

THE THRESHOLD



Towson Unitarian Universalist Church

A Welcoming Congregation

www.towsonuuc.org

Lutherville, Maryland

January 2012

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Upcoming Services

TUUC's Lay Worship Associates will present a January 2012 full of interesting and thought-provoking worship services as Reverend Clare begins her sabbatical, and we hope you'll join us.

January 1, 2012: One Service at 10:30 AM ***Earthquakes and Shifting Sands***

During times of uncertainty, when the earth is shaking beneath us, we often reach out for a sense of comfort and assurance. What happens when the faith that we reach to is grounded in uncertainty itself? Please note there will be one service only, at 10:30 AM, and no youth religious exploration classes. Michelle Collins will serve as the worship leader for this service.

January 8, 2012: Services at 9:30 and 11:15 AM

A very special TUUC music service exploring our UU roots through song, developed and presented by Joe Gascho and Joyce Duncan.

January 15, 2012: Services at 9:30 and 11:15 AM

A celebration of the work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in a service led by Francie Weeks and Scott Shane entitled "Baltimore History in Black and White", exploring the unique link between our city and the history of the American slave trade. Scott is a reporter for *The New York Times*.

January 22, 2012: Services at 9:30 and 11:15 AM

Guest speaker Paula Cole Jones, director of Racial and Social Justice for the UUA's Joseph Priestley District, will discuss TUUC's role in support of the cause of multiculturalism in our community. TUUC Lay Worship Associate Tara McIntyre will facilitate this service.

January 29, 2012: Services at 9:30 and 11:15 AM

"Oh, No, My Profession (and just about everything else) Has Changed!"

Rev. Dr. Stephan Papa, Special Assistant to the UUA President for Growth Funding

In the information he provided about his service, Rev. Dr. Stephan Papa wrote: "Thank you for affirming our common bonds and purposes by inviting me to participate in an Association Sunday service with you. There has been so much change in our society that we may wonder what the future holds for us. In my thirty-five years in our ministry, my profession has changed, and I am certain there have been changes in your church, religion, personal lives, and in your professions as well." After sharing some stories, Rev. Dr. Papa will talk about what can help us deal with change and go forward into a future we see uncertainly. Although his profession has changed, his profession of faith has not.

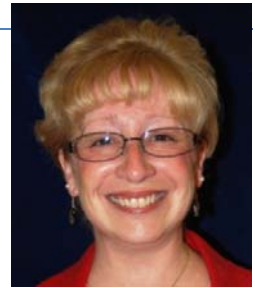
A special collection will be taken during the service, which will be used to develop the excellence of our professional ministries through providing them continuing education programs through the UUA and grants to the UU Ministers Association, the UU Musicians Network, and the Liberal Religious Educators Association. TUUC Lay Worship Associate Aynsley Hamel will facilitate this service.

We will begin the month of February with our annual Youth Group service on **February 5**, always interesting and engaging, and full of inspiration from the minds and hearts of vibrant TUUC high school students, truly the future of our liberal faith tradition.

We hope you'll join us as we begin 2012 with a sense of history, an exploration of growth, and an eye toward the future of TUUC and our place in the wider community. See you at church!

Clare's Colloquy

Rev. Clare Petersberger



In the two magical December 18th TUUC pageants, there was a smidgeon of confusion among the shepherds about their journey to seek the holy. Up the aisle and back down? Up the aisle and around to come down the center aisle?

The shepherds in the ancient story must also have had no small amount of uncertainty. It was not every night that they were visited by an angel saying "Fear, not!" and an angelic host singing of peace on earth and good will to all! In the nativity story, we are not given specific details about the shepherds' journey to Bethlehem. But in our TUUC pageant, the waving of hands of other members of the congregation and several angelic voices guided them to their destination.

I know how our shepherds felt. For the past six months, we have been preparing for me to go, not to Bethlehem, but "on sabbatical." I am grateful for your gift of time for renewal and to seek fresh perspectives on our ministry. I am grateful for your suggestions for retreat centers, on-line classes, places to travel, and even "one day to do nothing" (followed by a sermon on the experience.) I will keep you apprised of my journey through a link Al Peabody thoughtfully created on our website.

However, it is strange to open my 2012 calendar to no church related meetings or visits until June. I already miss you and find myself imagining your lives and the life of TUUC from January through May. I picture the inspiring worship services and beautiful music; the listening ear of the Lay Pastoral Associates; the launch of the new semester of religious exploration classes; the Chalice Circle sessions; the visioning TUUC leadership retreat; the fellowship of the marvelous auction events; the building of a Habitat home and the lobbying efforts for marriage equality, etc.

I try to imagine everything that you will do and discover, together, in the next five months! As Alan Kay said, "The best way to predict the future is to invent it." Your commitment to share your gifts for ministry invents the future of TUUC.

As in our TUUC pageant, you will call, and point, and gently guide one another to the promise of peace on earth, goodwill toward all.

My colleague the Rev. Tom Disrud of the First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon puts it this way:

In being a community of memory and hope, we recognize that here we are with people in all the places of life. Those who are born, those who die and all the places of life in between...

Knowing that we are interconnected, living with an awareness of how we fit into the larger scheme of things, we come to know that our own joy and our own pain are connected to the joy and the pain that moves through the world...

We need to know the signposts we can look to so that no matter what changes, we can know what remains...

Our task is to live with our hearts open, living in faith that what we need will be provided and that we will be enough. That, in the end, no matter how lost we might be, we will, finally, find our way home.

I have great faith that what you need will be provided. I have seen you shepherd, not only shepherds in a nativity pageant—but each other—to where we need to be. I am grateful that we all have TUUC to find our way home.

Youth Religious Exploration

By Sue Royer, YRE committee chair

Joyce Duncan and her family are in our thoughts and prayers as she recovers from surgery. Your cards and notes are welcome to Joyce at her home address, which is in the directory.

While Joyce is out, Wendy Werkheiser has offered to help keep the YRE program running, with the support of the YRE Committee and YRE Teachers. Wendy has been attending TUUC for 12 years and joined as a member about three years ago. Her volunteer contributions to TUUC include hospitality, teaching YRE, and as a member of the YRE Committee. Wendy is an experienced child care provider and her daughter Natalie is in the RE program. Please continue to send YRE-related emails to tuucdre@towsonuuc.org. These emails are being routed to Wendy and to Mickie Grover. Wendy will be at TUUC on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:15 AM to 2:15 PM, in addition to Sunday mornings. Wendy has recently been helping with Stories For All Ages, so her face should be familiar to you!

Wendy will be preparing the weekly parent and teacher emails, which will be sent out by the office. She will coordinate with the Worship Committee and with Joe Gascho regarding the part of the weekly service which includes the children and teachers. She will obtain supplies for teachers if given sufficient lead time.

Our program is using a semester approach to teaching this church year, where every family is asked to teach for one semester. Our Winter Semester begins in mid-January.

On Saturday, January 14 from 9 to 11:30 AM we will hold Teacher Training. All teachers for the Winter Semester are strongly encouraged to attend—to meet your fellow teachers, plan your teaching schedule, learn the logistics of sharing our classroom space with the Auburn School, and other essentials for success!

Sunday January 15 and/or Sunday January 22 are teacher overlap days in the classroom. During either or both of these Sundays, teachers from both the Fall and the Winter Semesters should be in the classroom, for continuity and transition. Effective January 29, the Fall teachers have completed their term—thank you!

Looking ahead to February, we will be assembling pans of lasagna during classes on February 12—a favorite social action for all! After class, we will need parent and other adult volunteers to take pans home to bake and then bring them back the following week.

The YRE Committee meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM, usually in classroom 6. Please join us! If you would like to get involved as a teacher, substitute, YRE greeter or to help with a social action project, please contact any member of the YRE Committee: Ginger Ashley, Joyce Duncan, Donna Fox, Annette Hottenstein, Collen Knipp, Jen Larson, Larry Magder, Sheila Malenski, Sue Royer, and Wendy Werkheiser.

Wise Gardening & Pest Management

By Leslie Mandell

Now that Winter has descended upon us, leaving the trees without their wonderful foliage, we need not worry. The TUUC grounds are airy and sparse reminding all that we are headed for the Winter Solstice and the beginning of longer days. Most of us spend much of our time inside our warm homes enjoying the seasonal holidays. As a result there is little to report regarding our grounds or gardening activities. However, there is one piece of news: construction on the bottom floor of our church

continues and as a result we advise that you be careful navigating around any impediments. Be safe and have a wonderful holiday season.

Notes



Joseph Gascho, music director



- Jan 1 - Joseph Gascho, piano
- Jan 8 - Joseph Gascho, piano and friends
- Jan 15 - TUUC Choir and Joseph Gascho, piano
- Jan 22 - Chungwon Chung, piano
- Jan 29 - TUUC Choir and Joseph Gascho, piano

I hope you all have had a great holiday break and got to sing some fun music over the last few weeks. Last week, I had a lot of fun playing with Zinnia Epps, Emma Hammer, Asher Herzog, and Hannah Reuland for the December 18th service. Thanks you all, hope we can do it again sometime. Earlier in December, the Choir and Kuperstein family helped us enjoy the rich experience of one of J.S. Bach's advent cantatas, with Nancy Hannah as soprano soloist.

If you haven't listened to one yet, please be sure to pick up a copy of the 50th Anniversary TUUC CD; it's been getting great reviews!

As Reverend Clare is headed on sabbatical, I wish her a great time, but also I look forward to working with the Worship Associates on many services over the next months. I'm also looking forward to Bald Mountain on January 14 for the Saturday Night Concert Series; make sure to be there! As always, I welcome your participation in TUUC's music program; please be in touch if you want to get involved.

Upcoming Events

Evening Book Group: Wednesday, January 4, 7:30 PM

The Evening Book Group will meet at 7:30 PM to discuss *The Tiger's Wife* by Téa Obreht. This National Book Award Finalist weaves a latticework of family legend, loss and love. A young doctor in a Balkan country, on a mission to inoculate children, confronts age-old superstitions, myths and secrets, and the mysterious circumstances of her grandfather's death. Contact Carel Hedlund (info in directory) if any questions.

"The Conversation Continues": Friday, January 13, 7:30 PM

POT LUCK at 6 PM; showing at 7:30 PM. Come join us and watch Garrison Keillor and Bill Moyers have a timely discussion. This evening will create thought provoking and stimulating discussion. Sponsored by the Tuesday "Afternoon Delighters" Chalice Circle.

Aging Together: Tuesday, January 17, 1 PM

The topic of discussion will be "Hopes and Expectations for 2012" and a brain-storming session for topics for the coming year.

Philosophy Bites: Mondays, January 16 and January 30

Philosophy Bites will meet twice in January—on Monday, January 16 and Monday, January 30. Meetings are at 7:30 PM at the home of PB facilitator Peter Talley (431 Old Trail in the Rodgers Forge community near Towson University). Watch and discuss the final two lectures from Harvard

University professor Michael Sandel's series *Justice* – an introduction to moral and political philosophy. Newcomers are welcome. Contact Peter (info in church directory) if any questions.

p.s. This lecture series is available free on-line.

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 29

5 PM Potluck

6 PM Meeting

A mid-Winter update on:
Church finances
The Auburn School
Payments made from the loan
How the Councils are doing
and more...

with TUUC's lay leaders. Please
plan to attend.

Green Sanctuary Committee: Sunday, January 15

Our next Green Sanctuary meeting will be on January 15. Contact Samantha Saalfeld if you would like to be added to the Green Sanctuary email list.

January 15 is also the day for **Fair Trade Coffee/Chocolate Sales**. The Green Sanctuary Committee works diligently to bring our community excellent quality products at a very competitive price. Our price benefits both the church and the hardworking farmers and processors who make it possible for us to enjoy them. We avoid the speculators and middlemen by buying Fair Trade products from Zeke's, Equal Exchange and other Fair Trade suppliers. Delicious coffee in ground or bean form, chai tea and wonderful chocolate bars with a variety of flavor

combinations—all are delicious and make good gifts as well.

Recycling in Baltimore County

Baltimore County's website includes a lot of useful information on recycling for residents and tips for everyone on how to use less, properly dispose of our "toss-ables" and other related and timely information for concerned citizens. You can sign up for emails to be notified of special collection events, rain barrel sales, etc., as well. Online, go

to: <http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/publicworks/recycling> to check this out.

Chalice Circles

Some participants speak of deepening relationships, some speak of expanding personal horizons, some speak of meaningful service to the wider community. What would you bring to a circle? What would you take away from it? How do you think it might change you?

Now is the time to come and find out what more and more TUUCers are experiencing. Come and join one of our circles for a little bit of fellowship, a little bit of worship and celebration, a little bit of service, a little bit of spiritual exploration, and a lot of deepening relationships and meaningful times together.

Sign-up time is coming! Chalice Circles will meet two times a month beginning in February. If you have any questions or to sign up for a circle, please visit our information table after the worship services during January or email us at chalicecircles@towsonuuc.org.

Outreach Council

Santa's Workshop at Banner Reading Club

Thanks to all for donations for the Banner Reading Club Santa's Workshop. However, special thanks go to Renegades Chalice Circle members who contributed money so that their member Mimi Marks could shop for gifts that students could give to their families. On December 14, the points students earned for attendance and good behavior were converted to "dollars." After snacks of cider, deviled eggs (a favorite food), and Christmas cookies, students "shopped" and excitedly wrapped their presents for their families.

We are also delighted to have TUUC friend Barbara Burns join the volunteers at the Banner Neighborhood Community Corporation, 2900 E. Fayette Street. For more information, contact Betty Lou Anderson (info in directory).

Help Families in Motels

We are continuing to learn from local schools of families who are living in motels, often in one room. They have a continual need for the following items: laundry soap, toothpaste and brushes, adult and children's socks and gloves, shampoo, deodorant, healthy snack food, elementary age books and craft materials. We like to include in each basket a \$10 certificate from Giant (located close to the motel) to help with food purchases. A certificate or cash can be put in a labeled envelope and put into the safe in the office. The number of families we can assist will depend on how much our congregation is able to donate.

Immigration Issues: Arrest, Detention and Deportation

Saturday, January 28, 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax
2709 Hunter Mill Rd, Oakton, VA 22124-1614

Confused about the facts on immigration? No matter where you stand on immigration, much of what you believe may be wrong and almost certainly is incomplete. Unitarian-Universalists for Social Justice presents an all day workshop on Immigration Issues. Click on these links for more information and to register for the program. [Immigration detailed flyer](#) [IMMIGRATION - 1-28 simple flyer](#)

Growing Inequality in Wealth, the Corruption of the Democratic Process and Resulting Social Injustice

Saturday, February 4, 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Mount Vernon Unitarian Church
1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria, VA 22307

The Occupy Movement has given a fresh voice to these long-standing and worsening problems and calls UUs to respond. Income inequality has produced wealthy beneficiaries who use that wealth to create political influence. The political influence of wealthy individuals is magnified by equally powerful (and closely related) corporate interests to so distort our political system that it routinely produces outcomes favoring these wealthy and corporate interests (the 1%) rather than the public interest. There is less and less available for the rest of us (the 99%), resulting in deprivation and growing social injustice, particularly among the most vulnerable. This process represents a vicious cycle that keeps expanding the inequality and the problems it causes. Click on this link [program flyer](#) for more information and to register.

Christmas Pageant

A fine time was had by all at the TUUC Christmas Pageant December 18!



January 2012 Calendar

Jan 1	Sun	Worship Service (single service)	10:30 AM
		Open Discussion Group	11:45 AM
Jan 2	Mon	Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
Jan 3	Tue	Anita Gregory Book Group	2 PM
		Rental - Handel Choir Rehearsal	6 PM – 10 PM
		Operations Team	7:30 PM
Jan 4	Wed	Improv Group	7 PM
		Evening Book Group	7:30 PM
Jan 5	Thu	Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
Jan 6	Fri	Men's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
		Caring Committee	10 AM
Jan 8	Sun	Worship Service	9:30 & 11:15 AM
		Green Sanctuary Committee	10:30 AM
		Open Discussion Group	12:30 PM
		Gallery Unicorn Reception	12:30 PM – 2 PM
Jan 9	Mon	Rental - Handel Choir Rehearsal	6 PM – 10 PM
		Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
Jan 10	Tue	Chalice Circle	12 N
		Board Meeting	7 PM
		Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
Jan 11	Wed	Improv Group	7 PM
Jan 12	Thu	Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
Jan 13	Fri	Chalice Circle Potluck & Movie Night	6 PM
Jan 14	Sat	Teacher Training	9 AM – 1 PM
		TUUC House Concert	7 PM
Jan 15	Sun	Worship Service	9:30 & 11:15 AM
		Social Action Committee	10:45 AM
		Open Discussion Group	12:30 PM
Jan 16	Mon	PFLAG Steering Committee	7 PM
		Rental - Handel Choir Rehearsal	6 PM – 10 PM
		Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
Jan 17	Tues	Aging Together	1 PM
Jan 18	Wed	Improv Group	7 PM
		Worship Program Committee	7:30 PM
Jan 19	Thu	Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
Jan 20	Fri	Men's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
Jan 21	Sat	Work Party	9 AM – 12 N
		JPD Racial Justice Workshop	10 AM – 4 PM
Jan 22	Sun	Worship Service	9:30 & 11:15 AM
		Open Discussion Group	12:30 PM
Jan 23	Mon	Rental - Handel Choir Rehearsal	6 PM – 10 PM
		Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
Jan 24	Tue	Chalice Circle	12 N
		PFLAG	7 PM
		Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
Jan 25	Wed	Women's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
		Improv Group	7 PM
Jan 26	Thu	Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
Jan 28	Sat	TUUC Organizational Structure Meeting	1 PM – 6 PM
Jan 29	Sun	Worship Service	9:30 & 11:15 AM
		Open Discussion Group	12:30 PM
		CONGREGATIONAL MEETING!	5 PM – 9 PM

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