



December 15, 2017

(Submissions appearing for the first time this week are printed in **BLUE**.)

Volume 12 Number 3

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2017

WORK PARTY

December 16 from 9 AM – 12 Noon

Winter is coming and we need to prepare

Indoors

-Cleaning

-Dusting

-Organizing

Outdoors

-Ivy Removal

-Wood Moving

-Creating Brush piles for wildlife

-Parking Lot clean up

Tasks for all skill and fitness levels!

If I get a guaranteed 5 people coming there will be HOT CIDER and doughnuts!

For questions, please contact Todd Robertson at houseandgrounds@towsonuuc.org

Open Minds...

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2017

SUNDAY SERVICE

December 17, 2017

ONE SERVICE @ 10:30 AM

Welcome, Yule!

Rev. Clare Petersberger, Joyce Duncan, Tracy Hall, the TUUC Choir, and students in our TUUC Religious Exploration Ministry.

Susan Cooper writes how, at winter solstice, people sang and danced to drive the dark away. In keeping with these old traditions of reveling with friends and family on the shortest day of the year, this morning we enjoy a single multigenerational winter solstice celebration filled with music and dance, poetry and theater. We give thanks for our community to shine the light of hope and the warmth of love as the earth pauses to tilt towards the sun again.

FAIR TRADE COFFEE AND HOLIDAY TREATS

This Sunday, December 17, the Green Sanctuary Committee brings you fair trade and organic coffee (decaf and regular), chocolate, and nuts, perfect for sharing with friends and family this holiday season! In addition to our usual offerings, we will have new coffee blends, including a light roast and a hazelnut crème flavored coffee. Your purchases support fair compensation and sustainable farming and directly fund the fair trade coffee served during Sunday coffee hour.

YOUTH RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

Children and teens in all of our classes and groups are looking forward to sharing songs, ritual dances, and skits with all of you this Sunday. Our youngest children show the steps needed for grain harvest, another group ensures a good apple harvest by wassailing the old apple tree. The middle school and teen groups will surprise us with their offerings, one ancient and one newly scripted but based on old stories. Song, dance, ritual and merriment help us carry on the tradition of sharing hope for the coming year and celebrating the light of community in the darkest days of the current year.

The YRE ministries welcomes your participation in a teaching team in the winter semester or as a substitute. Please contact Joyce tuucdre@towsonuuc.org if you have a passion for children and the continuation of our faith tradition.

YRE ATTENDANCE REPORT FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2017 11:15AM (Children/Teachers)

Nursery	K - 1 st	2 nd - 3 rd	4 th - 5 th	6 th - 7 th	7 th - 8 th (OWL)	YRUU	TOTAL CHILDREN
4	6/3	9/2	5/2	7/2	7/2	3/2	41

Goucher UU	8 PM at Goucher	(vacation)
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Loving Hearts

TUUC HOLIDAY PARTY
Multigenerational
FELLOWSHIP

CANCELLED

Potluck Dinner
Games for All Ages
Crafts for All Ages
Photo Booth
"The Pagans & the Christians" Skit
Holiday Sing-Along

Friday, December 15th, 6:30 p.m.

CLARE'S COLLOQUY

“Hope is an embrace of the unknown and the unknowable, an alternative to the certainty of both optimists and pessimists ... It’s the belief that what we do matters even though how and when it may matter, who and what it may impact, are not things you can know beforehand.” ---

-Rebecca Solnit

I was reminded of these words of Rebecca Solnit this morning. The Facebook feed had photo after photo of people who voted in the Alabama election yesterday---with their “I voted” stickers.

When some of these photos were posted---the results of the election had not been announced. All these smiling faces knew is that voting mattered and that their vote would have an impact.

The majority of the faces in the photographs belonged to women and children of color.

After the results were announced, Dan Rather wrote, “An earthquake has shook the nation...We will likely find out it was powered by women, minorities, and the young....” Rather went on to remember being a child and “following the daily desperate news reports on the momentous battles of the Second World War. There was a deep sense that the fate of the world hung in the balance and there were tides of optimism and despair. But after early defeats and dark days, the great tide swung towards freedom. There were pitched battles ahead back then, but liberty emerged victorious. There is that feeling once again tonight.”

The ancient stories of this season retell embracing the unknown and the unknowable in the belief that what we do matters---even when we don’t know how and when it may matter and who and what it may impact.

The Maccabees had no reason to be optimistic that their resistance would succeed and that they would be able to rededicate their temple; people long ago did not know about the rotation of the earth around the sun and had no reason to be optimistic that they would be able to woo back the sun; Joseph and Mary had no reason to be optimistic about bringing new life into a world in which the king was ordering the death of newborn boys; the shepherds had no reason to be optimistic that a chorus of angels was to be trusted....

In all the ancient stories of this season, hope entails embracing the unknown and the unknowable---with the faith that what we do matters---even if we don’t know how and when and to whom.

May such hope be yours.

Kai, Mary Kay, Joyce, Tracy, and Nancy join me in wishing you and yours happy and hope-filled holidays!

Helping Hands...

FEEDING THE HUNGRY



Please plan ahead! We are entering the very busy holiday season, and December has a 5th Saturday. This means that the TUUC community has pledged to donate AT LEAST 60 casseroles to feed the hungry at Our Daily Bread soup kitchen. ODB serves a HOT meal to the guests every day. Plan NOW to make, buy or donate \$10 for a casserole to be bought in your name. Sign up on the poster in the lobby. Casseroles are due by December 30.

SOCIAL ACTION

Join TUUC members for our annual Earl's Place Holiday dinner and sing-along on **Thursday, December 21, from 6 – 9 PM**. Sheila M and Jane D will make the Pot Roast, Sue R will bring homemade desserts, and Spice will lead us in a memorable sing-along. Contact Sheila M at socailaction@towsonuuc.org to join us and sign-up for a side dish and carpool.

TOWSON UU CHURCH SOCIAL ACTION HOLIDAY GIVING

You are invited to experience the joy of giving this holiday season by gifting through our community partners. Select a gift tag from the tabletop Holiday Tree in the lobby.

Return by December 17th to the church lobby. Place in the gift box on the counter or the Earl's Place bucket under clothes rack. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

ARAMINTA FREEDOM INITIATIVE

(A nonprofit member of the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force)



The holidays are quickly approaching! For many this is a joyful time, but for children and young women sexually exploited through human trafficking the season can add unnecessary stress and heartache to their lives. As you prepare with your friends and loved ones, please consider coming alongside a survivor to help make the holidays hopeful in a tangible way to meet basic needs, as well as creating opportunities for healthy and restorative relationships with their Mentors. Gift cards of \$25 or \$50 from Target and Walmart **(send directly online or bring to church)** for the purchase of personal items for survivors (and their children) served by Araminta (www.aramintafreedom.org).



Earl's Place is a recovery based housing program providing long-term (up to two years) housing and supportive services to men experiencing homelessness; seventeen men at a time.

Adopt a Resident Holiday Wish List - Please wrap the gifts and label them with the resident's name. **Return by December 17th to the church lobby**

Earl's Place Executive Director Sheila Helgerson 410-522-0225 sheila@umhousing.org
TUUC coordinator Sheila M. sheila3m83@gmail.com



Adonis is a 63-year-old male originally from Cuba. He has lived in the United States since 1980. He has five children and a sister who lives in Las Vegas. Adonis graduated from Guadenzia Treatment Program in September. He has been working on improving his computer skills and works part-time for a cleaning company.

His wish list includes:

- housewares for when he moves to his own apartment: kitchen items, dishes, utensils, glasses, bed linen
- hats and gloves
- Gift certificates and personal items such as lotion, shampoo, and razors are always appreciated

PROSPECT PLACE in Rosedale, serving 12 chronically homeless men. Holiday gift suggestions are:

- \$25.00 Walmart Gift Cards (in walking distance).
- Socks, gloves & hand warmers.

(send directly online or bring to church)

NOTICES

AMAZON SMILE!

It's the time of year when many of us go online to Amazon for holiday gifts!

Please remember that TUUC is now a member of the **Amazon Smile** program! Amazon Smile - smile.amazon.com - allows qualifying organizations like TUUC to collect 0.5% from every purchase made through the program. It is easy, it is free for you, and every time you use it, TUUC earns money! It is a great way to effortlessly donate money at no cost to you.

To join:

Go to www.smile.amazon.com (do not go to the regular Amazon website - this only works through the Amazon Smile site). If you are already an Amazon customer you will need to sign in to the Amazon Smile site; however you can use the same email address and password you use to log in to your Amazon account.

In the <Select a Charity> area, there's a box titled "Or pick your own charitable organization." Type Towson Unitarian Universalist Church and click <Search>. The next screen will show you we are a registered charity; click <Select> by TUUC's name.

The next step is crucial. Now that you have selected TUUC as your charity, you **MUST** shop through the smile.amazon.com website for TUUC to benefit. TUUC will **NOT** benefit if you use the regular Amazon site. The way to tell if you are at the correct site is to look in the upper left corner of the website. If you see the Amazon Smile logo and the words "Supporting: Towson Unitarian Universalist Church," you are in the right place. Once you have joined, you will receive a confirmation email with additional details.

Other than the logo and TUUC's name, the Amazon Smile website is identical to the regular Amazon website that you know. All your preferences, Wish Lists, addresses, etc. are here. If

you're an Amazon Prime member, you'll still get the Amazon Prime benefits; the logo at the top of your screen will read "Amazon Smile Prime."

By using this site you'll help TUUC with every purchase. Please sign up today, shop now and year-round, and help TUUC! Feel free to share this information with others who may want to help us fund TUUC's continuing mission. Thanks for helping with our fundraising efforts!

BUDDHIST BOOK GROUP

There will be a Buddhist book group starting February 20 and continuing every third Tuesday until the end of 2018 (Feb 20, March 20, April 17, May 15, June 19, July 17, August 21, Sept 18, Oct 16, Nov 20, Dec 18). We will read *Awakening the Buddha Within*, by Lama Surya Das on a rotational leadership basis until the book is completed - a chapter a month. Everyone should have a copy of the book (used copies are available). **We will meet 7:30 – 9 PM.** Limited to a maximum of 14 and a minimum of 8. No prior knowledge of Buddhism is required or necessary. The group will be coordinated by Art Starr, contact information in the directory.

GALLERY UNICORN

What? NO ART! Blank Walls? The sanctuary walls could be blank starting next June. After what will be eight years in June 2018, Emily will be resigning as curator for Gallery Unicorn. She has been actively searching for a person or persons to take on this role so that Gallery Unicorn can continue to exhibit a variety of awesome artistic works for the benefit of all. Gallery Unicorn is also a fundraiser as 25% of all sales go the church. This is a pro bono position and we invite all interested persons to contact the church office where they can also find a job description.

Calling All Member Artists

Gallery Unicorn will begin the New Year with our annual **Members Art Exhibition**. So pull out that artwork and share your creative side with our congregation who look forward to this annual event. The Members show will be hung on Monday, January 8, 2018 and the exhibition will remain through February 25, 2018. Please contact Emily Tarsell (her number is in the directory) to let her know that you would like to participate. All wall art is welcome and we may be able to also accommodate a few sculptural pieces.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSURE INFORMATION

In the event that severe weather or other emergencies compromise the safe use of TUUC facilities or property the church may cancel events or close to all activities. If the weather or the condition of the roads cause you to wonder whether we are proceeding with our programming as scheduled, please check for cancellations before you head out.

- The Church Office and facilities are closed 9-5 on weekdays if Baltimore County Public Schools are closed.

Additional closure or cancellation information can be found in the following places:

- Outgoing Church Office Voicemail: (410) 825-6045

- <http://www.wbaltv.com/weather/closings>
- TUUC Website: <http://towsonuuc.org/>

- Church Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/51782871068/>
- TUUC Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/TowsonUnitarianUniversalistChurch/>
- TUUC Bulletin board/listserv: Register at <http://towsonuuc.org/index.php/ct-menu-item-33/ct-menu-item-45>

When the facility is closed, no one is permitted on church grounds without the express permission of the Chairperson of the House and Grounds Council (houseandgrounds@towsonuuc.org)

We will do our utmost to update these sources as early and as quickly as possible. Please check multiple sources and use your best judgement.

Event/activity/meeting leaders may choose to cancel events, activities or meetings even when the facility is not closed. For possible cancellations of a specific meeting or event please contact your event leader.

Event/activity/meeting leaders (Committee Chairs, Committee or Meeting Organizers, Board Members, and Staff, Etc.), it is your responsibility to notify your event, activity or meeting participants if you choose to cancel a session. Please also notify the Church Administrator (churchoffice@towsonuuc.org) and the Chairperson of the House and Grounds Council (Houseandgrounds@towsonuuc.org) if you do. It may affect our plans for snow removal.

Please use your best judgement and be safe!

MEMBERSHIP RESOURCE

A new Membership Handbook is available to all members. It is an excellent resource for members new and old. Please click on the link below to view this current and informative document. <http://towsonuuc.org/images/docsMisc/MembershipHandbook.pdf> .

MUSIC NEWS

TUUC will present a **Spring Musical again this year, on April 13 & 14 of 2018**. Auditions will be held in January, so be thinking about what song you might want to present! (Singing, reading, and a little dancing). All ages welcome. Rehearsals will start in February. Our Director is Sharen Camille (who has a phenomenal resume in musical theater), and Tracy Hall will be Musical Director and overall producer. The name of the show will be released soon!

Sunday, December 17 is a one-service Sunday (10:30 AM), and there will be a special Solstice service that includes all manner of singing, dancing, poetry, and theatrics! Included will be children from the various RE classes, the TUUC Choir, and two new TUUC vocal ensembles. Please join us for this very special Sunday. Thanks, Tracy

SEND US YOUR TUUC PHOTOS!

During this holiday season, we encourage everyone to take pictures of TUUC and TUUCers! Email us a couple of your best shots, and say in the email what/who it shows and approximately, when it was taken. Send to: churchoffice@towsonuuc.org and scott.shane@nytimes.com . Thanks!

USHER ATTENDANCE REPORT FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2017

Date	Time	Adults	Choir	Lounge	Total	Visitors Total
12/10/2017	9:30 am	20	2	3	25	↓
12/10/2017	11:15 am	81	0	7	88	6

ONGOING & UPCOMING

SINGLES FELLOWSHIP GROUP POTLUCK, Sunday, December 17 at 6 PM

Join the Singles Fellowship Group for a potluck with good food and conversation at one of our homes. We offer an atmosphere for fellowship and friendship among TUUC single adults. Please call Ronald Rowley (listed in the church directory) to RSVP and to get more information.

ETHNIC LUNCH – Wednesday, December 20 @ 12:30 PM

Join us to try the best of local ethnic food at 12:30 PM on Wednesday, December 20, at Silk Road (Uzbeki), 1004 Reisterstown Rd., Pikesville, MD 21208 (410 205 7717). All are welcome; however, sign ups to ethniclunch@towsonuuc.org by Friday, December 15.

Our group is now putting together a 2018 calendar of lunches so please send your suggestions for ethnic restaurants that serve lunch to ethniclunch@towsonuuc.org as well.

SOLSTICE RITUAL AT FIRST CHURCH – Thursday, December 21 @ 7 PM

You are invited to a winter solstice ritual, featuring the Baltimore Men's Chorus, at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Baltimore (Franklin and Charles), at 7 PM on December 21.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES – Sunday, December 24 @ 10:30 AM, 5:30 PM, 7:30 PM

10:30 AM *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* Rev. Clare Petersberger, Tracy Hall

This Christmas Eve morning we celebrate how Unitarians imagined/re-imagined the ancient story of Christmas in stories, poems, and song. How do their interpretations speak to our own understanding of this ancient story in 2017? **We will be offering nursery care for the 10:30 AM Christmas Eve service.** Although there will be no nursery care for the evening Christmas Eve services, we hope families will attend. For the message of Christmas Eve is about the birth of divinity in every child.

5:30 PM *December Spirits* Rev. Clare Petersberger, Joyce Duncan

In our Family Christmas Eve Candlelight service we honor the importance of light to so many December holidays and think about the origins of feelings we associate with our "inner light," --- hope, love, and peace.

7:30 PM *To My Heart There Came a Whisper* Rev. Clare Petersberger, Tracy Hall, The TUUC Choir

Shepherds are an important part of the ancient nativity story. Yet you rarely hear someone say, "I hope I get cast as a shepherd in the Christmas pageant." Perhaps this has something to do with how shepherds were originally viewed. Tonight, we look at the role of shepherds in the ancient nativity story and how their role has been reimagined and become more hopeful and hope-filled over the centuries.

EVENING BOOK GROUP – Wednesday, January 3 @ 7:30 PM

We will meet downstairs to discuss *Tortilla Curtain* by T.C. Boyle (372 pages). Set in California, this novel is about middle-class values, illegal immigration, xenophobia, poverty, and environmental destruction. Although written over 20 years ago, its themes are relevant to today. (The book for February 7th is *The Sandcastle Girls* by Chris Bohjalian (320 pages)). If questions, please contact Carel Hedlund (info in directory).

TUUC values the internet privacy of our members, so we do not publish emails or telephone numbers in our newsletter. If you are a member, please consult the online Fellowship One program for those details about a member, or contact the office during weekly hours to obtain the necessary number or email. Thank you for understanding our efforts to safeguard your information.