



The Steel Chalice

December, 2016

Welcome to UUYO's Emailed Newsletter

We are saving money, time, and trees by shifting to an emailed newsletter -- easily read on computers, tablets and phones. We no longer mail a paper newsletter, except to those who request it.

You can also access a version that is more easily read when printed out.

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December Worship Theme: "Presence"

The spiritual idea of presence can mean two radically different things. On the one hand, contemplatives talk of “being present.” Presence from this perspective is all about awareness and remembering to “live in the moment.” On the other hand, theologians tend to come at presence from the perspective of “otherness.” Their concern is not just that we pay attention to the present moment, but that we notice a transcendent Presence that is woven through all moments. Which of these two ideas fits for you? Maybe both? During December, we'll explore what presence in our church community means to us.

Sunday, December 4: "Difference and Presence"

Differences can cause fear, inspire curiosity, or bring delight. When do differences open the way to a pleasant surprise? How do we interact with difference such that bridges are built? Let's reflect on the presence of Unitarian Universalists in the world and how we interact with difference. All are welcome.

Speaker: Davita Fitzgerald

Worship Associate: Gina Vance

Musician: Marcellene Hawk Mayhall

Sunday, December 11: "Being Present in a Chaotic World"

We live in an increasingly uncertain and chaotic world. The holidays find many of us amped up and frenetic, as we deal with numerous family and professional obligations. How do we weather the storm? We'll explore some ideas and techniques for finding personal presence in these times.

Worship Leader: Rev. Matt Alspaugh

Worship Associate: Gina DeAngelo

Musician: Nanette Kaplan Solomon

Sunday, December 18: "The Gift of Presence"

Christmas can be a hectic time filled with a To Do list worthy of a full-time job. Reflecting on material from Unplug the Christmas Machine by Jo Robinson and Jean Coppock Staeheli, we will explore the current state of Christmas commercialism and expectations, as well as reflecting on Christmases past. We will explore ways to make Christmas about the "Presence" more than the "Presents."

Worship Leaders: Becky Ann Harker and Molly Toth

Musician: Marcellene Hawk Mayhall and Tom Smotzer

Saturday, December 24 at 5pm: "Christmas Eve Service"

We celebrate Christmas with a multigenerational Candlelight Service, full of readings and carols, and will

include a Youngstown Christmas pageant, a visit by St. Nick, and lighting the tree.

Families are especially welcome - we start at 5 pm.

Worship Leaders: Rev. Matt Alspaugh and Sarah Lown

Worship Associates: Molly Toth and Andy Crabb

Musician: Nanette Kaplan Solomon

Singers: Tim Raridon and Devon Cleland

Sunday, December 25: "Christmas Day Meditations"

Our Christmas Day service offers time to be in the presence of each other, enjoying selections from Olivier Messiaen's wonderful mid-century piece "Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus" ("Twenty Contemplations on the Infant Jesus") played by Marcellene Hawk, interspersed with readings and silence. There will be no Religious Education classes, including Nursery.

Worship Leader: Rev. Matt Alspaugh

Musician: Marcellene Hawk Mayhall



Bits from the Board

Happy Holidays! As we encounter the joys, frustrations, and excitements of the season, UUYO is preparing for its 125th anniversary year in 2017. We have many things in the works. More details will be available as the plans gel throughout the coming months. Members and the community are invited to participate so if there is something you would like to see happen, please see any Board member, Matt, or Heather to share your thoughts on what you would like to help implement over the coming year.

We look forward in particular to bringing Matt back to full time status. In 2016 he has worked $\frac{3}{4}$ time which eased our budget demands a bit and gave him additional

personal time. In 2017, we want to get back to operating at full steam and need Matt at 100% for the whole year to make everything happen, in particular to embrace the welcoming and participation of new members at UUYO as we emphasize our unique perspective on faith and community in the Mahoning Valley.

Our Stewardship program is moving forward but has been hindered by my inability to devote enough time to energize it the way we have in past years. I hope you will each help by being responsive and receptive to the efforts the Stewardship Team puts forth in the month of December. We want to communicate the excitement of the coming year for UUYO and get 2017 started with a solid commitment to making our goals and objectives happen in a way that honors our history in the community and builds a solid foundation for future generations to continue to find UUYO as we serve a unique role in the community.

Andy Crabb
Board President



Matt's Musings

It is three weeks after the election. Our congregation seems somehow changed. Unitarian Universalism seems somehow changed. Yet we have not changed, instead, we now live in a changed world. Those changes have made us clearer about who we are, what we're doing, what we value. This clarity is apparent to me as I've talked to many of you in recent weeks, and as I talk with colleagues in our UU movement.

As Unitarian Universalists, we have always had strong religious values, strands of which trace back to and are woven into those high-minded founding values of this nation. We celebrate and protect those values, even as we remind ourselves that some of the nation's other founding values, around slavery and racism, for example, are immoral, even evil.

Our values have caused us to work tirelessly over the years against oppression and evil in its many forms. We've worked for abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, rights of Native Americans, peace, resisting Nazi violence, civil rights, justice reform, the environmental movement, immigration reform, marriage equality, and the Black Lives Movement.

We are, more than ever, a beacon for progressive religion in the valley. We are a light of hope and prophetic promise for all who dream about a better world. This broad bright beam of our expansive religious faith shines a way for everyone who finds our values speak to them - among them:

- Every person counts - as we defend the inherent worth and dignity of all people.
- The world counts - as we defend the earth and the web of life we share.
- That democracy counts - as we defend the right of conscience and the democratic process.
- That reason counts - as we defend the free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

But we are also a religious community, coming together on matters of spirit, faith, and trust. We, and our children,

come together because we realize that spiritual growth is best accomplished in the presence and companionship of others.

In times like these, it is even more critical to fortify this beacon of progressive religion and let its light shine.

Among the many ways we do this, a most critical one, is through our regular contributions of money to support the work of the church. This is our stewardship season, in which everyone who cares about the church is encouraged to make a pledge -- a promise of regular financial gifts for the next year. We realize that not everyone can make such a pledge, but if everyone who can give will give, and give generously, we will be stronger, more able to support each other, and better able to live our values in the coming years.

As a beacon, our church is like a lighthouse that provides guidance to ships on stormy seas. We are those ships.

Author and poet Clarissa Pinkola Estes writes:

“I grew up on the Great Lakes and recognize a seaworthy vessel when I see one. Regarding awakened souls, there have never been more able vessels in the waters than there are right now across the world. And they are fully

provisioned and able to signal one another as never before in the history of humankind....

One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. ... To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these - to be fierce and to show mercy toward others; both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity....

When a great ship is in harbor and moored, it is safe, there can be no doubt. But that is not what great ships are built for.”

See you in church!

Matt



Reflections

Merry December!

A reminder to our Coming of Age youth- we will have our monthly meeting during church on Sunday, December 4. Also, save the date for Saturday, January 7, as this is the scheduled date for the next UUYOuth lock-in. There will be Coming of Age programming for the high school youth, as well as general lock-in for the Junior High youth- grades 6 and up.

Christmas falls on a Sunday this year. Due to expected low attendance, there will be **NO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES (including Nursery) ON**

CHRISTMAS, though there will be lots of music in the Sanctuary that morning for all to enjoy. We will have our annual Christmas Eve candlelight service, complete with a no-rehearsal pageant crafted by our own Sarah Lown. This is a multi-generational service and families are encouraged to attend. There are plenty of opportunities for child (and adult) participation, as well as some singing of carols and cookies to follow. There will not be Nursery care that evening.

I have led a couple of workshops in November (both in and out of church) on the topic of Unplugging the Christmas Machine. I will be co-leading a worship on that topic with Molly Toth on December 18. As this newsletter comes out at the beginning of December, I wish for you a happy and stress-free holiday season. Do only the things you enjoy. Simplify as you can! In that spirit, may you have a relaxing, presence-filled Christmas.

--BeckyAnn Harker, Director of Religious Education

Thank UUs

We extend THANKS to: Jim Rak for mowing and concrete repair to the sidewalk and steps; Becky Harker, Josh Yohman, and Michaella Moore for volunteering at the CQE Clinic November 5; and Kadey Kimpel for organizing and putting in many hours of work that resulted in the impressive landscaping at UUYO.

Forum: "We've been here before!"

The election and presidency from a historical context.

Sunday December 4 and 11, 9:30am - 10:45am

Channing Hall

For the month of December, we will have two workshops and discussions before worship. These are open to everyone.

December 4 - Part I

A discussion of the presidential election and upcoming presidency using the lense of American history. Led by UUYO member **Dr. Diane Barnes**, professor of history at

YSU, who focuses on 19th century history, slavery and abolition. First of two discussions.

December 11 - Part II

A discussion of the presidential election and upcoming presidency using the lense of American history. Led by UUYO members **Dr. Lowell Satre** and **Dr. Martin Berger**, emerita professors of history at YSU, who focused on European history.

Coffee with the Minister

I'm holding "office hours" in our local coffee shop, Cultivate Café at 901 Elm St, a couple blocks south of the church most Tuesdays in December. I will be there December 6, 13, and 27, 11am-1pm. Drop on by, have a cup of coffee or a snack, and chat!

Rev. Matt

December Events

12/3/16 CQE Clinic (CH) 10am-2pm, 8:30am volunteer training
12/4/16 Forum (CH) 9:30am
12/4/16 Connection Circles
12/4/16 Frack Free 6pm
12/6/16 Coffee with the Minister 11am-1pm at Cultivate Cafe
12/6/16 Writing as Spiritual Practice (BR) 7-8:30pm
12/6/16 Stretch & Creative Movement (CH) 5:30pm
12/6/16 AA (CC) 7:30pm
12/8/16 the Salon (CH) 6-9pm
12/9/16 Meditation Group (SL) 6pm
12/10/16 Women's Alliance 12:30pm
12/11/16 Forum (CH) 9:30am
12/11/16 Judy Stone Memorial Service (SA) 2pm
12/11/16 Frack Free 6pm
12/13/16 Coffee with the Minister 11am-1pm at Cultivate Cafe
12/13/16 Stretch & Creative Movement (CH) 5:30pm
12/13/16 AA (CC) 7:30pm
12/14/16 Board Meeting (BR) 6pm
12/16/16 Where Science and Spirituality Meet (SL) 7-9pm

12/18/16 Forum (CH) 9:30am
12/18/16 Cookie Walk (CH) 12:15pm
12/18/16 Frack Free 6pm
12/20/16 Stretch & Creative Movement (CH) 5:30pm
12/20/16 AA (CC) 7:30pm
12/21/16 Spiritual Explorations (SL) 7pm
12/25/16 Forum (CH) 9:30am
12/25/16 Frack Free 6pm
12/27/16 Coffee with the Minister 11am-1pm at Cultivate Cafe
12/27/16 Stretch & Creative Movement (CH) 5:30pm
12/27/16 AA (CC) 7:30pm

CQE Clinic

Saturday, December 3, 10am-2pm

On Saturday, December 3, UUYO will hold a clinic to help people who have returned to society from prison to improve their opportunities for employment. We will help them complete the legal paperwork for a Certificate of Qualification of Employment, which will allow them to work in many fields for which they would otherwise be

prohibited. Volunteers will be trained beginning at 8:30am the same day.

Contact Gary Davenport - gdavenport@uuyo.org

Yet Another Tweak for Connection Circles

Sunday, December 4th at 12:15

With the goal of continuing a program that is useful and meaningful to many people, but hasn't yet found the best logistics in which to develop, we will modify the way that Connection Circles are offered.

Those who wish to engage with the discussion questions related to our worship theme are invited to **gather in Schweitzer Lounge at 12:15 on Dec 4**. We will meet for no more than 30 minutes for reflection and sharing.

This is a way for us to go deeper in our explorations, as we get to know each other through meaningful discussion. Our theme for December is "Presence."

Karen Lapidus, Membership Coordinator

Writing as Spiritual Practice

Tuesday December 6, 7-8:30pm, Board Room

We'll reflect on the December worship theme, "Presence." We will then have a time to "free write" individually, with the option of sharing our reflections. All are invited, regardless of writing experience. Bring a pen and notebook and a willingness to explore. Led by Liz Hill, liz@lizhill.net, [330-333-1619](tel:330-333-1619).

Women's Alliance Meeting

Saturday, December 10, 12:30pm

The next Women's Alliance meeting will be held on December 10, 2016 at the Das Dutch Haus Restaurant, 14895 South Ave., Columbiana, OH 44408, at 12:30 P.M. The best way to get there is to take I-680 south to Western Reserve Rd. (last free exit or else you will wind up on the Turnpike). Make a left onto Western Reserve then an immediate right after going over I-680 (Rt. 164 South). Stay on Rt. 164 (cross Market St. [Rt.7]) until just before the Rt. 14 intersection in Columbiana. The

restaurant is on the left just past a car dealership. Call Eugenia for info at (330) 503-4039 or (330) 953-3086. Main order of business will be the cookie walk. All are welcome. Come out and order basic and simple home-style cooking.

Spiritual Explorations

Wednesday, December 21, 7-9 PM

Spiritual Explorations – Wednesday, December 21 – 7-9pm

Spiritual Explorations is a small group ministry program that helps people go deeper than the Sunday morning church experience. We use the monthly theme as a starting point for discussion. For December, the theme is “What does it mean to be a community of presence?”

I encourage you to read [the month's packet, which is online, here.](#)

The group will include discussion, reflection, and meditation, and will be facilitated by Rev. Matt Alspaugh.

Book Club

The UUYO Book Group will not meet in December, but will gather in the New Year on Wednesday, January 18, 2017 at the home of Melissa Smith to discuss *Early Autumn*, the 1927 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel of Louis Bromfield .



Hospitality Teams Schedule

Our hospitality teams do so much to make Sunday morning come together: Greet, welcome, provide coffee and treats at coffee hour. If you are interested in joining a hospitality team, please contact Linda Mohn (lmohn2005@yahoo.com). Please be sure and thank the folks on this month's teams!

Team 2: December 4, and 11

- *Anita Wesler - Communicator*
- *Ralph Malmer – Facilitator*
- *Marcia Malmer – Facilitator*
- Millie Brewer
- Lynn Coleman
- Kate Fitzgerald
- Margaret Haushalter
- Cathy Kajut
- Gerard Kelly
- Kadey Kimpel
- Alison & Jon Locketti
- Sarah Lown
- Patricia Natali Dunbar
- Trudee Weatherby

Team 3: December 18 and 25

- *Linda Mohn - Communicator*
- *Diana Shaheen - Facilitator*
- *Susie Beiersdorfer - Facilitator*
- Audra & Jason Carlson
- Karen Lapidus
- Sarah Lowry

- Dianna Mason
- Marcellene Hawk Mayhall
- Susan Miracle
- Diana Palardy
- Wendy & Andy Pfrenger
- Gene Pusateri
- Davin Stilson
- Mary June Tartan

Equal Exchange for the Holidays

It is the time of year for visiting and parties, so it is time to stock up on Fair Trade items from Equal Exchange! In this crazy consumer world, and at this crazy time when the people who are already struggling are targeted for even more punishment or exploitation, we can do a few good things in return.

Equal Exchange is a remarkable cooperative which deals fairly with small farmers, mostly in equatorial latitudes, who produce the products that we in the northern climates love: coffee, tea, and chocolate. The big, industrial conglomerates fight to obtain these commodities at the lowest prices possible. And many Americans fall prey to

the desire for cheap goods. Cheap is no bargain if it means that small farmers in faraway lands are squeezed by big, faceless buyers. The fair trade concepts grew out of a commitment to treat growers fairly, offering prices and financial assistance so that such small farmers could work their lands, grow crops, and make a living to support themselves and their families in a decent fashion.

UUYO has been participating in Equal Exchange for over 12 years! We serve fair trade coffee at our events, and we market products for your own use, or for gifts (!). So, this season it is time to stock up on gift packages. Your purchases work wonders in many ways: the products are excellent quality, the church gets a small amount from each sale, a contribution goes to the social service work of our denominational organization UUSC, and small farmers around the globe earn a decent living. You can do all of the above by visiting the Equal Exchange coffee cart on Sunday mornings. See you soon!

Share the Plate

We will share our loose plate offering with the Richard Brown United Methodist Church's Food Pantry in

December. This is the same organization that received the bounty we collected during the November 20 service. They call their food pantry "the Food Shelf" and service 60 to 70 families per month. They usually pack 72 orders for distribution. The distribution is on the last Wednesday of each month. They try to keep the distribution in the neighborhood. They don't turn anybody away but they try to direct people who visit from other parts of town to services closer to their own neighborhoods.

Lit Youngstown Book Launch

Lit Youngstown, a local literary nonprofit that involves several members of UUYO, is celebrating the launch of its first book, [Phenomenal Women: Twelve Youngstown Stories](#), on Tuesday December 13, 2016, 6:30 pm, at First Presbyterian Church, 201 Wick Avenue Youngstown. UUYO member Davita Fitzgerald will be one of the readers in a staged reading from the book. Liz Hill was coordinator of this project, and Molly Toth was one of the editors. Questions or if you plan to attend contact Liz Hill 330-333-1619, liz@lizhill.net.

Messages from the Care Team

Joan Bushey continues to welcome visitors. If you wish to visit Joan in in-home Hospice Care, please call in advance to arrange a time.

There will be a Memorial Service for **Judy Stone** at UUYO December 11th at 2pm.

There will be a Memorial Service for **Jack Brizzi** at UUYO January 14 at 2pm.

Care Team Help and Pastoral Care

Care Team

UUYO's care team is available for short-term assistance. This could include transportation, visits, cards, phone calls or casseroles in time of need. For more information or assistance, please contact Jeanne Tucker at (330.652.0308).

Pastoral Care

If you have a pastoral care need, or know of someone in

our congregation who might have a need, please contact Rev. Matt Alspaugh (minister@uuyo.org) or the church office (office@uuyo.org, 330-746-3067)

Reading *Ulysses*

Calling all readers! Have you ever wanted to read James Joyce's classic book, *Ulysses*? Have you ever started the book and given up? Did you read *Ulysses* when you were much younger, before you had any real life experience?

A few of us are going to start reading *Ulysses* in 2017. We'll set up assignments of short segments at a time, and discussion dates as we go along. Call or e-mail Ellen Satre to join in this James Joyce adventure. [330-743-2748](tel:330-743-2748) or lesatre@gmail.com.

Stuff to Know

Church Calendar

The most up-to-date version of the church calendar is on the website. [You can view it here.](#)

Please contact the office (office@uuyo.org, 330-746-3067) if you wish to list a church event on the calendar.

Staff

Matt Alspaugh, Minister minister@uuyo.org

BeckyAnn Harker, Director of Religious Education
dre@uuyo.org

Heather Best, Office Administrator office@uuyo.org

Leaders

Members of the Board of Trustees

Andy Crabb, President

Louisa Berger, Secretary

Gary Davenport, Treasurer

Tom Beck

Gerard Kelly

Sarah Lowry

Ralph Malmer

Linda Mohn

Committee Chairpersons

Martin Berger, Building and Grounds

Jeanne Tucker, Caring

Lowell Satre, Endowment

Ralph Malmer, Green Sanctuary

Linda Mohn & Carole McWilson, Hospitality

Diane Barnes, Nominating

Jan Grigsby, Welcoming Congregation

Eugenia Pierce, Women's Alliance

Sarah Lown, Worship Associates Coordinator

Mission Statement

Our Mission is to build a diverse and transformative spiritual community, help people live lives of wholeness, and promote justice, peace, and religious freedom.

[Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes](#)

Office Hours

Tuesday and Friday, 9am-3:30pm

Sunday, 9-11am and 12:30-4:30pm