

THE CHALICE FLAME

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF PUEBLO

December
2007

Issue XII

110 S. LaCrosse Ave., Pueblo, CO 81001

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

December 2—Rev. Mo White
“Buddhism by the Numbers”

Lay Leader: Dave Wagner

Greeters: Ib & Midge Birgers

Coffee Host: TBA

December 9—Rev. Jack Wilson

Lay Leader: Ib Birgers

Greeters: Mary Leonard & Shawn Collins

Coffee Host: TBA

December 16—Michael Corrigan

“All I Want For Christmas”

Lay Leader: Ivy Carter

Greeters: Dan & Irene Stone

Coffee Host: Midge Birgers

December 23—Michael Corrigan

“Let There Be Light”

Lay Leader: Kate Langworthy

Greeters: Westy Bush & Betty Eichenberger

Coffee Host: Debbie Rivera

December 24 (Eve)—Michael Corrigan

Christmas Eve 2007—“Room at the Inn?”

Room In Our Hearts?”

Lay Leader & Greeters: TBA

December 30—Rev. Byron Kelham

“Six Names of God”

Lay Leader: Debbie Rivera

Greeters: Debbie Rivera & Liz Moulder

Coffee Host: TBA



Expanded Titles and Descriptions

Sunday December 16th 2006—“All I Want For Christmas”

Perhaps you remember making your holiday “wish list” of *things* you wanted? Perhaps you still make a list each year? Have you ever thought about your deepest yearnings for yourself, for the world...as part of that list? What gifts might we create if we take a moment to explore our “highest aspirations and our deepest yearnings” as a religious community? What *do* we really want for Christmas?

Sunday December 23rd 2007—“Let There Be Light”

The Winter Solstice is nigh, and slowly, almost imperceptibly, the days grow longer and the light returns, minute by minute. The image, metaphor, and archetype of “Light” is an important and universal presence in religious observance. On this Solstice Sunday, as we move through the shortest days of the year to greet the returning light, we’ll consider some religious images of Light in words, music, and practice.

CHRISTMAS EVE 2007—“Room at the Inn? Room In Our Hearts?”

Lessons, Carols, & Candle Light for Christmas Eve — 6:30 PM MONDAY 24 DECEMBER 2007

At this time of year, we think a lot about giving gifts. A central religious theme at this time of year is the gift of hospitality...of welcome alike to kith and kin and the

stranger who crosses our path. There are plenty of faith stories about welcoming. This service of lessons, carols, and candlelight will offer three stories as a special gift to welcome the spirit of hospitality into our hearts. This service is for the entire family...and for relatives, guests, and friends with whom you're spending the Christmas holiday—don't forget to invite them!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER EVENTS!

Yoga—moving to different date and time— see bulletin board & announcements.

Every Sunday— Socrates' Café - 9:15-10:15 am.

Every Wednesday—Art Group at the church—1:00-3:00 pm.

Every Wednesday—Fellowship Night—6:00 pm.

Wednesday, December 5th at 10:00 am—Happy Booker's Group at the church.

Wednesday, December 5th – A Hannukah Celebration for our Fellowship Night.

Wednesday, December 12th & 19th. Help make decorations & small gifts at Fellowship night.

Saturday, December 15th—Holiday potluck at 6:00 pm (sign up please).

Sunday, December 16th - Decorating the church (following church).

December 19th at 11:00 am—Happy Booker's Group. At the Rosemont museum carriage house for lunch and a tour. New members always welcome.

January 31 and February 1 and 2, Patti Gallagher will present "Broadway Hits Through the Years" at La Renaissance. Tickets are on sale at La Renaissance from Richard at 543-6367.

April 25-27—Small Congregations Weekend—See boxed area below.

No Movie Night or Fellowship Breakfast in December — We will resume in January so stay tuned.

Small Congregations Weekend in Santa Fe— April 25-27, 2008

Here's another great opportunity for our congregation. The keynote speaker is the Rev. Wanda Daniel. Program tracks include: strategies for growth & outreach, creating a dynamic worship team, religious education program management and church administration do's and don'ts. Twelve of us attended the recent Care Conference in Golden with many good comments on what we learned, and we are talking about how we can best share our information with the entire congregation. This looks like another excellent opportunity for our congregation so I urge you to attend! There is a flier with more information on the bulletin board and we will have a sign up sheet in the new year. Kate

In the Interim...The Minister's Column for December 2007

The holiday season is rich in sentiment. Many stories express wonder, awe, and the hope of abundant opportunity for growth and transformation. My favorite kinds of stories are those about giving from the heart of hospitality. They usually involve the "simplest" of gifts, given from what we have to offer, that become "moments of miracle." They are occasions for transformation both for the gifted and the giver.

Leo Tolstoy wrote such a story about Martin, a cobbler who so much wants to welcome the Christ child to his shop on Christmas Eve that he even dreams it! As Martin works in his shop on Christmas Eve, people arrive at his door, including a mother and her small child. Martin searches and finds he has nothing to offer, except the opportunity to get in out of the Russian winter night. And perhaps a small pair of boots for the child, made from scraps of left-over leather.

As the evening ends, Martin is disappointed the Christ child has not appeared. He blows out the lamp, locks the door and goes to bed tired and dispirited. Yet, in his Christmas Eve dreams, the Christ child does appear to him, holding the small pair of boots Martin crafted for the child that had visited him earlier. Martin realizes that "just as he gave what he could to 'the least among us,' he **did** welcome the child Jesus to his shop!

Our commercial culture stresses giving at this time of year, but the gifts we're cajoled to buy and give are material things—things we procure from someone and somewhere else. Rarely are we encouraged to look inward to see what "gifts of the heart" we have to offer.

I invite you, then, this Christmas to look inside yourself for the "gifts of the heart" within you. I encourage you as

well to have a look at what "gifts of the heart" this community of faith has to offer those who come to our doors. What **are** those truly transformational "gifts of the heart" we can give freely and abundantly, if we can only recognize them?

I'll throw out a few clues from things I've heard in the congregation. UUCP has many "gift of the heart." We have the gift of community—a community that is supportive, accepting, and appreciative of people **as they are**. We offer the gift of a safe and nurturing environment in which to explore our spiritual cores and become the best human beings we can be. That means, too, that we can offer a safe space for people to assess and challenge their limitations! We offer the means for spiritual exploration, through Sunday services and other opportunities to delve into our highest aspirations and deepest yearnings. And we offer the gift of radical hospitality—that is, a response to those in need.

To me, these are marvelous gifts—true miracles of human engagement and compassion! We can recognize, celebrate and refine these gifts by intentionally honoring them as we practice **giving them** freely!

In the spirit of another kind of holiday stories—the ones about "proclaiming news of good tidings," as the angels did to the shepherds on the hillsides surrounding Bethlehem—let's **proclaim the great tidings** of the "gifts of the heart" we hold here in this community of faith! Let's shout out for all to hear the good news of our great gifts—and that we want to give them away!

The gifts we possess are the ones

many, many people seek...and rarely find in places whose names end in "Mart." They are gifts that cannot, in fact, be bought. They can—and must—be shared among people of faith like all of you here at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Pueblo.

My wish for all of you at this season of Light is that you delve into your "gifts of the heart" and come to know them. Then, proclaim and share those "gift of the heart" with the world. May you all know that you are blessed this holiday season, and may you all **be** blessing for others.

Shalom and blessings,
Michael

New Horizons...

Thanksgiving day is over. I hope everyone had a bountiful day with remembrances of all the things we have to be thankful for in spite of all the troubles in the world. I heard that the Thanksgiving feast at the church was well attended as usual by at least twenty people.

I decided, after reviewing several options, to have dinner at my home so that Nuno, (our exchange student from Portugal) could learn more about how an American family celebrated Thanksgiving day. Pat joined us as our guest and "token Indian". However, I guess Chantelle (a second student who lives with me) fits that role better. She claims to be $\frac{3}{4}$ Native American. Anyway, we had a turkey with all the trimmings. Nuno made the pumpkin pies and Chantelle made the curried deviled eggs and mashed potatoes.

Over dinner we talked about the origin of Thanksgiving and the myths that have arisen from this tradition. Nuno said one of his teachers had told him that, "Thanksgiving was not a day of celebration for the Indians. That we immigrants took over their land and pushed them onto reservations, eventually destroying their way of life." This is true. The same thing happens when any group immigrates to a new land looking for a better life. The natives must move aside and make room for the newcomers. This happened in Australia and other countries. Sometimes the occupation comes with bloodshed as the purpose of immigration is to conquer another country and use that country's resources and people for the conqueror's own glory. According to the history I learned that was not our purpose in coming to the new country of America. We came here looking for a place where we could have religious freedom and live in peace away from the restrictions of the British crown. However, as a UU it is with a sensitivity and understanding of past history that I must be vigilant today for current injustices. I refuse to harbor any retroactive, collective guilt for what our forefathers did to settle this wonderful land. The only thing I can do today is to personally not mistreat my peers (and everyone is my peer) in the future. I also must speak out when I see someone else mistreating another group or person. For that and that alone I will be responsible. Not for what my ancestors did.

Zikomo Kwamberi

Melva Steen
President

SOCIAL JUSTICE NOTES

Christmas Project for 2007 For this year, we are supporting the Wayside Cross Mission. Please specify on memo line of your check in the collection plate if you are contributing money. Items requested are:

- Coffee making supplies
- Napkins
- Toilet tissue
- Hand soaps
- Outerwear, esp. oversized coats

ART NOTES

Beth Allen is the exhibiting artist for December. Please show your appreciation to Ivy for her work.

The "On Your Own" exhibit at the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center continues until December 29th. Nina, Shirley, and Ivy all have works on show.

Ivy is leading art activities with the children at Bradford Elementary School during the month of December.

Nina Fry is holding her "Small Works Art Sale" at her studio at 1009 South Road Saturday December 1 from 10:00 to 4:00 and Sunday December 2 from 1:00 to 4:00.

Candles of Community

We hold in our hearts during this season all members, their families and friends near and far.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

The Happy Booker's Group is currently discussing women's spirituality. They will meet on the 5th and 19th this month. New members always welcome. Call Dorie or Liz for more information.

Fellowship Night: Dec. 5th at 6:00 pm. A Hannukah Celebration. A fight for religious freedom - and a festival of lights. On this second night of Hannukah we will have candle lighting, latkas, dreidles, and the story of Hannukah. Please sign up to come and celebrate, and join in our fellowship. Food provided, donations accepted. On December 12th and 19th, please join us in making decorations and small gifts.

Fellowship Breakfast: None in December due to holiday events.

Holiday Potluck: Saturday, December 15th at 6:00 pm! Come join in the celebration of the winter season – Christmas, Hannukah, Santa Lucia, Solstice, and all other celebrations clustered around this darkest time of the year. Bring stories, song, and any traditions you want to share. Please sign up on the sheet on the table in the fellowship area.

Decorate our church: Sunday, December 16th - Help decorate the church! Stay after church on December 16th and help us decorate for the season. Please bring some food to munch on while we do our work.

Check out the new check out instructions at the bookstore courtesy of Dan Stone.

Where's the beef? Thanks to Tom Bush, it's in many of our freezers! Total contributions total \$521.00. Many thanks from the Finance Committee.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Pueblo
110 S. LaCrosse Avenue
Pueblo, CO 81001



Sunday Service 10:30 am

719-561-0880

Email: uucop@juno.com

We're on the Web at:
www.uupueblo.org

Interim Minister: Michael Corrigan
Minister Emeritus: Byron Kelham

Board President: Melva Steen
Vice President: Kathleen Petit
Secretary: Jeannine Semrau
Treasurer: Pat Spahr
Members at Large:
Kristen Castor
Kate Langworthy
Betty Eichenberger

Send newsletter items to:

uucop@juno.com

Include "Newsletter item" in the subject line.

	Our newsletter is printed in Verdana 12 point font, to accommodate our visually impaired readers!
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