



News for Lake Country UUs

Lake Country Unitarian Universalists
rejoice in life, find the sacred, seek justice,
with open minds and hearts.

DECEMBER 2009

Rev. Jane Esbensen, Minister
Kerry Duma, Director of Religious Education
Karen Haskell, Choir Director

Sunday Services and Religious Education for Children/Youth—10:00 a.m.

W299 N5595 Grace Drive, Hartland WI, 53029

At the intersection of Hwy E and Hwy K

Dec. 6: "Religious Truth for Progressives: Discerning the Meaning of Miracles," by Rev. Bret Myers*

Today we will consider three miracles recorded in the New Testament in a way that makes sense for UUs, religious progressives, and post-modern thinkers who are "spiritual but not religious." The "Feeding of the 5000," the "Virgin Birth," and the "Resurrection" are integral to the Christian understanding of the world, and have even shaped the religious imagination of those who do not consider themselves "Christian." They are questionable to the modern mindset that associates truth with provable or historical facts, and are sometimes construed as "roadblocks" to continuing dialogue when interpreted as literal. Yet, is there still a "truth" to them? Should we continue to consider them if they do not conform to and satisfy our "scientific" understanding of reality? Can they still remain meaningful for our lives in the 21st century? Today's message will show one way by which these questions may be answered in the affirmative.

*See bio on page 4.

Dec. 13: "Out of Darkness," by Rev. Jane Esbensen

The service will be a lovely liturgical celebration in words and music of the light we call forth in the midst of this deep winter season. Come and be with us as we greet the darkness and bring in the light!

Dec. 20: "Lo! It Shall Be Given," by Rev. Jane Esbensen

In this intergenerational Christmas service, we will ring in the season with story and song, poetry and prayer. Christmas is more than the birth of a baby named Jesus. It is also the birth of hope and goodwill for all and to all. A celebration is afoot!

Dec. 27: "Hooray for Failure!" originally written by Rev. Judith A. Walker-Riggs, presented by Paul Fackler

On the edge of a new year, we often take a look back to get a measure of what we have done – how far we have come. Too often, we count only our successes. But what about our failures, the things we haven't managed to do? As Rev. Judith Walker-Riggs writes, "This is a sermon about how it is perfectly all right to be incompetent for hours on end." Yes, it is okay to fail. In fact, our failures may be what we are best at.

Food/Needs Collection

The first Sunday of the month is our food pantry collection. Please bring your contribution to church with you on Sunday, December 6.





Journeying: One Minister's Thoughts

The Road Not Taken
by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

As this year proceeds, day toward day, month upon month, the truth of life not going as planned has become this autumn's theme here at LCUUC. Although most of us feel that we are simply ordinary folk going along in our ordinary ways with nothing remarkable to tell, life often has another take on this. In sudden swiftness, even on a bright, sunlit day when nothing bad should happen, it brings us news of hardship and despair, of illness and of cancer and of death. No one is spared. Not the elderly, not the young. No matter the best-laid plans, life arrives and shakes us to the core and makes us have to look it in the eyes and see all that it contains: beautiful moments and plain days and unbearable anguish.

We may think that we are choosing the paths we find ourselves upon, but it is really life that chooses the paths for us in many ways. We may believe that if we do certain things in a certain way that there are guarantees: guarantees of how things will turn out for ourselves, for our children, for our dearest friends. But life doesn't play itself out in this manner. It is mercurial, unable to be gathered up and gathered in; if you are alive in it, it will split apart at some time, in some way, someday. Be certain of that and try to be brave in the face of it – but mostly be kind to yourselves. When Life and Death meet unexpectedly and stop you in your tracks, be kind to yourselves and know that only time is the healer. When you find yourselves at a crossroads, looking as far as you can beneath the undergrowth to discern which way to take, be kind to yourselves for the choice you need to make. For your past as much as for your present, for the moments seized or allowed to slip away, for all that you have done or didn't do, be kind to yourselves. We are all on this same road called Life, so we have that in common, but it is still the road less traveled, because whatever happens, is happening uniquely to each and every one of us, sometimes for the first time. Understanding this is what unites us. Being there for each other is what makes all the difference.

Affectionately,
Jane

On Board!

Everyone's had the recent opportunity of signing up for committees or various other activities, events or working groups. Thanks to all of you for pitching in! And even though the activity fair is over, it's never too late to join in. First-time participants or old hands will find that signing up is a great way to get to know other church members as you work closely together.

One of the ongoing themes of Board discussions this year is the organization of the committees and other working groups. All Board members serve as liaison to multiple committees, and this year we've better defined that role and are adding a bit of process and structure. (More on those details in the future.) We hope to offer guidance and stimulate cross-committee sharing in ways that channel our efforts toward common church goals by consistency in our programming, in our various activities, and through the work of committees.

At the same time we'd also like to encourage autonomy and collaboration, and provide committees authority to make decisions and spend their budgets. So, in addition to the liaison role and structure work, we'll also be providing more detailed information on what committees are empowered to do. It will cover the annual budgeting process and timing, guidance on what kind of questions to raise to the Board (few), and what they should go ahead and decide on their own (most).

Submitted by Tim P



Canceling Service Policy

As winter approaches, we offer a reminder of LCUUC's Canceling Service Policy. A decision about canceling services will be made at least 2 hours before the service begins (i.e., by 8 a.m. or earlier for the 10 a.m. service). Very soon thereafter:

- 1) A closing announcement will be posted with WTMJ. There is a link to the WTMJ webpage (<http://closings.todaystmj4.com/>) on the LCUUC website at <http://www.lcuuc.org>.
- 2) A closing message will be posted on the LCUUC voicemail at 262-369-1703 ext. 600
- 3) A closing email will be sent to member_list@lcuuc.org.

December Happy Birthday Wishes to:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1 Greg S | 19 Paul T |
| 2 Bjorn L | 21 Emily D |
| 5 Erin J | 21 Jessica F |
| 6 Dian E | 23 Barb H |
| 9 Abby J | 23 Diane M |
| 10 Lawrence S | 23 Chris P |
| 12 Jessie D | 24 Wendy R |
| 16 Gerry F | 27 Leann R |
| 17 Marci B | 28 Bethany P |

(Please contact Kirsten J if your name is not included in the birthday congratulations.)



December Calendar of Events (all events at LCUUC unless otherwise noted)

Every Tuesday	Buddhist meditation	8–9:15 a.m.
Every Tuesday	SOS*	7–8:30 p.m.
Wednesday, 2	Library Committee	6:30 p.m.
Sunday, 6	Choir rehearsal Food pantry collection	8:25 a.m. During the service
Tuesday, 8	Mindfulness Meditation (see p. 6) Worship Committee	7–9 p.m. 7 p.m.
Thursday, 10	Board meeting	6:30 p.m.
Sunday, 13	Choir rehearsal	8:25 a.m.
Sunday, 20	Choir rehearsal Sing for service Holiday Bake Sale	8:25 a.m. After the service
Tuesday, 22	Mindfulness Meditation (see p. 6)	7–9 p.m.**
Sunday, 27	No choir rehearsal	

* **Secular Organizations for Sobriety**, also known as Save Our Selves, is dedicated to providing a path to sobriety, an alternative to those paths depending upon supernatural or religious beliefs. SOS respects diversity, welcomes healthy skepticism, and encourages rational thinking as well as the expression of feelings.

** If you are new to meditation and would like a brief introduction or a refresher, arrive at 6:30 p.m. , otherwise at 7:00 p.m.

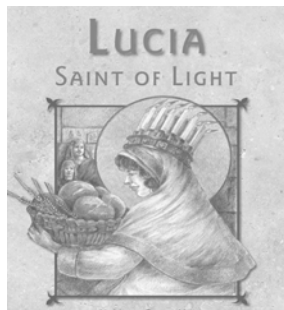
*Bio for Dec. 6 pulpit guest

Rev. Bret Myers has served as pastor, director of religious education, campus minister, lecturer of philosophy, and hospice chaplain in 24 years of clergy service. He owns a home in Hartford, WI, where he currently resides. He was ordained in the United Methodist Church, and has standing in the United Church of Christ. His last position was as interim pastor at a church that is in covenant relationship with both the UUA and the UCC. He has studied the world religions and integrated elements of many traditions within his own ministry, which he describes as progressive and pluralistic. He majored in philosophy and religious studies at the University of Indianapolis, social ethics and pastoral psychology and counseling at Boston University School of Theology, and philosophy (concentrating in ethics with an emphasis in environmental and medical ethics) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Children's RE News

Special December Happenings in Religious Education

Christmas Clearing Council ... This year, some of the children in our Religious Educations classes will be embracing the spirit of giving by sponsoring a child in need to help make their Christmas a little more special. The Christmas Clearing Council of Waukesha County is matching us with a family with three children. Our 3rd to 5th Grade, Middle School, and High School RE Classes will each sponsor one of these children. Our commitment is to spend \$60 on each child's "Wish/Need List" of gifts. Our children are all being asked to bring in \$4 that they have saved or earned through extra chores at home. We will go shopping for the gifts after the service on December 6th and will deliver the gifts to the family on December 13th. Parents who can help with the shopping, please contact Kerry Duma at dre@lcuuc.org. Thanks to all for your help in keeping a child's faith in the magic of Christmas alive.



December 13 Celebration of St. Lucia Day ... We hope your family can join us for a special Sunday on December 13th. Our minister, who has lived in Sweden, will be sharing the story of a special holiday in that country – St. Lucia Day

– with the children during the worship service. When the children leave for Religious Education, all ages will be together. They will make the traditional St. Lucia saffron buns for everyone to share during social hour, and will also be paired up, older and younger together, as they have a chance to decorate (and eat!) gingerbread cookies.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education for Grades 7-9 ... This year, LCUUC will be offering the Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education for Grades 7-9, for the first time, starting in late January through March of 2010. This excellent program is a progressive approach to sexuality education that addresses the totality of human

sexuality in an age-appropriate manner. It is based firmly on the values of self-worth, sexual health, responsibility, justice, and inclusivity.

An orientation session will be offered to members of the congregation who are interested in learning more about the program. Attendance at the orientation session is required of parents who have children interested in participating in the program. The orientation will be held on **January 10th, 2010** from noon to 2:00 p.m. at the church. Please contact Kerry Duma with any questions or if you would like to register to attend the orientation. She can be reached at the church or at dre@lcuuc.org.

Interested in a Parenting Covenant Group?

Covenant Groups exist in many Unitarian Universalist congregations as a way for people to explore their deepest understanding of life in the midst of a community of faith. In the first few meetings of a Covenant Group, members develop a covenant – a list of promises – describing the ways they commit to interact with one another.



A few years back, some of our parents of younger-aged children started a Parenting Covenant Group. They took turns hosting dinners and arranged a babysitter, so the kids could play in one area (coming and going with the adults as needed) while the adults talked. The host also chose a resource or topic to discuss. The people involved said that it was a very valuable resource – giving the parents a chance to talk about issues with like-minded parents and building community among families

There has been some talk about starting this up again. Is there interest? If so, please email Kerry Duma at dre@lcuuc.org.

Warmly in faith,
Kerry Duma

Get Involved / Things to Do



Giving Tree

The Giving Tree is now up at in the church foyer. The tree has been hung with ornaments printed with the first name, age, and desired gift for guests of

Hebron House of Hospitality and Siena House Shelters. If you would like to help make the season special for those living in shelters over the holiday, please take a tag and purchase the requested gift. Attach the tag to the new, unwrapped gift and bring it to church by **Sunday, December 13th**. Santa parked a spare sleigh in the church foyer where you may leave your gift. Donations of wrapping paper are also appreciated.

Tuesday Evening Mindfulness Meditation Gatherings in December

There *will* be meditation sessions at LCUUC in December: lay led on the 8th, and led by Dr. Paul Norton on the 22nd. Meditation is a useful stress-reliever during the holidays. We hope to see many people there who are looking for serenity in the midst of chaos. Contact Diane M with any questions.

In January, Paul will be starting an 11-week class at the church entitled Mindfulness in Everyday Life. Please see specific information about the class on the following page.

Buddhist Meditation May Change

The ongoing morning Buddhist dharma talk and meditation, currently held on Tuesdays (8 to 9:15 a.m.), may be changing to another



morning of the week, or may possibly be put on hold as of January. The last Tuesday morning meditation in December will take place on Tuesday the 22nd. Email Kathie G with any questions.

Kathie will send an email to the member_list to notify all of an eventual change.

Calling All Bake Sale Volunteers

It's not too early to think about what you might like to bake or purchase for our Bake Sale, which will take place after the service on **Sunday, December 20th**.

The more people contributing items for sale, the better! Cookies, pies, quick breads, small cakes, homemade candy, goodies of all kinds would be wonderful to see on the Bake Sale tables. This will be a great way to collect a variety of delicious desserts for your holiday celebrations if you don't do much baking yourself. They would make nice gifts also! Almost anything can be made ahead and frozen to bring on December 20th.

A good way to bring your items would be to put them on sturdy paper plates and slip them inside one-gallon plastic bags. That way people can take home numerous items with no mess. Please pre-price your items and include important information such as whether nuts are among the ingredients.

I would really appreciate having two or three people volunteer to help accept contributed items before the service, set them up, collect money for purchases after the service, offer any ideas to make this the most profitable bake sale ever.

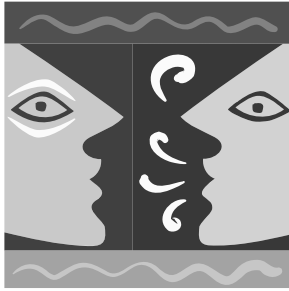
Please call Diane M or email me if you can help or have questions.

Thank you so much!

Submitted by Diane M



Get Involved / Things to Do (*continued*)



Socrates Café Up and Running Again!

Socrates Café will take place on the second Saturday of the month, starting in December (**December 12**), from 7 to 9 p.m., at Milwaukee Street Traders (523

Milwaukee St) in Delafield. The coffee house is opening its facility especially for us.

At the December gathering, we will discuss the best way to arrange for a different individual to facilitate each month.

If you're not familiar with Socrates Café, it consists of a casual, lively philosophical discussion! Bring a question (if you'd like), such as "What is courage?" or "What is enough?" Using the Socratic method, in which the meanings of the words and the underlying assumptions in the question are examined, we will perhaps not answer the question, but it will be explored from many angles. You might come to listen, you might want to participate in discussion. Either way, we hope to see you there!

Contact Barbara B with any questions.



Writing as a Spiritual Exercise

The Writing as a Spiritual Exercise class will continue in the new year. Beginning in January we would like to welcome all writers or wanna-

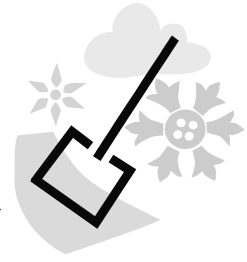
be writers to drop in on the **first and third Thursday of the month** for 2 hours of writing time, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

No need to reserve a spot or show up on a regular schedule. Just feel free to join us for a brief exercise to warm up the writing muscles and then enjoy quiet time to write in the fellowship of others.

Call Joanne N. with questions.

Interfaith Seeking Volunteers

A neighbor in your community needs a volunteer to help with snow removal this winter. Interfaith of Waukesha will match you with a senior or adult with a disability in your neighborhood who won't be safe this winter without a caring volunteer to remove snow from driveways and walkways. Adopt a home nearby, or sign up as a "snow sub" to fill in for another volunteer while they're away. Volunteer as a family, school group, congregation, business, or community group. For more information or to volunteer, visit www.interfaithwaukesha.org or contact Nancy Bell at 262-549-3348 X224 or nancyb@interfaithwaukesha.org. Thank you!



Looking into the New Year

Day-long, In-House Multigenerational Retreat

A tradition at LCUUC is to have a winter retreat – an opportunity for us to be together on a weekend to spend meaningful time learning, playing, and building community. Some years we go away for an overnight retreat. This is our year to have a day-long, in-house retreat at LCUUC. Plans for this event are just beginning. If you would like to be involved in helping to organize this event, please contact Kerry Duma at dre@lcuuc.org.

Mindfulness In Everyday Life

Winter 2010 The Intra-vaganza

Led by Paul Norton, M.D., Order of Interbeing
Eleven Mondays, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Jan 11 Beginning Mindfulness Practice

Jan 18 Sitting and Walking Meditation

Jan 25 Mindfulness of Body

Feb 1 Mindfulness of Feelings

Feb 8 Mindfulness of Thought

Feb 15 Mindfulness of the World

Feb 22 Gatha Practice/ Guided Meditation

Get Involved / Things to Do (*continued*)

Mar 1 Four Noble Truths
Mar 8 Lovingkindness
Mar 15 Compassion and Joy
Mar 22 Equanimity / Graduation

\$140 for entire course, \$15 for any individual week. Includes reading materials and two CDs of guided meditation.

To register, email milwmindful@hotmail.com, phone 414-962-8678, or mail LCUUC.

All proceeds go the Mindfulness Community of Milwaukee and LCUUC.



Building Your Own Theology Course Offering

A new adult Enrichment course, "Building Your Own Theology," will begin in February, led by Rev. Jane Esbensen.

Beginning: Wednesday, February 3, 2010

From 6 to 8 p.m.

Duration: 8 weeks

Class size: limited to 15 participants

Course book: \$16.00 per person (to be ordered in advance, so please sign up early!)

Beyond an "elevator speech," this course invites each person to write his or her spiritual odyssey and examines a structure for a liberal theological model, varieties of religious experience, human nature, ultimate reality, history, ethics, and religious meaning.

The goal for participants is:

- ◆ To determine your values and beliefs about God or ultimate reality, human nature, ethics, and the meaning and purpose of life
- ◆ To discover what other UUs believe about the great religious questions
- ◆ To articulate your beliefs in a credo statement
- ◆ To meet the challenge of building your own theology and being able to articulate who you are as a UU, for yourself.

Winter WomanSpirit 2010

Registration is now beginning for Winter WomanSpirit 2010, titled "Nurturing Ourselves – Sustaining Our World," which will be held at First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee **February 26-28, 2010**. The keynote speaker will be Starhawk, whose keynote address is titled "Earth Spirit, Earth Justice," and the excitement for this fabulous woman's conference is high!

What is all the excitement about? To name just a bit to whet your appetites, you can expect over 20 different workshops to choose from, the teen maidens will have a special talk with Starhawk, there will be an honorary tea for Margaret Fuller, entertainment will be provided during the coffeehouse, there will be drumming and dancing as well as great vendors! Don't miss your opportunity to join hundreds of women in spirituality, connection, and fun. Register early. As an added bonus, you save money when you register by January 10, 2010. Register online; don't get left in the snow as space is limited and we anticipate a full house. Go to <http://www.regonline.com/WWS2010> today!



Committees etc.

Social Action

Outreach meals

Members and friends of LCUUC now have the opportunity to serve two community meals. Three to four times a year, volunteers from LCUUC help serve the Outreach Meal sponsored by Cooperating Congregations of Waukesha County. Dave C coordinates our volunteers for this meal and informs us that CCWC has recently been renamed the Hope Center.

We have also begun to participate in a new community meal closer to home. St. Anskar's Episcopal Church, located on Hwy 83 just two and a half miles from LCUUC, has recently begun organizing a free community meal called Lake Country Bread of Life. LCUUC has committed to help purchase, prepare, and serve this meal twice a year. Our November designated collection was used for our share of groceries for this meal. Thank you to Bill L, who has taken on the task of coordinating our participation.

Coat collection

Thank you to all who donated warm winter clothing for our coat drive and helped make it a big success. We were able to donate several carloads of coats, boots, hats, and gloves to the Hope Center.

Giving Tree

The Giving Tree is now up in the church foyer. See the article on page 6 for more details.

Submitted by Patty W

Adult Enrichment

The Adult Enrichment Committee (formerly Adult RE) is up and running! The purpose of our committee is to provide the adult congregation with deliberate, thought-provoking spiritual education. Ideas for developing instruction are drawn from three sources: intentional programming throughout the year by our minister; classes/presentations led by members who would like to share their knowledge; and programs developed from suggestions made by the committee or congregation. Current offerings include Mindfulness Meditation, Spiritual Writing Group,

World Religions Group, and Deep Ecology. Planned future contributions will be Paul Norton's 11-week Meditation Instruction "Intravaganza" beginning in January and Rev. Jane Esbensen's 8-week "Building Your Own Theology" beginning in February. Socrates Café has returned, and we may be creating Covenant groups. Most of these offerings are described elsewhere in this newsletter.

We look forward to hearing YOUR thoughts and desires for adult spiritual enrichment. Please contact Joanne N with your ideas.

Silent Auction Follow-up

THANK YOU again to everyone who participated in the LCUUC 2009 Silent Auction. We raised \$5263.00 for our church, which is fantastic!

Everyone has been notified about the items they successfully bid on. We would like to "wrap up" the process of collecting payments. Please make checks payable to LCUUC and write "Silent Auction" on the memo line. The Committee will continue to have a table set up for Auction payments in the Social Hall after Sunday services. Or you may send your payment to Amy S. at her home address.

Thank you!

October 25th – Unders Win!

In a history-making match, the LCUUC Unders defeated the Overs 5-4 on a beautiful Sunday afternoon in October. It was historic because the Unders, although playing to a tie and losing in past matches, had never before beaten the Overs. The Overs squad congratulates the Unders ... although they do anticipate a more favorable outcome in a Spring re-match.



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Lake Country Unitarian Universalist Church is a religious community that encourages spiritual growth in compassion, wisdom and understanding. We draw inspiration from the principles of Unitarian Universalism, diverse religious sources, and the breadth of human experience. We seek to live in accordance with this inspiration, working for positive change in our community, country and the world.



Printed on recycled paper.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Submit all articles by the 20th of each month for inclusion in the next month's newsletter.

Mail items to: LCUUC—Newsletter,
PO Box 437,
Hartland, WI 53029-0437
Or email to : newsletter@lcuuc.org

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