

OUR CHURCH LIFE

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Hill Country Newsletter
December 2016

Holiday Festivities

Much has been planned to celebrate the holidays at Unitarian Universalist Church of the Hill Country. You will find the dates and times in the new calendar on page 3 of this newsletter, but below is more information on specific events.

Christmas Eve Service ★ 5:30pm ★ Church Sanctuary

Come prepared to sing your favorite holiday songs. After the service there will be a "Cookies & Milk" Exchange. All are urged to bring cookies. The church will provide boxes/bags to encourage taking home cookies that someone else baked. Eggnog, coffee, hot cider, wine, and milk will be provided as well.

In addition to this and for those who wish to participate, there will be a **White Elephant exchange**. Bring a gift, which may be re-gifted, of up to \$10 in value to put under the tree. Everyone will pick a gift and if you don't like yours, you can steal something you do like from your neighbor.



Annual Holiday Dinner ★ Friday, Dec. 9 ★ 5:30pm Cowboy Steak House (416 Main Street - Kerrville)

There will be seasonal fun and games. Participants may order from the holiday menu or a special vegetarian entrée. Attendees pay for their meals and adult beverages. The church will provide for the desserts, non-alcoholic beverages and tip. Please RSVP by Sunday, December 4 to Judy Ashcraft (830.896-8319) and please request vegetarian entrée, if desired.



Events & Activities Committee Concert Carpool ★ Saturday, December 3 ★ meet at church for 3pm

This event is a car pool to The Chordsmen Barbershop Chorus' Annual Christmas Show, "Christmas on the River" featuring The Chordsmen and local quartets. Tickets for seniors (55+) and kids are just \$10. General admission is \$15. Thereafter, interested parties could possibly enjoy dinner together. For more information, please contact Judy Ashcraft (830.896-8319).



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830.792-3626

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email: churchofthehillcountry@uuchc.org
Check out our Facebook page

FROM YOUR MINISTER...

Greetings!

Christmas is coming

It is that time of year again and I am at surprised at how fast this year has flown by. I am now sitting outside in the morning watching the sunrise, huddled up in a jacket and shivering and wondering why the sun is taking so long to peek over the horizon. Then, as I slowly watch the progression of the sun and begin to plan my day, it dawns on me that I need to start shopping for Christmas presents.

Oh, the agony, the waiting until Christmas Eve and running blindly through the stores attempting to put tangible goods with the smiling faces in my mind. I suppose there are many of you who know just the right things to get for so and so and exactly what size everything someone wears. Not me. I am not at all good at shopping. Gift cards have become my new "go to" item and at times they are hit and miss, but each one I buy crosses another person off that list. As the years have gone by there are less people to buy for. Although that might seem like a good thing, it does take the joy out of the season. It is difficult to think of letting go of the stress of shopping as a bad thing but it is not the shopping nor is it the gifts, but the lack of people to buy for. There are many people out there who are down to buying for maybe one or two people and some have none at all.

This holiday season let us think of those who are home alone on Christmas; let us remember them. If you have a friend or a neighbor who you know has no one to shop for or to receive gifts from stop by and drop off a present. Repurpose if you must, take some cookies or maybe stop by the store and pick up a pie, ring their doorbell and hand it to them. Then step back and watch the smile on their face as they know that there is someone out there that cares.

Have a happy Holiday Season and share your happiness with others; it will bring happiness into your life.

With gratitude, Reverend Ja



December Chalice Table Décor

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

4 - Kay White
11 - Judy Ashcraft/Jerry Best
18 - Baxter/Don Pyle
25 - Marie Brown

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



Christmas Dinner Anyone?
Sunday, December 25 🕒 5pm
916 Barnett Street - Kerrville

If you don't have the opportunity to be with family or friends on Christmas day, Marie Brown invites you to join her and daughter at her home. In addition to the food which she is preparing and providing, you will also enjoy fun and fellowship. All are welcomed, but please RSVP to 830.895-5138.

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Hill Country December 2016 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
 PA: Palmer Annex	 CS: Church Sanctuary			1	2 Men's Fellowship Lunch: 11:30am - PA. ①	3 Events & Activities Committee - Concert Carpool: 3pm. See page 1.
4 Service: Rev. Chuck Freeman to speak; "Fling Off Your Bushel: Let Reproductive Justice Light Shine!" See page 4.	5 PFLAG Meeting: 7pm-8:30pm - The Unity Church, (corner Tivy & Jefferson Streets). Contact Reverend Ja Rickard 262.237-0634/ minister@uuchc.org	6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Board Meeting: 6pm - PA. All welcomed.	8 Choir Practice: 3:30-5pm - CS - Subject to change. ④	9 Annual Holiday Dinner: 5:30pm - Cowboy Steak House. RSVP to Judy Ashcraft by Dec. 4. See pg 1.	10
11 CAM Sunday ② Service: Rev. Ja Rickard - Sermon: "Blue Christmas" - a service for grieving and healing. Congregational Meeting after service	12 día de la virgen de Guadalupe	13	14 Women's Connection: 10:30am - PA ⑤	15 Choir Practice: 3:30-5pm - CS - Subject to change. ④	16 Men's Fellowship Lunch: 11:30am - PA ①	17
18 Service: Carolyn Osborn to speak; "Freud Revisited: Programming the Unconscious Brain". See page 5. ☎ Pot Luck Dinner after the Service - PA Last day to submit articles for next month's newsletter to communication@uuchc.org	19	20	21	22 Choir Practice: 3:30-5pm - CS - Subject to change. ④	23	24 Christmas Eve - Hanukkah begins at sundown Service: 5:30pm - Reverend Ja Rickard. See page 1.
25 CAM Sunday ② Christmas Service: Reverend Ja Rickard - Sermon: A service to hold each other in community.	26 Kwanzaa begins	27	28	29 Choir Practice: 3:30-5pm - CS - Subject to change. ④	30 New Year's Eve	31 New Year's Day

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/ sagalland143@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@lipphealth.com

③ Church women and their female friends meet for fun, support and then enjoy lunch. This month the eatery is Rio Ranch at 2590 Junction Hwy; 12:15pm. Contact: Kay White 830.896-2852/ kaywhite201222@gmail.com

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



November Feedback Circles Report

The following report was forwarded to the Newsletter Editor by President, Linda Smith and was altered only to fit the constraints of a newsletter format.

This month our questions focused on our communications efforts. We reached 26 of 39 members and friends, for a response rate of 62%. Please note that all numbers of responses do not always correlate as not all questions were consistently posed in the same manner. Following are the results of your responses:

Webpage:

- 9 had visited the webpage; 14 had not; 4 do not have computers
- 1 comment each as follows: concern at easily finding calendar events; site needs to be modeled after UUA website; it needs to include a clear welcoming of the LGBTQ community; one visits just to look at pictures; it was discouraging, needed more information about services, sermon titles and similar information; it is hard to read; wants current happenings instead of history; it needs to be more warm and inviting.

Facebook:

- 7 indicated they have visited our Facebook page; 15 noted they did not as they are not enrolled in Facebook
- 7 had "Liked" the Facebook page; 4 had not; 6 are not enrolled in Facebook
- 5 do not have or use computers.
- 1 comment each as follows: uses Facebook for event happenings as it is easier to read quickly; like that we have a Facebook presence as it is important for new, and perhaps younger, members looking for a church and its events; would like to see more UU information shared; thought Facebook is redundant

Newsletter:

- 20 noted they liked the format of the newsletter; however, many of those "likes" were qualified as "ok" or "fine" with comments
- 5 found it too busy and hard to read
- 3 do not like the format
- 2 expressed no opinion; 2 like the colors and two do not with one commenting they liked the gray scale option; 2 liked the calendar; 2 would like to see the calendar on one page
- 1 comment each as follows: it's good for feeling in touch when out of town; it's easy to read, colorful, and has a nice font; the paper copy is easier to read; it is more useful when consistently published before the first of the month; do not like the heading as it will not fit in email

Weekly Update:

- 17 liked the format although some of the yeses were "oks" or "fine" with suggestions
- 9 said one or all of the following: too busy, too convoluted, not easy to read quickly
- 5 stated that it is too much information for a weekly update and a desire to have only one week's events
- 4 do not like the format
- 3 have no opinion
- 1 comment each as follows: it works for them; "why there are so many TBAs?"; it should list all committee meetings and whether they are open or closed; the weekly update has become a weekly newsletter and has too much information



"Our Church Life" - More Material on Upcoming Sunday Services

Since the page 3 Calendar has limited space, the following is more information in areas as indicated on the calendar.

- 4 **Sunday - 10am - Church Sanctuary: Speaker - Reverend Chuck Freeman.** Subject; "Fling Off Your Bushel: Let Reproductive Justice Light Shine!" Description: "Vital rays of light leading to the Roe vs Wade decision were sparked at 1st UU Dallas. In the late 60's the Women's Alliance of the church began to study the abortion issue, eventually signing the amicus brief of the landmark case for women's autonomy that beamed a nationwide beacon of light!

Texas now has among the most restrictive abortion laws in the nation. We UU's have rested on our laurels in a dormant slumber for too long. We have overslept the alarm. It's time to wake up, stand up and let our lights shine for the sacred trust between a Woman, her Creator, and her Doctor. The Texas UU Justice Ministry (TXUUJM) is here to lead the light brigade!"

Rev. Chuck Freeman has been in the ministry since 1977 serving Church of Christ and Unitarian Universalist congregations. He is the founding minister of the Free Souls Church in Round Rock, Texas. Chuck is a founding member of the Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry and its Executive Director.



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

- 4 - Marie Brown**
- 11 - Julie Davis**
- 18 - Pot Luck Dinner**
- 25 - Judy Ashcraft**

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

**CONTINUED "Our Church Life" - More Material on
Upcoming Sunday Services...**

**18 Sunday - 10am - Church Sanctuary: Speaker -
Carolyn Osborn.** Subject; ""Freud Revisited:
Programming the Unconscious Brain".
Carolyn Osborn has had a lifelong career in public
education, higher education, and mental health.
She has a master's degree in counseling from The
University of Texas in Austin, and she continues her
own personal education in brain science, world
religions, and spirituality. She currently maintains
a private counseling practice in Kerrville.

Upcoming January Programs

The **study of world religions** will resume with a
Teaching Company DVD series on **Judaism**. Starting
Monday January 9, the series will continue on Mondays
from 1 - 3pm through February 13.

January 15 - February 12 UU Service Committee "Guest at Your Table" Program Fundraiser

This program's worldwide humanitarian efforts will be
acknowledged and shared. The church campaign will
kick off during a Pot Lunch after which the airing of the
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 of our 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.

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Hill Country Board Members for 2016

- President ~ Linda Smith**
830.257-2529/ president@uuchc.org
- Vice President ~ Mike Burkett**
830.895-7076/ m.k.burkett@att.net
- Secretary ~ Laurie Pesez**
830.895-4764/ lpesez@stx.rr.com
- Treasurer ~ Judy Ashcraft**
210.326-0084/ whodit@hotmail.com
- Past President ~ June Hartley**
830.896-5191/ june@windstream.net

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: Ellen Jackson

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, TXUUJM, 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

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

