

# OUR CHURCH LIFE

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Hill Country Newsletter  
January 2017

## Service to Others Strong Theme for Church in 2016 as well as 2017

The Unitarian Universalist Church of the Hill Country amply serviced the community in 2016 and the plans for 2017 show little abatement. Led by Outreach/Social Justice Committee Chair, Karen Burkett, below are **some of the many accomplishments** reached and programs planned.

### La Casa de Raices (Refugee And Immigrant Center for Education and legal Services)

Spearheaded by Ellen Jackson, the Church prepared a record breaking 39 backpacks to assist refugees as they as they left for final destinations somewhere in the United States in April, 2016. These refugees are primarily young mothers and their small children who are escaping violence in their Central American countries. The numbers of refugees have surged recently due to the perceived threat and uncertainty following the election of Donald Trump.

Then **Backpack/Undie Sunday** gathered much-needed undergarments for between 300 and 800 families per month, followed by a Baby Shower in early November for the youngest refugees.

Church members and friends volunteered hundreds of hours to assist in Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners, organizing efforts, cleaning/housekeeping and plumbing and electrical expertise/services.

To cap off the year, a special Holiday Tree was assembled to focus on the purchasing of small stuffed animals or donating cash to the children of La Casa de Raices.

The Church recently received the following heartfelt note of thanks from Sister Mary Grace who helps to oversee La Casa.

*Let me add my thanks for your support of the mothers and children who arrive in San Antonio with no one to look to for support except us. Your generosity in thinking of these families from clothing to time to toiletries and back pack snacks to money makes a huge difference in the new lives they are beginning here. I love you all so dearly!*

### “Donate the Plate” 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Program

This Church program was reestablished in July, 2016. **On the fifth Sunday of every month with a fifth Sunday**, all moneys in the collection plate not designated for the church are donated to a worthy non-profit organization.

In 2016, much-appreciated donations were raised for PFLAG (July) and Hill Country Cares (October).

Since there are five Sundays in January, CAM (Christian Assistance Ministry) has been selected to be the recipient of this important program on January 29.

### CAM Donation Program

On the second and fourth Sundays of every month, this program focuses on gathering items to service the neediest in our community through CAM (Christian Assistance Ministry). On the second Sunday, the collection focuses on canned, boxed or bagged non-perishable food items and on the fourth Sunday, the collection is devoted to personal products; shampoos, soaps, facial tissues, etc.

These items are amassed in specially marked boxes at the back of the church and delivered to help fill the pantries at CAM.

In addition to this, Reverend Ja has donated her time during special distribution days.

**In 2016, the donations of items totaled over 397 items equaling over 280 pounds and \$570 in value, thus exceeding the goal of 320 items valued at \$500!**



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Check out our Facebook page

## FROM YOUR MINISTER...

### Greetings!

There is a tradition of taking pieces of paper on New Year's Eve, writing down the unwanted habits, thoughts or patterns in our lives that are holding us back from becoming the person we would like to be. The scraps of paper are placed in a bowl and the paper is started on fire. As the papers begin to smoke, the rising smoke which quickly dissipates takes the unwanted conditions from our lives and opens up room for new conditions to enter our lives. Wouldn't it be wonderful if life were that simple? Every time we had an undesirable thought we could just write it down and start the paper on fire and voila it would be gone. Life is not that simple. Unwanted conditions in our lives are things that we must work on so that we can change them.

I have a different way of clearing out the old and making room for the new. It is called gratitude. I have a charm that I wear on my necklace that says gratitude in ten different languages and it reminds me daily to remember all of the things that I am grateful for. If I can continue to remember what is good in life I leave little room for the bad.

Thinking about the bad things that have happened or that you have done in your lifetime is a trick your ego likes to play on you. Your ego likes to tell you about all of the bad things so that you find ways to stroke it and make it feel better. Your ego is the little voice in your head that tells you that you are gaining weight when you look in the mirror or tries to tell you that your mind is starting to slip when you forget something. These are not true things; they are just your ego trying to get you to feed it.

Don't do it. Yes, we all have things in our lives that we wish we would not have done but the key word is done. Done as in has happened, is over, move on. This is where the burning bowl ritual comes in. You do not have to burn a piece of paper to get these things out of your head, you just have to replace them with something else and this is where gratitude comes in. Be thankful for what you have, who you are, what you have accomplished in your life. Fill your mind with gratitude for little things like the home you live in, the food you eat, your health, friends and family.

Continue to be grateful and watch the problems of the past slip away during the new year. Put your ego away for a minute, think back on your life with gratitude, I am pretty sure it will make you smile.

Happy New Year,

*Reverend Ja*



### January Chalice Table Décor

Thank you to the following members  
decorating the chalice table  
on these Sundays:

**1 - Mike & Karen Burkett**  
**8 - Julie Davis & Troy Fannin**  
**15 - Ann & Steve Galland**  
**22 - Bill & Selma Gibson**  
**29 - Shari Gore**

For more information about Chalice Table  
décor, please contact Shari Gore 830.367-3142.

### UUSC "Guest at Your Table" Program Sunday, January 15 - Monday, Feb. 13

This program's worldwide humanitarian efforts will be acknowledged and shared during the kickoff on Sunday, January 15. This year's theme is "Combating Hate". After the church Pot Luck, Ken Burns video documentary, "Defying the Nazis; The Sharps' War" will be featured. The Sharps, a UU Minister and his wife, are introduced in the film by several UU Association leaders as their work led to the formation of the UU Service Committee.

In the past our church has supported this program very generously. All donations over \$125 are doubled by the Long Island Shelter Rock Church.

The film is 80 min long and there will be a short time for discussion afterward.

### Life Span Learning Continues with 6-week Series on Judaism

The Video/Discussion Series of World Religions will continue beginning on **Monday, January 9** by exploring Judaism. The series will be held from 1-3pm on six consecutive Mondays in the Palmer Annex and Laurie Pesez will be the facilitator.

For more information, please call Laurie  
(830.895-4764).

## January 2017 Unitarian Universalist Church of the Hill Country Calendar

Updates & Revisions to this calendar may be found on the Weekly Calendar Update which is emailed on Thursdays.

| Sunday   | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday  | Friday  | Saturday   |
|--|---|-----------|--|---|---|--|
| <b>1</b><br><b>New Year's Day</b>  | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>   | <b>5</b>  | <b>6</b>                                      | <b>7</b>   |
| <p><b>Service: Mike Burkett, Church Member to speak; "Looking Back, Looking Forward".</b></p>  | <p>PFLAG Meeting: 7pm-8:30pm - The Unity Church, (corner Tivy &amp; Jefferson Streets). For more information about PFLAG, contact Reverend Ja Rickard 262.237-0634/ minister@uuchc.org</p>                                  |           |  | <p>Choir Practice: 3:30-5pm - CS - Subject to change. ②</p> <p>Activities &amp; Events Committee Meeting (open): 6pm - PA</p> | <p>Men's Fellowship Lunch: 11:30am - PA ①</p> |  |
| <b>8</b><br>CAM Sunday ②   | <b>9</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>11</b>  | <b>12</b>   | <b>13</b>                                     | <b>14</b>  |
| <p><b>Service: Rev. Ja Rickard - Sermon: "It is Finished" - The holidays are over and we are still here to talk about it.</b></p>  | <p>Life Span Learning (#1 of 6): 1-3pm - PA. See page 2.</p>  |           | <p>Board Meeting: 6:30pm - PA - All are welcomed.<br/>Last day to sign up to participate in Circle Suppers</p>   | <p>Choir Practice: 3:30-5pm - CS - Subject to change. ②</p>   | <p>← <b>Circle Suppers</b> →</p>              | <p>Training/prep for TXUJLM Legislative Action Day: 11am - PA. See pg 4.</p> |
| <b>15</b>  | <b>16</b>   | <b>17</b> | <b>18</b>  | <b>19</b>   | <b>20</b>                                     | <b>21</b>  |
| <p><b>Service: Rev. Ja Rickard - Sermon: "The New Civil Rights Movement" - New problems are arising every day. How will we react?</b></p> <p>UUSC "Guest at Your Table" campaign begins. See page 2.</p> <p>☪ Pot Luck Dinner after the Service - PA</p> | <p style="color: red;"><b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day &amp; Holiday</b></p>  <p>Life Span Learning (#2 of 6): 1-3pm - PA. See page 2.</p> |           | <p>Women's Connection: 10:30am - PA ⑤</p>  | <p>Choir Practice: 3:30-5pm - CS - Subject to change. ②</p>   | <p>Men's Fellowship Lunch: 11:30am - PA ①</p> |  |
| <b>22</b><br>CAM Sunday ②  | <b>23</b>   | <b>24</b> | <b>25</b>  | <b>26</b>   | <b>27</b>                                     | <b>28</b>  |
| <p><b>Service: Rev. Deanna Vandiver - Sermon: "Resist &amp; Rejoice".</b></p> <p>Last day to submit articles for next month's newsletter - communication@uuchc.org</p>   | <p>Life Span Learning (#3 of 6): 1-3pm - PA. See page 2.</p>  |           |  | <p>Choir Practice: 3:30-5pm - CS - Subject to change. ②</p>   |   | <p style="color: red;"><b>Lunar New Year</b></p>                             |
| <b>29</b>  | <b>30</b>   | <b>31</b> | <p style="color: red;"><b>PA: Palmer Annex      CS: Church Sanctuary</b></p>  |   |   |  |
| <p><b>Service: Laurie Pesez, Church Member - Subject: TBA</b></p> <p>5th Sunday "Donate the Plate" program featuring CAM. See page 1.</p>  | <p>Life Span Learning (#4 of 6): 1-3pm - PA. See page 2.</p>  |           |  |   |   |  |

**All Sunday church services are held at 10am in the Church Sanctuary.**

① There will be news, views, and thought provoking discussion. Guys bring your sandwich or gourmet repast as you wish. Contact: Steve Galland 830.634-7668/sgalland143@gmail.com

② CAM (Christian Assistance Ministry) Sundays are held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. On the 2nd Sunday, the collection focuses on food and the 4th Sunday; on personal/cleaning items. Contact Susan Lipp 619.248-0669/ susan@liphealth.com

⑤ Church women and their female friends meet for fun, support and then enjoy lunch. This month's eatery is Del Norte Restaurant, 710 Junction Hwy; 12:15 pm. Contact: Kay White 830.896-2852/ kaywhite201222@gmail.com

④ Contact: Meredith Hensley 830.522-0802/ pmeredithc@yahoo.com



**January Sunday  
Coffee Hour  
Church Treats  
brought to you by...**

- 1 - Judy Ashcraft**
- 8 - Marie Brown**
- 22 - Open**
- 29 - Julie Davis**

**Thanks for the Yummies  
for our tummies!**

“Our Church Life” - More Material on Sunday Services...

**22 Sunday - 10am - Church Sanctuary: Speaker - Reverend Deanna Vandiver.** Subject; “Resist and Rejoice”. Vandiver is a community minister in New Orleans, LA, serving as the Executive Director for the Center for Ethical Living and Social Justice Renewal ([www.celjsr.org](http://www.celjsr.org)).

**Training/ preparation for the TXUJLM  
Legislative Action Day**

On **Saturday, January 14 from 11am-12pm in the Palmer Annex**, there will be training/preparation for the TXUJLM Legislative Action Day scheduled for Wednesday, February 15 in Austin. Some of the areas to be covered for this special day are:

- ☉ Mandatory registration with TXUJLM,
- ☉ Ordering of “Standing of the Side of Love” t-shirts or collared shirts (recommended) - style and size desired by participants needed, and
- ☉ Austin motel room accommodations (since the event begins at 8am at the Capitol, participants probably will want to spend Tuesday night in a nearby motel).

Contact Karen or Mike Burkett for more information (830.895-7076/ [m.k.burkett@att.net](mailto:m.k.burkett@att.net)).

*Eileen Katherine Cooper, 7-year member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Hill Country and longtime Unitarian Universalist passed away on December 18, 2016, one week before her 93rd birthday. Her son, Kevin Barnawell Hartley and daughter in law, June, who are both active church members, were by her side. No service is planned.*



**Unitarian Universalist Church of the Hill Country  
Board Members for 2016**

- President ~ Linda Smith**  
830.257-2529/ [iwasparc1@gmail.com](mailto:iwasparc1@gmail.com)
- Vice President ~ Mike Burkett**  
830.895-7076/ [m.k.burkett@att.net](mailto:m.k.burkett@att.net)
- Secretary ~ Laurie Pesez**  
830.895-4764/ [lpesez@stx.rr.com](mailto:lpesez@stx.rr.com)
- Treasurer ~ Jim McMahon**  
210.326-0084/ [whodit@hotmail.com](mailto:whodit@hotmail.com)

**Spiritual Development Committee Chair:  
Mike Burkett**

Lifespan Development, Free Speech Café, Wayside Pulpit, Coffee Set-Up, Music/Choir, Order of Service, Greeters, Chalice Table, Service Schedule/Associates

**Membership Committee Chair:  
Curtis Overstreet**

Congregational Care, Visitor Follow-Up, Exit Interviews, New Member Orientation, Emergency Phone Tree, Members/Friends List

**Outreach/Social Justice Committee Chair:  
Karen Burkett**

CAM, La Casa de Raices, TXUJLM, Transportation Planning Council, CAM, PFLAG, Habitat for Humanity, Texas IMPACT

**Finance Committee Chair: Andy Pesez**  
Stewardship, Budget, Financial Management & Reports, Building/Grounds

**Activities/Events Chair: Judy Ashcraft**  
Special Social Events, Recurring Events, Building Usage

**Communications Chair: Joyce Randle**  
[communication@uuchc.org](mailto:communication@uuchc.org)

Electronic Media (Facebook & web site):  
Judy Ashcraft  
Order of Service: Kevin Hartley  
Newsletter/Weekly Calendar Update: Susan Lipp