

December Newsletter

For questions or details regarding any activities listed below, please send an email to church@lcuuc.org or call our church office at 262-369-1703.

Get Involved/Things to Do

December's Movie That Matters

Bring your teenager/s and come see the Emmy-award winning documentary *Promises*. This film introduces seven Palestinian and Israeli children who, though they live only 20 minutes apart, exist in completely separate worlds. Filmed over 4 years, *Promises* explores the nature of these boundaries and tells the story of a few children who dare to cross the lines to meet their neighbors. This film is presented FREE of charge! An after-film discussion will be held. For more information visit promisesproject.org or see Liz K at the church office.

December's Saturday Indoor Outing

Join us on Saturday, December 16th, at 2:00 pm for Retzer Nature Center's Planetarium show *Season of Light*. According to Retzer, "This beautiful holiday season program investigates the most fascinating **winter solstice celebrations from all over the world**. It also searches for possible explanations for the "Star" seen by the Wisemen." This show would be *especially* meaningful to the middle school RE students as it, among other things, "recounts the historical religious and cultural rituals practiced during the time of winter solstice—not only Christian and Jewish, but also Celtic, Nordic, Roman, Irish, Mexican and Hopi."

Tickets are \$4.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children under 12 and seniors age 60+. Make reservations at 262-548-7801. For more show or ticket information see the flyer on the bulletin board or talk to Liz K at the church office.

Library News

A new children's book, *Unitarianism Universalism is a Really Long Name*, by Jennifer Dant, has been added to the library. It gives UU children words and concepts to understand our faith, and explain it to others. The book's simple text and lively art make it suitable for ages 5-9.

Donated to our library by the Kingery Martin family is *The Liberated Traveler: How to see Europe Intelligently, Independently, Inexpensively*. Written by Phyllis Kingery Martin and her husband Alan Kingery in the late 70's, the advice remains charming and helpful.

Synthesis, a meditation CD, has been donated to the library. It is a guided meditation cd intended to create a greater sense of well-being by focusing breathing and awareness on the chakras (Sanskrit word for wheel). The chakra system is an ancient East Indian concept that basically posits seven energy systems within the body that are connected with a universal consciousness.

Calling all parents of young or young-ish children!

The LCUUC Parenting Covenant Group would like to invite you to a solstice gathering on Saturday, December 16th, at 4 p.m. (after the planetarium show, if you're going to that), at the home of Sue L and Eric L. This will be an informal family gathering with lots of playtime for kids and (hopefully) peaceful conversation around the fire for adults. Feel free to bring an

appetizer if you want, or just show up. We'll order some pizzas and provide beverages. New members and visitors are particularly welcome and encouraged to attend. Please contact Sue or Eric to RSVP or for more information at the church office.

The Parenting Covenant Group met regularly at LCUUC for the past several years. This year we're meeting less frequently, but still looking for ways to support the parents and families of LCUUC.

Lunch Bunch

The Lunch Bunch will meet on Wednesday, December 13, at Noon, at Palate Pleasers, 870 Rose Drive, Hartland. Palate Pleasers is located at the intersection of Hwy. 83 and KE (where there is a traffic light), south of Hartland. Palate Pleasers faces Hwy. 83, but you have to enter from Rose Drive. On KE, east of Hwy. 83, turn north on Rose Drive, and then left by the day care center. Proceed to the front of the building. This is a great opportunity for members and new friends to get better acquainted! If you have questions, contact Yvonne F, or Mary P at the church office..

Food, Fun and Friends!

Looking for a chance to hang out with some of your UU friends—old and new? Next month, we will be starting something new: monthly evenings of food, fun and friends. Each person or couple who wants to be involved will sign up, and on the appointed evening, bring an hors d'oeuvre to a host's house and spend the evening talking, playing games, looking at the stars, playing music... whatever! We'll offer a family friendly option that will include kids, and an adults-only option.

This is a new brainchild still in the works. If you'd like to help get this off the ground, we could use you. Contact Kerry D at the church office with questions, suggestions, or if you'd like to host an evening.

Other Announcements:

Deadline Approaching for Grocery Receipts

Grocery receipts will be turned in to Sentry and Piggly Wiggly at the end of December. Please turn in the receipts that you have been collecting during December Sunday services.

Kids' Corner Provides Fellowship Space for Young Members and Friends

In the interest of providing a fun place for kids during social time (and providing their parents with a chance to do some socializing themselves), we have arranged the Kids' Corner. In order to make it a pleasant place for all, the user expectations are listed below:

~Please supervise your children. (There is no caregiver on duty.)

~Help children remember to clean up one activity before moving on to another.

~Encourage them to be inclusive in games and activities, especially with the new faces among them.

~If furniture is moved from the usual arrangement, please return it to its proper place. (Refer to photo affixed to the bookshelf.)

~When it is time for your family to leave, have your children clean up at least one small part of the area. This will give them a feeling of responsibility and ownership. (And there is no one designated to clean up the area.)

If you would like to donate a game or activity to the area, please see Kristin S or Kim S at the church office.

We hope that this will be a great place for kids to make and maintain friendships and create a welcoming church environment for all our young people.

COMING SOON

Conversation Corner

We will be trying something new at LCUUC. For those who would like to “continue the conversation,” we will set aside a corner of the social hall for about 15 minutes for folks to gather, offer their reflections, listen to other perspectives and share in a conversation based on the morning’s service. Whenever possible we would like to have the speaker join in the conversation and respond to questions. It will be a great way to meet other people and share new ideas.

Membership Directories

The Membership Committee hopes to have new directories available early in December. When you get your copy, please check to make sure your information is accurate. Please contact Kirsten J at the church office with any changes.

Sermons Available in Multiple Formats

Kathleen Green, the Meadville Lombard Student Minister who is working with us this year, has generously agreed to make her sermons available in written form. Some copies of her sermons are at the Visitors’ Table, and Gerry F will make copies of the taped sermons upon request. Soon her sermons will also be posted on our LCUUC website.

New Member Welcome on December 17

We will celebrate our newest members during the service on December 17th. The congregation will formally welcome new members and covenant with them as partners in the journey for truth and meaning. Friends interested in joining LCUUC can talk with Lynne S or Yvonne F at the church office.

LifeWays Child Development Center

Submitted by Mary O’Connell, Center Director

LifeWays Child Development Center just opened in LCUUC last month. We are delighted to be here, and have been warmly welcomed by your community. Every member who has stopped in for one reason or another has been so friendly. It makes us feel very welcome!

LifeWays offers full-day and half-day childcare (ages infant to 6 yrs), preschool, and parent/child playgroup. Some of the features that make LifeWays unique from other childcare centers are our mixed-age environment, organic foods menu, natural toys, and home-like atmosphere.

Stop by to see how LifeWays can be your family's home away from home, or call us at (262) 369-0044!

Worship Service Reminders

It's been an exciting year with a new building, many special activities and lots of guests visiting our church. With all of the changes, members of the Worship Committee would like to offer some clarification about some parts of our worship services.

Announcements: If you would like to tell the congregation about an upcoming church-related event, it is best to have it printed in the Order of Service. Announcements sent to oos@lcuuc.org by Wednesday will be included. If you would like a brief announcement read by the Board Representative at the beginning of the service, please write it down and give it to him or her before the service.

Joys and Concerns: Lighting candles of joys and concerns is a sacred time in our services where we share milestones, great joys and deep concerns. In the spirit of sharing these meaningful parts of our lives, it is important to speak from a personal perspective and to be mindful of the diverse opinions we embrace as a community. We ask that people who wish to speak say their name before briefly sharing their thoughts. In some ways sharing joys and concerns is a form of communal prayer in which we hold each others' cares and celebrations in our hearts.

Polylog: Having time in a worship service when people can offer their personal insights and reflections is a tradition at LCUUC, as it is in many UU churches. While not appropriate for every worship service, welcoming different perspectives and experiences has the potential to enrich a service. A polylog also has the potential to be divisive and distract from the focus and tone of a service. While a speaker sometimes invites questions, generally the purpose of the polylog is to hear ideas from the congregation. We ask that people wishing to share their perspective begin with their name and respectfully offer their thoughts. There will be a time set aside after the service for further discussion, questions and conversation. Our services are designed to be worshipful and offer the opportunity for spiritual growth. Honoring different opinions in a respectful and safe environment is a key element in the search for truth and meaning.

Holiday Gift Ideas that Support LCUUC

Please remember the LCUUC Scrip program when Christmas shopping this season. John Staudt has made available many, many options for us this year! It's easy to order and pick up the cards at church. The cards can be used while shopping, or given as gifts. This is especially helpful if you have corporate gift giving.

Some of the cards available are Barnes & Noble, Blockbuster, Panera Bread, Bath and Body Works, Best Buy, Menards, and Home Depot. Don't forget the gas, grocery and department store cards that we still have available. Gas cards are a great gift for the young drivers and not so young too! Check out the expanded options now offered.

Christmas is fast approaching. To make certain we have your cards available, please order by Thursday, December 7th. The cards will then be available at the December 17th service.

Remember, these cards cost you nothing. You pay the face value of the card and LCUUC makes a profit on each purchase made. It's a convenient gift giving idea and profits our church as well. If you are considering larger purchases at anytime throughout the year at Home Depot, Menards or Best Buy, please remember this as an option before you buy. What a fast and easy way to support LCUUC.

Any questions or orders, please email John S or Traci L at the church office. Thank you for the exceptional support of this program and the LCUUC fundraising efforts.

Social Action

Food Pantry Collection: Our December 3rd collection will be for the Pewaukee Food Pantry, located at 642 Main Street in the lower level of the church. It is currently open Wednesday and Saturday from 10-11 am. To volunteer at the pantry, contact 691-3240.

The congregation collected \$109 for the November food pantry collection. Two full bags of food were also donated. Thank you to the congregation for the donation as well as to the Haskell family for delivering the November donation to the Oconomowoc food pantry.

UU-Ministry For Earth/Green Sanctuary: At the Social Justice Empowerment Workshop held here on October 14, the consensus of those involved was to focus our social action energies into the area of energy conservation. We held an informational meeting at on November 5 on this topic, and almost 30 of us attended! The process for this kind of action exists within the framework of the UU Ministry for Earth program, called "Green Sanctuary".

The goals that underlie the Green Sanctuary Program are:

- Build awareness of societal environmental issues among UU's;
- Generate commitment for personal lifestyle changes;
- Motivate UU's to community action on environmental issues;

- Build a connection between spiritual practice and environmental consciousness; and
- Build awareness of and rectify environmental injustices.

Part of becoming a Green Sanctuary is to make our facility environment-friendly, but it goes much farther than that, to help each of us, our community, our nation, and the world become more environment-friendly as well, in keeping with our UU 7th Principle of respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

What we have done so far:

- Held our first informational meeting
- Obtained a copy of the Green Sanctuary Manual from UU-MFE
- Attended an Energy Stewards workshop, which includes a step-by-step guide for efficient energy use
- Arranged for an WE Energies energy audit for our facility in mid-December

What we must do next:

- Form a Green Sanctuary committee of members who are committed to leading this process for our church
- Educate the committee members on the process
- Apply to UU-Ministry For Earth for Green Sanctuary Accreditation
- Get with the program!

Please contact Kerry D or Gerry F at the church office for more information, or to sign up for the Green Sanctuary committee if you haven't already.

Religious Education News

Parents, Kids, and Social Hour: We want social time to be enjoyable and safe for everyone at LCUUC. The RE Committee asks that children 8th grade and younger *not* remain in the classrooms after RE ends unless accompanied by a parent or RE teacher. During social hour, please encourage your children to join the congregation in the social hall. Check out the newly created Kids' Corner! (See related article.) Feedback from kids and parents on what they'd like to have in the Kids' Corner is welcome. See Christi E, Kim S, or Kristin S. Please help your children understand that it is not appropriate to play in the office or sanctuary. High school youth are welcome to hang out in their classroom or join in the coffee-time conversation.

Joint RE on December 24 and 31: Regular RE classes will make way for intergenerational “joint” RE on these two holiday weekends. We're looking for suggestions of some activities that kids of all ages can enjoy together. We'd like to include a social action component, if possible. Adult leaders are also needed on both dates. Contact Christi E at the church office with ideas or to volunteer your help. Thanks!

Peace High School Youth Con

Submitted by Nadine B, LCUUC High School RE Student

On the weekend of October 6th, three high school youth from LCUUC went to Springfield, Illinois, to attend a youth conference. Abraham Lincoln UU Congregation hosted the event. Mr. Tom H drove Roza H, Matt K and Nadine B down and back, equaling about ten hours of driving time. The wait was well worth it, because we were all reunited with buddies we hadn't seen for months. We also met new people that we will look for at future cons.

As like any youth con, every person was split up from the others they came with and were put into a smaller group of about ten people. This “touch group” had people who you normally wouldn't meet, talking with you and learning a little about you. The extra special thing that we did this past con was to have our own peace rally. We made signs and sang songs on the sidewalks near an intersection. Our picture and story even made it into the local newspaper, of which a copy is posted on the LCUUC bulletin board. Saturday also included workshops such as belly dancing, duct tape art, the meaning of movies, ultimate Frisbee, tarot card reading, and more. Later on, after dinner, was the worship service followed by coffeehouse.

Coffeehouse is a talent show and we saw some very interesting skits and talents. My personal favorites were when the touch groups had their own skits. Some people went to sleep after coffeehouse, but for most youth, the night was just beginning. Later on, we played the traditional time-warp song and the traditional “wink” game. As soon as the time warp ended, the new people to cons (we call them “virgins”) got /phuuf/-ed. /PHUUF/ stands for /people having uu fun/. Of course, no one got hurt but as usual it was fun to watch.

The worst part about con was Sunday morning. After the massive group hug, we had to say goodbye, get in our cars, and leave. But our goodbyes only lasted until we got home and talked again to friends through email.

I *love* going to youth cons and am trying to attend as many as possible. I have so much fun with the people I meet. Some people have a hard time understanding the numerous traditions we have, but once experienced, they make sense. I have to shout out to all the youth that have not gone to a con—Go because you might just meet your new best friend!! And for the youth wondering what phuuf-ing is, you just have to go to find out.

FROM THE MINISTER'S MAILBOX

Dear ones,

We are coming into a busy season of beginnings and endings. At this time of year, I try to remember three important factors, and encourage you to consider doing the same:

(1) December marks the beginning of several different holidays and holy days for many different people. There is Winter Solstice, Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and Bodhi Day, just to name a few. In a Unitarian Universalist congregation, where there is a wide variety of theological positions, spiritual practices, and religious backgrounds, it is important to keep this diversity in mind and appreciate the occasion to learn from one another.

(2) December marks the ending of another year and an opportunity to take stock of our lives once again. This can mean the life of our faith community as well as our personal lives. Reviewing the past year can prompt us towards new goals or renewing old goals not yet reached.

Setting aside even a few minutes of quiet reflection, in the midst of the busyness that is December, can be calming and illuminating. This is good for our children, too!

(3) December marks the beginning of a “blue” season for many people and the ending of too many lives from suicide. This isn’t something I enjoy thinking about or even talking about and yet I know from family history and chaplaincy experience that depression and suicide are unfortunately a large part of the holiday season for many people. Not everyone has a loving family or friends to spend the holidays with. Not everyone is capable of ‘getting in the holiday spirit.’ And not everyone is eager to let others know that they find December a very depressing time of the year. But everyone has the human need to love and be loved. Check in with each other this month. Find a moment to call or email someone from LCUUC that you haven’t seen in a while – long-time members and new friends alike.

My hope for this season is that each of us will remember to be mindful of the many holiday traditions celebrated, find the inspiration to begin the new year with hope, and take care of ourselves and each other. These might be the best gifts you give and receive this holiday season.

May you be especially blessed this December.

Your MOD minister,
Kathleen Green