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East Suburban Unitarian Universalist Church



Sunday Services - 10:30 AM
Religious Education - 10:30 AM

Telephone
(724) 327-5872

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

Volume 45 No. 5

December 2007

Editor: Mary Warwick
newsletter@esuuc.org

ESUUC Sunday Services

Sunday, December 2, 10:30 am – *“Thinking Outside the Box”*- We have to face the fact that the way we interact with the world is shifting so rapidly we can hardly keep up with it. It is time to allow for different paradigms in this season of “peace and goodwill” as we see how we are really connected in deep and surprising ways to systems and people in far away lands. **Dr. Waun** will present.

Sunday, December 9, 10:30 am – *“Reflections on Death”*— As winter descends upon us, we recognize death as a part of the natural cycle of life, yet it is the rare individual who lets mortality into their consciousness. Death permeates human existence, yet we ignore it, particularly the church, which should be leading the way. Are we risking our happiness? Is there a healthier plan than living in denial?

Sunday, December 16, 10:30 am – *“Christmas in Baghdad”*-- This new musical written our own David Schwartz uses traditional Christmas carols with new words to describe the U.S. involvement in Iraq and a plea for withdrawing the troops by Christmas and restoring peace. In addition, the choir will sing some carols with the original words in which the audience can participate.

Sunday, December 23, 10:30 am – *“Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men”*-- Wanda Guthrie, long-time peace activist (and Leona's mom), will discuss the prospects for peace in our time.

Monday, December 24, 7:30 pm – *“Love Came Down at Christmas”*-- Our annual traditional “story” centered Christmas Eve service will feature favorite carols, a book by Pearl S. Buck and the singing of *“Silent Night”* with hand held candles. **Dr. Waun** will facilitate.

Sunday, December 30, 10:30am -- *“Reflecting on the Holidays”*- A panel of ESUUC members will discuss the many ways Unitarian families experience the holidays.

Sunday, Jan. 6, 10:30am- *“Sex and Spirituality”*-- We don't usually address this subject in church, but perhaps it is time to explore how sexuality and spirituality are related, especially in our culture at a time in history when sex is such a central and formative focus. **Dr. Waun** will venture carefully into this minefield of a topic.



Pastor's Column: Finding the Right Words

by Rev. Renee Waun

There has been a fuss in recent years about the best, most sensitive and appropriate way to convey holiday greetings at this time of year, so as not to offend anyone. And I'm sure we all remember this anonymously written "Lawyer's Christmas Greeting" that made the email round a few years ago:

Please accept without obligation, explicit or implicit, our best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, politically correct, low stress, non-addictive, gender neutral, celebration of the winter solstice holiday, practiced within the most enjoyable traditions of the religious persuasion or secular practice of your choice, with respect for the religious/secular persuasions and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions.

When I first read this I recall thinking how much it sounded like some UUs I know, and it made me smile. But I think we've all probably gotten beyond this sort of thing by now. At least I hope so.

As we enter full tilt into this holiday season may we find deep and sincere ways to connect with those for whom the celebration is meaningful and special. It probably won't matter so much what words we use as long as we express ourselves in a way that translates to others as a wish for peace, love, hope and joy for our world!



mUUsings from the President:

by Matt Mathis

UU University

For most of us, the Holiday season is a time to be with our families. We either visit our parents, or our not-so-little children come home to us, or sometimes both. At the same time the commercial world works as hard as it can to inject its base message into our lives. It is all too easy to forget just how lucky we are and to forget the people who are less fortunate than ourselves. I am not so much speaking of people who have fallen on financial hard times, but the people who are alone, or have lost loved ones or their connections to a supporting community.

We all need to be thankful for what we have, and extend the hand of community to the people who are without. This is the true holiday spirit!

Please feel free to call or send a note anytime. 412.654.7529 or mathis@psc.edu

Religious Education

Nursery:

No providers in December.

Elementary:

Dec. 2 Children's Chapel - Nic Freda
Dec. 9 It's a Small World - Wendy Noe
Dec. 16 No RE Classes - Christmas Play, Kids attend service
Dec. 23 No RE Classes
Dec. 30 No RE Classes

Middle:

Dec. 2 Children's Chapel - Nic Freda
Dec. 9 Everyone Should Have a Vote - Tabitha Riggio
Dec. 16 No RE Classes - Christmas Play, Kids attend service
Dec. 23 No RE Classes
Dec. 30 No RE Classes

COA:

Dec. 2 Children's Chapel - Nic Freda
Dec. 9 Conflict Resolution, King David and King Solomon – Marianne Jew
Dec. 16 No RE Classes - Christmas Play, Kids attend service
Dec. 23 No RE Classes
Dec. 30 No RE Classes

Party Alert!!

It's time to chill out and have some fun. This month we are celebrating our not-so-annual traditional holiday party. It is for adults only on Sunday, December 16th from 6:00PM to - ???

Please Bring:

- Gag-gift for the Exchange (max value \$10.00)
- A favorite food for the pot luck.

Finance Committee News

The Following is an excerpt from the Fall/Winter 2007 edition of the American Funds publication, "Investor." It may be of interest to our senior members and friends:

"Congress has provided an excellent tax incentive for charitable contributions, but you must act soon. The Pension Protection Act of 2006 allows individuals 70 1/2 and older to make tax-exempt charitable

contributions (limits apply) directly from their IRA assets to an eligible charity. The transaction must be made by December 31, 2007, as it is not certain that this provision will be extended. This legislation is good news for many IRA account holders 70 1/2 and older because this qualified charitable distribution, or QCD, satisfies the minimum distribution rule. In addition, WCD monies are excluded from adjusted gross income and, therefore, are tax-exempt."

For more information, and to see if this option is appropriate for you, please talk to your financial or tax adviser .

Rev. Waun Working to Launch Social Justice Charter School

Dr. Waun has been working with a group of creative thinkers in the Pittsburgh area to gain approval to start a charter school on the North Side. It will be called the Quest International Charter School; "international" because it will be the sister school of the one in Uganda.

So far, Quest has received a grant from the State of PA to help fund the proposal writing stage as well as the first three years of operating budget. The focus of the school will be social justice; promoting the "beloved community". It will use specialized curricula and teaching methods.

Currently they are seeking signatures for general and parent petitions to present to the Pittsburgh School Board in May, along with letters of support from community leaders and interested teachers.

Please visit <http://www.questinternational.org> for more information on the school as well as ways that you can help with getting petition signatures. Dr. Waun is happy to talk about Quest, and to answer questions you might have about this bold and life changing experiment.

Chalice Window Update

Ooooh, we are close! In September the ESUUC 40th Anniversary Gift Committee presented our choice of a stained glass chalice window design by Terry Bengal to commemorate this auspicious occasion. We kicked off a fundraiser that targeted \$7,750.00 and includes a Chalice Lighters grant request of \$2000 which Maureen McHugh prepared for us. The Ohio-Meadville District decision meeting for the grant is Dec. 8th. But... we are within several hundred dollars of meeting our part of the goal, assuming we get the Chalice Lighter's grant.

So now is the time. I believe this window will come to represent our church in the community. If you want to be able to say to your self, your children and grandchildren that you contributed to it's shining in Murrysville, please make a contribution that is affordable for you. If there is any overrun, we will put the money back in the treasury capital fund to be voted for some future need. 'Beauty feeds the soul'. N. Fitzgerald, Chair

Change in Music Director's Schedule

Our Music Director Brian Ogle has a new schedule for playing at our Sunday services. We will now enjoy his musical talents on three Sundays every month. Also, we will be seeing different faces directing the choir on the first Sunday of the month. Be sure to let Brian know how much we appreciate his music and presence when you see him on those Sundays when he is with us.

Sunday Refreshments

To ensure fairness, we assign each adult member or couple a date on which to bring refreshments. These don't have to be homemade or fancy; store-bought treats work well, too. If you haven't brought refreshments before, or are unfamiliar with how things are set up, you may want to come in the weekend before your turn to see how it's done. There are also instructions in the kitchen on how to use the coffeemaker and hot water pot. If you are still confused, or need assistance, contact Brenda Shiring at brennyren@yahoo.com.

If the week you're assigned doesn't work for your schedule, please switch with someone else for that month.

Dec. 2	Wendy Noe
Dec. 9	Gayle Pamerleau
Dec. 16	Mike Pasipanki
Dec. 23	Sharing Sunday
Dec. 30	Sharing Sunday

Jan. 6	Chris Priano
Jan. 13	George Ratliff
Jan. 20	Tabitha Riggio
Jan. 27	David Schwartz

Congregational Committees

Committee – Chair (email)

Aesthetics – Jean Robl and Maureen Lilly Building and Facilities – open Caring & Concerns – open Committee on Ministry – open Community – Drumming – Frank Nemeth (drumming@esuuc.org) Finance – Chris Priano Landscaping – Laurie Montgomery	Membership – Marylyn Devlin Music – Alan Halperin Pastoral Care – Maria Luczkow Religious Education – Kate Zingarelli Signs and Symbols – Leona Dunnett Social Enrichment – Brenda Shiring Sunday Programs/Celebrations – Mary Kukura-Straw Welcoming Congregation – Matt Mathis
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Newsletter Deadlines

January 2008 newsletter deadline: **Sunday, December 16th**.

Please email your articles to newsletter@esuuc.org or call Mary Warwick (724) 327-3092 and leave a message with your news, stories, and other information.

Get the Weekly Email News

If you would like to receive a weekly email that includes items not in the newsletter and reminders of upcoming events for the week, please send an email from the address you would like subscribed to **esuuc_news@esuuc.org**. You can also send a message to that address if you would like it included in the weekly email announcement to the congregation.

Calendar

Friday, November 30

6:00pm

OMD YAC Junior High con

Saturday, December 1

11:30pm

OMD YAC Junior High con

9:00am

OWL 7-9 (tentative)

7:00pm

Light Book Club – “Eat, Pray, Love” Discussion at Mary Warwick’s house.

Sunday, December 2

9:30am

Choir Rehearsal for today's Service

10:30am

Sunday Service

12:00pm

Program Committee

5:30pm

Youth Group

8:00pm

* Spirit Progress Radio is an online streamed audio radio program

Wednesday, December 5

7:30pm

Board Meeting

Thursday, December 6

7:00pm

"A Course in Miracles" reading group (contact Nancy Fitzgerald)

Friday, December 7

6:00pm

"Open Mike" night

7:00pm

YRUU Coffeehouse

Saturday, December 8

» 11:00am

YRUU Coffeehouse

9:00am

OWL 7-9 (tentative)

Sunday, December 9

10:30am

Sunday Service

8:00pm

* Spirit Progress Radio is an online streamed audio radio program

Thursday, December 13

7:00pm

"A Course in Miracles" reading group (contact Nancy Fitzgerald)

Sunday, December 16

10:30am

Sunday Service

5:30pm

Youth Group

6:00pm

Holiday Potluck&Party (Adult!)

7:30pm

Drumming Circle

8:00pm

* Spirit Progress Radio is an online streamed audio radio program

11:00pm

Newsletter Deadline

Thursday, December 20

7:00pm

"A Course in Miracles" reading group (contact Nancy Fitzgerald) Saturday, December 22

9:00am

OWL 7-9 (tentative)

Sunday, December 23

10:30am

Sunday Service

8:00pm

* Spirit Progress Radio is an online streamed audio radio program

Thursday, December 27

7:00pm

"A Course in Miracles" reading group (contact Nancy Fitzgerald)

Saturday, December 29

9:00am

OWL 7-9 (tentative)

Sunday, December 30

10:30am

Sunday Service

8:00pm

* Spirit Progress Radio is an online streamed audio radio program

Thursday, January 3

7:00pm

"A Course in Miracles" reading group (contact Nancy Fitzgerald)

Sunday, January 6

9:30am

Choir Rehearsal for today's Service

10:30am

Sunday Service

12:00pm

Program Committee

5:00pm

OWL 7-9 (tentative)

8:00pm

* Spirit Progress Radio is an online streamed audio radio program