



Island Passages

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF WHIDBEY ISLAND

P.O. Box 1076, Freeland, WA 98249 • 360-321-8656 • www.whidbey.com/uucwi/

December 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 9am: Membership Committee	3	4	5	6
7 Service 10am: The Still Small Voice (p2) Choir Rehearsal after the Service	8 9am: Worship Committee	9	10	11	12 9-11am: BOT	13 1-3pm: North End Koffee Klatch at Whidbey General Hospital (p2) Fun on Whidbey: Nutcracker (p4)
14 8:45am: Choir Rehearsal Service 10am: Holidays of Light (p2) Social Responsibility Council Potluck after the Service (p2)	15	16 10am-12 noon: South End Koffee Klatch at Rockhoppers (p2) 6pm: Book Group (p6)	17	18	19	20 Newsletter Deadline
21 Service 10am: Holiday Pageant, Intergenerational Service (p2)	22	23	24 Service 4:00 pm: Christmas Eve Service (p2)	25	26	27
28 Service 10am: Soap Box Sunday (p2)	29	30	31			

Dec. 7, 2008: The Still Small Voice**Speaker: Rev. Kit Ketcham**

What is spirituality? Where does it come from? How do we find it or create it or make it happen? Most of us humans yearn for experiences that take us outside our everyday world and infuse us with a sense of connection to each other and the power we call God, Cosmos, Higher Power, Nature. Rev. Kit Ketcham will speak about the "still small voice" that is available to us when we quiet our chaotic lives.

Worship Leader: Mark B

Greeter: Lois C

Dec. 14: Holidays of Light

Worship on December 14 will be an overview of "Holidays of Light," including songs and stories about St. Lucia, the Italian saint who ended up in Sweden and is celebrated in both countries on December 13, "Lucia Day." The children will participate for part of the service, and we'll have our own "Lucia" appear! We'll share some historical insights to some traditional practices in this festive "prequel" to Christmas.

Worship Leaders : Joann R and Peggy B

Greeter: Ken M

Dec. 21: Holiday Pageant and Intergenerational Service

The Religious Education program will present the intergenerational Christmas worship service by Joyce Poley and Frank Henning. This pageant celebrates the Christmas nativity story from a Unitarian Universalist perspective. Linda G will be leading the choir and the pageant participants in many traditional carols as well as four original pageant songs. Nola A will provide the music accompaniment.

Worship Leader : Lorie W

Greeter: Baird B

Dec. 24: 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve at Home**Speaker: Rev. Kit Ketcham**

This is our first Christmas in our own home. On this Christmas Eve, join others in our sanctuary at dusk for stories and song, blessing our sacred space with candles and carols. Rev. Kit Ketcham and Worship Leader Terra A will lead. Afterwards, we'll enjoy Christmas goodies before saying goodnight. This is a service for all ages.

Worship Leader: Terra A

Greeter: Earl Berg

Dec. 28: Soap Box Sunday

Once a year our pulpit is wide open for any congregant to speak on a topic that arouses his or her passion and commitment. Four or five congregants will entertain us, provoke us, amaze us, arouse our curiosity or perhaps even our indignation. Please don't miss this favorite annual service, one that harkens back to our ancestors speaking in the town squares of New England. Please let Malcolm F or Frank A know if you would like to speak and what your topic will be.

Worship Leaders: Malcolm F and Frank A

Greeter: Lois C

News and Events**Koffee Klatches: Best Conversation on the Island!**

North End: 1-3 pm, Saturday, Dec. 13, at Whidbey General Hospital's cafeteria in Coupeville. Inexpensive food, good coffee, great conversation, excellent company!

South End: 10am-12noon, Tuesday Dec. 16, at Rockhoppers in Clinton. Delicious coffee, fine conversation, terrific company in a whimsical, artful setting.

New Editor for UUCWI Newsletter

Beginning in January, Rebecca S will step down as editor of the newsletter, and Celia B will be welcomed as the new editor. Submissions should be directed to her by December 20.

Social Responsibility Council

The new Social Responsibility Council will meet after church on Sunday, December 14 for a potluck lunch and meeting. We will continue to discuss opportunities for UUCWI to take action and to be of service. Last month's meeting was attended by 16. Many ideas were discussed in a brain-storming session, ranging from assistance to local causes and Third World countries through existing organizations such as Heifer Project, Kiva etc., and Good Cheer Food Bank.

Many other areas of interest were discussed and individuals agreed to report back on the following: Eating Ethically, Gay Straight Alliance, Housing and Poverty, Peace Liberty and Justice. All are welcome to attend the next meeting on Dec. 14 after church for a potluck.

~Peggy B

Soap Box Sunday

Would You Like to Speak on Soap Box Sunday?? This is your chance, congregants! Once a year the pulpit is open for free-ranging observations, special pleadings etc, about 4-5 minutes long, more or less anything within the bounds of UUCWI decorum. Please volunteer by Dec 15 with your topic to Frank A or Malcolm F, and they will put the service together. Otherwise they might have to conscript speakers (or, worse still, speak themselves).

~Malcolm F

Choir News

The choir will be singing on December 14, with practices on December 7th after service, and on December 14th at 8:45am before worship service. Special music and choir direction will be led by Peggy B.

Refreshment Volunteers Needed

We need volunteers to bring refreshments for our social hour. If you've never done this before, I will send you instructions and be available to answer any questions. UUCWI will provide the coffee, tea and sugar.

On your day, you need to bring nibbles and come half an hour early to get your snacks and the coffee started before the service. (Because kitchen noises can be heard throughout the hall, there should be no activity in the kitchen after 10. Besides, you want to relax and enjoy the service!) After social hour you'll be our dishwasher (mostly cups). That's it! Very easy. Or find someone to team with you to make it even easier.

December 24 is a late afternoon service and we would appreciate some extra cookies and holiday goodies. We need volunteers for all Sundays beginning in January. Please email me with your chosen Sunday.

~ Judy K

From Our Minister

Dear Whidbey friends,

Are you connected with the military in any way? Were you a military brat? Do you have friends and family members who are or were in the military? Did you yourself serve in the military in your earlier years? Your experiences have given you a unique perspective and you may be interested in helping with an outreach to our Island vets.

We Unitarian Universalists, because we are peace-oriented, often are perceived as being anti-military. The truth is that we appreciate our military personnel for their peace-keeping and disaster-relief efforts, while we repudiate the violence of war. But we have few concrete ways of showing our appreciation for the non-violent activities of our service men and women. And the problems of returning vets with physical and mental disabilities seem beyond our ability to address. Yet we can see the desperate need and want to reach out and help.

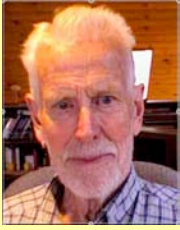
I'm writing this column on Veterans' Day, for I'm acutely aware these days of what an important opportunity we have to serve our veterans here on Whidbey Island. In fact, just this morning I had a good conversation with a mother whose son returned from Afghanistan suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and is receiving treatment in an Oregon VA treatment center.

She and I talked about how UUCWI might be part of a working group to reach out to returning vets, helping to establish an alcohol-free drop-in center somewhere on the south end, where vets could socialize and begin some of the healing that is essential if they are to return to normal civil life.

If you are a person with military connections, either from your own service or that of a family member, we need your perspective to help us reach out to vets on South Whidbey. We'll be scheduling a meeting soon for anyone with military experience, so that we can discuss the possibilities. I hope you'll consider attending. Watch for announcements in the Sunday bulletin and newsletters.

Much love,
Kit





The Prez Says:
AWE and WONDER

I continue to marvel at the generosity of our congregation. As we come to the end of the funds to complete our building we seem to find a way to go on to the next step. There is the ubiquitous sweat equity of course, but there is also the extra donation, money for a hymnal, a gift of plants or tables or a chair. The generous spirit seen at our auction was fun-filled philanthropy. We are doing the best we can to complete our construction with amenities which will make our building an important meeting place for the greater community.

The talent that resides amongst us astounds me. Our minister is inspirational. She lends an experienced steadying hand to our congregation. We are blessed with many who lend a deep spirituality to our services, either by the message they might give from the pulpit or as Worship Leader.

I'm blown away by the simplicity and power of our message that affirms the dignity and worth in each of us. We don't have to cross our fingers or wink when we articulate our deepest religious values. Hell and damnation are replaced by service based on love. We are all challenged to articulate spiritual values that are grounded in the best from the world's religions and philosophies.

What do you believe? Sing it out loudly and proudly.

Baird

Book Group

On Tuesday, December 16, at 6pm, there will be a pot luck dinner and book exchange. Please phone Helen at 341-6289 to confirm that you're coming and for directions. And sift through your shelves for those books you'd like to pass on this year. Be prepared to say a bit about the books you've brought for this exchange.

Please note this will be the third Tuesday rather than the usual second Tuesday.

~Helen K

New Visual Arts Committee Is In Full Swing!

Another committee? Yes, and it's one that will assure you that what goes on the walls, windows and floors of our new building will have been carefully considered!

The Visual Arts Committee (VAC) has been formed to serve as a clearing house for ideas concerning the selection, use and display of all art objects within and around the church building and for maintaining the integrity of the aesthetics of our building. Activities this committee will engage in with this mission in mind include:

- (1) Approving or disapproving all donated, purchased or hand-made objects of art designed to be hung on walls or otherwise displayed.
- (2) Reviewing and approving any other object designed to hang on a wall so as to preserve the Committee's ability to aesthetically display art objects.
- (3) Reviewing and approving or disapproving any change to the building that has the potential of affecting the original architectural vision and the Committee's ability to aesthetically display art objects.
- (4) Planning, scheduling and executing the display of rotating art shows.

As soon as this new committee has finalized the wording of its mission to cover the scope of its responsibilities, a fuller description of the committee's responsibilities will be available on our website, and eventually a brochure will be published which will also offer information about the VAC and its mission.

Members of this committee are Nola A, Christi S, Peggy B, Mary G and Joan G.

Regular meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Saturday morning of each month, 10am to Noon.

Meetings are open to anyone who wishes to attend. Your ideas and comments are welcome! For more information, contact any member of the Committee.

~Joan G

Fun on Whidbey Club

We are nuts for the Nutcracker! Join us as we view the Whidbey Island Dance Theater's (16th) production of this famous dance and music extravaganza. We are going on Saturday, December 13. We'll meet at the South Whidbey High School Theater's box office at 7:15 for a 7:30 curtain.

The prices are \$20 for adults, \$15 for children 17 years and under, and \$18 for seniors. At the door, all tickets are \$20.

Everyone will need to get their own tickets by calling 360-341-2221, picking up tickets at the Whidbey Island Dance Theater's office at Ken's Korner Shopping Plaza, or by visiting their website: www.widtonline.org

For this event, please email me if you are planning to attend before getting tickets. I'll email you back with the location of our seats so we can sit together or near each other as we squeal with delight. 'Tis the season!

~ Judy K

Religious Education

Hi Everyone,

This has definitely been a time of growth and change for Religious Education (RE). We have had so many new families visit us since we opened the doors of our new building that we had to expand our RE program. We are now offering four classes. We have the Wonder Play class (ages 2 and below); Spirit Play (ages 3-6), Spirit Play, Too! (ages 7-10), and Middle Ages Group (MAGS, ages 11+). The MAGs also have an extracurricular "fun" activity once a month.

With this rapid expansion, we're in great need of assistant teachers. A lot of you have expressed your willingness to help out, but what we really need is someone, or rather about 3-5 some ones who would be willing to commit to one of our classes one Sunday per month on a regular schedule. Becoming part of the RE program is an incredibly rewarding experience. Please contact me to find out more

Also, it's pageant time! Our pageant this year is another Joyce Poley pageant, "The Spirit of the Christmas Tree." We need shepherds, a few friendly beasts, a couple of wise ones, and even an angel or two. Please join us for music practice on

Sunday mornings, 9:30-10am, and let me know which role you'd like to play. It'll be great fun!

With Warmth from the Flame,

~Lorie W., Director of Religious Education

Stewardship

What is "stewardship"? Well, it encompasses much of what we do to thrive as a UU congregation. In so many ways we each contribute to the health of our little [but growing!] community. But once a year we put some extra effort into a campaign that is especially vital to our survival. That is our annual pledge drive and all of the various activities that are a part of that drive.

What does that include?

• *Membership renewal*

While we sign the Membership Book only once, we sign a membership renewal card each year. It is important that we have an accurate membership count to report to the UUA each year. Our fair share dues to UUA are based on our active membership count.

• *Annual Survey of All Members and Friends*

Each year we make an effort to have a face-to-face conversation with every member and friend of the congregation to ask for their views on how we are doing. This year, among other things, we will be asking you for your best thoughts on a long range plan for UUCWI. So be thinking about that.

• *Pledge Drive*

Each year we ask all members and friends to make a pledge of financial support to the UUCWI operating budget. This is how we pay our bills. This is how we stay alive. We encourage you to consider a pledge of 2% to 5% of your adjusted income.

• *Celebration Dinner*

To kick off the pledge drive we have a big celebration. It's a way of celebrating who we are. There will be a dinner, entertainment and a few speakers. And, of course, lots of stimulating conversation with excellent dinner companions!

Now, it takes more than one or two people to pull this off! There is a role for YOU. Would you like to be a part of the kitchen crew? Have some ideas about decorating the tables? Will you be one of the many visiting stewards who meet with 3 or 4 members or friends? Do you have some ideas about the program for the night of our

celebration dinner? How about helping to design our brochure?

Our celebration dinner will be held on **April 4, 2009**, so save that date!

The visiting stewards will be scheduling their visits to take place during the two weeks following the dinner.

Call Lois C or send an email message about how you wish to help with this very important activity.

~ Lois C, Stewardship Chair

Greeters

“Imagine yourself as a newcomer who has decided to attend one of our Sunday services. The foyer is filled with people and, perhaps, feels chaotic. Suddenly, you become aware of a person who is smiling at you and who seems to have been expecting you. Before any words are exchanged and without even realizing what it is you’re feeling, you sense that you’re in the presence of lovingkindness. You realize you are welcomed here, for you are in the company of one of our greeters.”

I borrowed these words from the Rev. Arthur Vaeni, Minister of the UU congregation in Olympia, Washington. I believe they nicely capture the essence of why our greeters and ushers are so critical to the health of our congregation. Whether we are newcomers or “old timers,” the warm smiles on the faces of our greeters and ushers helps us to know we are amongst friends.

Each Sunday we have individuals who are our “officially” designated greeters and ushers, and the rest of us are “unofficial” greeters. We each can make a point of greeting others as they arrive and be especially mindful of greeting newcomers. If you would like to take a turn as one of our official greeters, please see Lois C. You will receive information about the greeter’s role, and you can choose which days you would be available.

~Lois C, Membership Chair

UUA and Allied Faith Groups File Lawsuit to Invalidate California Proposition 8

On November 17, 2008, religious leaders and faith organizations representing millions of members, filed a petition with the California Supreme Court asking the Court to invalidate Proposition 8. The petition argues that Proposition 8 poses a severe threat to the guarantee of equal protection for all and was not enacted through the constitutionally required process for such a dramatic change to the California Constitution. The full text of the petition (PDF) is available online at www.uua.org.

The petition is filed on behalf of the California Council of Churches, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, two Episcopal Bishops (of California and Los Angeles), the Progressive Jewish Alliance, the UUA, the UU Legislative Ministry of CA, and the Northern and Southern CA and Nevada Conferences of the United Church of Christ. The groups are represented by Eric Isaacson, a UU attorney based in San Diego, and by Jon B. Eisenberg of Eisenberg and Hancock, LLP, based in Oakland.

“Proposition 8 denies an entire class of citizens a basic civil right—the freedom to marry the person of their choice” said Rev. William G. Sinkford, President of the UUA. “Even worse, this amendment writes discrimination into the California Constitution. As people of conscience, we cannot permit legalized bigotry to attack California couples and families.”

The UUA has advocated for civil equality for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people for several decades. In 1996 the UUA’s General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to call for full legal marriage rights for same-sex couples. Hundreds of legally recognized same-sex weddings have been celebrated in UU churches in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and California.

The petition cites the California Constitution’s declaration, in Article I, section 1, of the “inalienable” rights of all persons under the law: “This equal protection principle is the basis of our governmental social contract and thus the bedrock foundation upon which our state Constitution is built. It cannot be overridden by fleeting majorities.”

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of Whidbey Island
2008-2009 Board of Trustees**

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If you wish to contact any of the Board members,
call UUCWI voice mail at 360-321-8656.

Minister: Kit Ketcham 360-331-2163

Chaplain: Sally Elder 360-675-3314

Our minister and chaplains are available for rites
of passage ceremonies (including ceremonies of
commitment or union) and pastoral visits.

Director of Religious Education: Lorie W

Newsletter Information:

News, announcements, events, and other items of
interest to members of the congregation should be
submitted in writing by the deadline to editor
Celia B. Items submitted after press time will
appear in the following month's newsletter if
appropriate. Time-sensitive late items will be
posted with the announcements and/or on the
calendar on our web site.

Current and past issues of this newsletter are
available online at:

www.whidbey.com/uucwi/newsletter.html

Last names, phone numbers, and addresses are
deleted from the online version for members'
privacy.

Communications Committee:

Celia B, Newsletter Editor
Mavis C, Church Administrator
Dave C, Webmaster

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