Sunday Services start at 10:30 a.m. and last approximately 60-75 minutes. Theme for December: Joy.

December 4    Joy

Our fundamental nature is joy, a joy that is available to all of us, no matter what our outer circumstances. So say saints, sages, and scientists! We will explore this concept with the video sermon "Choosing Joy" by Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube from First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego (see bio. on page 2), along with wisdom from The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World by Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. Come join us and share the joy :-) .

Musicians: James Pearson, Hannah Olanrewaju. The school age program will do a rehearsal in their regular classroom for Chalica. The children should report to the classroom upon arrival so we have the whole time for practice. Please make sure your children arrive promptly at 10:30 a.m. with their assigned reading and lyric sheets. The Coming of Age program will begin Unit 3 by examining UU Beliefs and Values.

December 11    Chalica

This is a multi-generational service prepared and directed by our Religious Education School Age program. Chalica is a holiday celebrated by Unitarian Universalists during the month of December. Each of our seven principles of Unitarian Universalism is celebrated and a candle lit. Children are asked to arrive at the UU by 9:40am so they can run through their parts in the sanctuary. (The choir will meet in classroom B/C on this day at their normal time). Please come and celebrate our principles and sources with us on this holiday season.

Musician: Jackson Froman.


Beneath the seasonal excess and commercialization of Christmas are deep roots. With stories both old and new, this morning’s service will both point to how over time humanity has celebrated these darkest days of the years while respecting 21st century sensibilities. For those with concerns about why religious liberals would bother to celebrate Christmas at all, I would gently suggest, why not? Musician: Jackson Froman. The school age program will have a holiday celebration for today's class, including games and activities. Your child is encouraged to bring a treat to share. We do have peanut and gluten allergies, so please plan your treat accordingly if you wish to contribute. The Coming of Age program will finish Unit 3.

December 24    Christmas Eve

Please join us for a lovely celebration featuring our choir and musical ensembles. Coordinated by Lynne Stephens and Janet Krack.
Minister’s Musings

Long ago and far away, a child was born in the middle of a crisp and starry night. People traveled for days to offer blessings and bring greetings, bearing gifts of every sort and size. The traditional story is woven deeply into world culture. New and different interpretations remind us to look beyond what we think we know. New retellings focus on three wise women or three queens, rather than three wise men or three kings. One version tells the story from the perspective of a small spider dangling high above the manger, and yet another through the eyes of a child watching from the background. Each variation reminds us that while we may have clear expectations of the upcoming holidays, there is always room for another viewpoint, another interpretation or a different experience. We can create the holidays we most need this year when we give ourselves permission to balance the memories of past years with the realities of this year. My wish for you this holiday season is simple—that you might find moments of joy, stretches of calm, bits of remembrance and moments of peace we seek.

In hope and faith,

Rev. Beth

Biography of our Video Guest Speaker December 4

Arvid Straube was born in Nebraska into a very religious German immigrant family. He was encouraged by his grandmother from the time he was a small boy to enter the ministry. In his college years, he had a crisis of faith that caused him to reject his fundamentalist faith. Various religious experiences followed, along with the discovery of Unitarian Universalism. He attended University of Chicago Divinity School and then Meadville Lombard Theological School, fulfilling his grandmother’s dream for him in a way she would not have expected. Thus began his 35-year career in parish ministry serving congregations in Washington state, North Carolina, and finally, San Diego. He left parish ministry in 2014 and began his current mission of spiritual coaching, spiritual direction, and meditation coaching which is informed by his 40-year Buddhist meditation practice.
December Caring News

Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, benevolence, were all my business.

~Charles Dickens, “A Christmas Carol”

Here we are at the beginning of another Holiday Season and December has holidays for everyone. Here are just a few groups who celebrate in December: Christians, Buddhist, Hindus, Jews, Pagans, seculars, and Unitarian Universalists. So it would seem appropriate to use Happy Holidays as a greeting in December since we live in a multicultural world.

Caring Meeting December 6, at 10 a.m. in the UUCE office

Our Neighbor’s Place In November we made and served two dinners to the homeless. During December, we have two more dates—December 5 and December 31. Thanks go out to the wonderful volunteers who support this program with help and monetary donations.

West Millcreek Food Bank The turkey drive was a success. Thanks to everyone who gave. Please continue to bring in nonperishable food and or cleaning and hygiene products for the food bank.

Holiday Card Blitz Thanks to everyone who made the card blitz for Thanksgiving a success. We were able to send cards to fifteen people who are friends of the UUCE. The December card blitz is Sunday, December 11. Cards and addresses will be on your table during social hour for you to sign and address.

Coffee Hour All those who conduct coffee hour need your help. Many times the same people are preparing the food, washing dishes, cleaning up the OB room and tidying up. We all need to be a part of this activity. If people would return dirty cups to the trays and put used napkins and plates in the trash, it would be helpful. Volunteers who are doing the coffee hour like to finish by 1p.m., so make sure your dirty coffee cups are returned by at least 12:45. Coffee hour takes a group effort. If we all work together, we can continue to have lovely social hours.

Have a happy, healthy holiday,

Ginny Sabol
Hospitality News

UUCE needs some members to become our Hospitality Committee. There are possibilities for re-organization.

Having two or three members who work well together is a great structure. Talk with a Hospitality Committee member, we have experience and can help.

Our UUCE Annual Yard Sale in June needs committee Co-Chairs to organize and direct our sale in June. This is a big fundraiser, a fun two-day sale, and a great UUCE community builder. Do you have some ideas for our sale? Talk with a Board member for more info.

Notes from the RE Chalkboard

Greetings all! I am pleased to report that attendance remains steady since the beginning of classes this school year. Thank you to the families and children who bless us with your presence. And thank you to all the devoted teachers and nursery workers that are volunteering regularly so that we can continue to offer this program to our youth.

In the school age program, we are preparing for holiday celebrations and social justice campaigns. Our annual Chalica service will be held December 11. Children need to attend our December 4 class for rehearsal. The should report directly to the classroom at 10:30 a.m. Please make sure your children are practicing their music and their reading part (if assigned one). Please arrive at 9:40 a.m. on December 11 so we can do a quick run-through in the sanctuary. I would also ask that the parents help the ushers in unpacking the Holiday Tree ornaments as we decorate the sanctuary tree at the end of the service.

Guest at Your Table is an annual, national, social justice fundraiser. Donations should be returned to the UU on Chalica and presented during the offertory portion of the service.

Bunny Yoga is at max capacity! If you were not able to sign up in time for this event, don’t worry. We will see this event again before the end of the school year. I am keeping a sign-up sheet in the classroom for those of you interested in the next time we will do this event. This way, we can let you know first when it is scheduled so you can get your reservation in time.

Teens participating in our Coming of Age Program are working diligently to develop their credos and continue their journey of spiritual self-discovery. I am proud of your hard work. Keep it up! Your teachers and mentors are happy with your progress as well.

Happy Holidays to you all!

Blessings,
Susan Galle-Boyko DRE
Annual Gingerbread House Decorating Party

Saturday, December 17 10 a.m.

Join us for the sweetest, prettiest, most imaginative time of the year - our gingerbread house decorating party! Bring an assembled gingerbread house on a firm base and two pounds of assorted candy to share with everyone.

We'll provide the 'glue' (frosting) popcorn, cider, and music to hum along as we decorate our houses and admire the end results.

There will be two house baking and assembling workshops offered; one on Wednesday the 14th and one on Thursday the 15th from 5 to 7:30 in the church kitchen. All you have to do for that is bring your prepared chilled dough and a flat baking sheet or two. You'll cut and bake your house and assemble it on the spot with guidance from Howard and the Gingerbread House Building crew. Please be aware that children under ten are not to be in the kitchen at this time because of the hot cookie sheets and melted sugar. Then, bring your house to the church at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 17, when the fun begins.

Sign up at church to let us know how many people will be involved. Recipes for the dough will be available then. Questions? Jan or Howard 866-2040.

Winter Solstice Celebration

As people have done across time and cultures, we will honor the day of shortest light and celebrate the rebirth of the unconquered sun. Dress for the weather, as we will be indoors and out. It’s going to be a bonfire blazing, song singing, bell ringing, storytelling, contemplative labyrinth walking kind of a night! A tip from Bryan: don’t be like a certain someone who had “holy” socks the last time he walked the labyrinth (no shoes, please)! Bring a treat to share if you like, and we’ll have hot beverages to warm you up.

Come help us make a Merry Yule! Contact: Bryan 397-2567, Michele 490-5976
Service Auction a Big Hit!

Our annual UUCE service auction was a huge hit. Thanks to all who participated, “Lights! Camera! Auction!” earned more than $6,000. A special thank you to all the volunteers who worked so hard to make the auction possible, congregation members who offered items and services, and all bidders. We could not have succeeded without you. Also big thank you to auctioneer Jim Finn, who was our auctioneer for the last time. We’ll miss you Jim.

Committee Co-chairs Edie Cultu, Ginny and Regis Sabol

Movie Trivia Quiz Winner and Answers

Many UU’s who attended our service auction had a lot of fun playing the movie trivia quiz. And the winner is—drum roll, please—Susan Woodland, a friend of the congregation. She wins a $20 gift certificate to Tinseltown. A tip of the hat to Diana Ziemniak and the team of Michele Rupp, Brian Hed, and Roberta McCall who scored 28 out of 30 correctly. Here are the movie titles, the quotations, and the characters and/or actors they played who spoke them:

All About Eve: “Fasten your seatbelts. It’s going to be a bumpy night.” Margo Channing (Bette Davis)
All the President’s Men: “Follow the money.” Deep Throat (Hal Holbrook)
Bonnie and Clyde: “We rob banks.” Clyde (Warren Beatty)
Casablanca: “As God is my witness, I’ll never go hungry again!” Scarlett O’Hara (Vivien Leigh)
The Graduate: “I could’a been a contender.” Terry Malloy (Marlon Brando)
Grand Hotel: “I have always depended on the kindness of strangers.” Blanche Dubois (Vivien Leigh)
I Haven’t Got a Hat: “That’s all, folks!” Porky Pig in his screen debut
Jaws: “You’re gonna need a bigger boat.” Sheriff Brody (Roy Scheider)
King Kong: “It was Beauty that killed the Beast.” Carl Denham (Robert Montgomery)
Klondike Annie: “Between two evils, I generally pick the one I never tried before.” Mae West
On the Waterfront: “I’m mad as hell and I’m not going to take this anymore!” Howard Beale (Peter Finch)
Psycho: “A boy’s best friend is his mother.” Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins)
Rocky: “Yo, Adrian!” Rocky Balboa (Sylvester Stallone)
Sixth Sense: “I see dead people.” Cole Sear (Haley Joel Osment)
Star Wars: “These are not the droids you seek.” Obi-Wan Kenobi (Alec Guinness)
A Streetcar Named Desire: “I have always depended on the kindness of strangers.” Blanche Dubois (Vivien Leigh)
Sunset Boulevard: “All right, Mr. DeMille. I’m ready for my close-up.” Norma Desmond (Gloria Swanson)
The Terminator: “I’ll be back.” (Arnold Schwarzenegger)
Treasure of the Sierra Madre: “Badges? We ain’t got no badges!” Mexican bandits
The Wizard of Oz: “That’s a horse of a different color!” Palace Guard
Share a Recipe

Lithuanian Honey Bread (AKA Amy Bread) - shared by Rev. Beth

1. Warm slowly over medium heat (or in the microwave):
   - ¼ C water
   - 4 T butter, margarine or veggie oil
   - 1 C milk
   - ½ C honey
2. Cool slightly. (Enough so it doesn’t burn your fingers.)
3. Mix together:
   - 4-4½ cup unbleached flour
   - 2 T yeast
   - 1 (generous) T ground coriander
   - ½ tsp. ground cloves
   - 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
   - 1 tsp. ground ginger
   - 1 tsp. salt
4. Add 1 beaten egg to cooled milk and honey mixture.
5. Gradually add wet mixture to dry ingredients. Add up to another ½ C flour to get good consistency.
6. Knead and allow to rise until doubled in size in a greased and covered bowl. (1.5-2 hours)
7. Punch down and knead for another 2 minutes.
8. Shape into large round loaf and place on greased cookie sheet or in a greased casserole dish.
9. Allow to rise for another hour, until doubled.
10. Brush with melted butter and slash the top with a sharp knife to prevent splitting.
11. Bake in a 325 degree oven for about an hour, or until it sounds hollow when tapped gently.
12. Cool slightly and enjoy. :-)

SafeNet Christmas Gift Program

All 40 ornaments were chosen the first day they were available! If you did not get an ornament, you can still participate. SafeNet needs shampoos, body washes, razors, soap, towels, wash cloths, twin sheets, fuzzy socks, lotions, body sprays, tissue, hand sanitizer, baby care, and feminine care products. Please bring your donations to UUCE by Dec. 11. Contact: Michele 490-5976
Post-Election Meeting Recap

On 11-17-16, friends gathered at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie at the invitation of Rev. Beth, to discuss the aftermath of the recent presidential election; what it means for us as individuals, as families, as a community, and as a nation. We sought understanding, and a plan to move forward. Each person in attendance had something valuable to share, and we came away with a renewed sense of hope and the affirmation of our Unitarian Universalist community.

We considered how the current social climate has caused feelings of grief, alienation, fear for safety of self and others, fear for loss of rights, of global conflict, and anti-intellectualism. We noted that many feel emboldened to express racism, sexism, homophobia, misogyny, and bullying, as evidenced by the sharp increase in the number of hate crimes being reported. To combat the rise of unbridled hate, intimidation, and even violence which is embraced or ignored by a segment of society, you may find the link below helpful, provided by the Southern Poverty Law Center: Ten Ways to Fight Hate: A Community Response Guide. This is an educational manual and an action guide, meant to be studied and put into practice. Take the time to read it, be ready to share it with others, and use what you learned. In addition, the ACLU has an app you can download on your smart phone to record and report hate crimes. We talked about wearing the safety pin to identify ourselves as allies who will protect the vulnerable. It is not a trendy symbol devoid of responsibility, and if we are going to wear it we need to know what the full ramifications may be. Here is one source to consider: So You Want to Wear a Safety Pin. We must be prepared if we are to be effective agents of change, the desperately needed lights in the darkness.

We agreed that celebrity tends to be valued more than substance, more than kindness, more than truth. We realize our values, our Guiding Principles, may be rejected as naïve, even unpatriotic to some. We wondered how to have dialogue with friends or family who voted differently from us, especially as the holidays approach. In the end, it has to be compassion and our commitment to civility, rather than trying to convince them to change their minds, that will be our hallmark.
We considered ways to move from a place of shock and hopelessness to a position of action and influence, in small but meaningful everyday actions, and through civic and political engagement. Can we become better informed through trustworthy sources? Can we learn about the needs of others which motivate them to believe, act, and vote in ways different from our own? Can we align ourselves with organizations who are needed more than ever: NAACP, Planned Parenthood, ACLU, International Refugee Assistance Project, the Trevor Project, Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, as but a few examples? There are countless local organizations reflecting these same values who would benefit greatly from our time and financial assistance. Seek them out, give of yourself according to your means.

We discussed who voted nationally, who did not vote, identified barriers to voting, the effects of gerrymandering, and the consequences of an electoral college. How will we restructure our political parties to make them more effective and responsive to the wishes of their members? Can we become more politically aware, and active in local affairs? Can we campaign for candidates in our community who are just and humane? Can we get election day designated a national holiday? Can we restore the number of polling stations, ensure everyone has identification, educate about absentee voting, establish early voting, and train people to use a voting machine? We will all find a way to do something individually and collectively, because we agreed we will be the change we wish to see in the world; we will actively work for civility, equality, justice, and peace.

A proposal was made to meet again to develop more concrete plans of action. Until next time, keep hope alive, live our Guiding Principles, and remember, we Stand on the Side of Love.

~Michele Rupp
Secretary:
Joanne Davis
Office Hours:
Tues, Wed & Thurs
8 a.m. until 1 p.m.
Fridays 8-11 a.m.

Leave Voice Messages
814-864-9300

Please direct all mail to:
P.O. Box 3495, Erie, PA 16508

UUCE Thursday Email Updates
Every Thursday an update of UUCE events and news for the week is sent out via email.
If you would like to be included on the UUCE email mailing list, please contact Joanne@uuerie.org before 9:30 a.m. Thursdays.

December Birthdays
05—Deb DiPlacido
07—Annette Krusewicz
10—Kelly Armor
11—Lyncoln Journey and Quinn Journey Horton-Bowen
12—Christine Bowen
12—Lynne Stephens
13—Rose Barr
15—Warren Edward Schauffele
24—Lily Hurlburt
25—Janet Krack

The Beacon is published monthly. We welcome your suggestions and submissions.
The deadline for articles for the January issue is Saturday, December 17.
Send submissions to: Joanne@uuerie.org.
Beacon Editor/Layout: Joanne Davis
Content Review: Dr. Regis T. Sabol
Board Liaison: Mary Zuck
To receive future newsletters via e-mail link or through the mail, please register with Joanne at 864-9300 or Joanne@uuerie.org.
Remember, you must register to receive a newsletter.

Service Attendance:
10/02/16—Socially Responsible Investing—Shane Youngston—75 attendees.
10/16/16—Revisiting Vietnam—Sanford Kelson and Mike Hastie—61 adults, 12 children.
### December 2016

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<th>Sun</th>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Sun</strong>: Marketplace of The Mind 9 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Mon</strong>: Sunday Service 10:30 a.m. Potluck lunch after the service.</td>
<td><strong>Tue</strong>: Homeschool Group 12-2 p.m. Finance Committee 4:30 p.m. Girl Scouts 7-8 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Wed</strong>: Bhakta School Meditation Event 6-10 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Thu</strong>: Memory Café 1-3:30 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Fri</strong>: Atheist and Agnostic Community 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Sat</strong>: Alcoholics Anonymous 8:30 a.m. QI Gong and Tai Chi 9-10 a.m.</td>
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<td><strong>Sun</strong>: Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Mon</strong>: Sunday Services Committee 4:15 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Tue</strong>: Homeschool Group 12-2 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Wed</strong>: Board of Trustees 5 p.m. Gingerbread House Baking 5-7:30 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Thu</strong>: Memory Café 1-3:30 p.m. Gingerbread House Baking 5-7:30 p.m.</td>
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<td><strong>Mon</strong>: Buddhist Sangha 7 p.m. PFLAG 7 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Tue</strong>: Homeschool Group 12-2 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Wed</strong>: Moral Ground Discussion Group Noon Whispering Lake Grove Yule Service 5:30 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Thu</strong>: Solstice Celebration 6-9 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Fri</strong>: Atheist and Agnostic Community 6:30 p.m.</td>
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**Additional Events:**
- **Sunday Service**: 10:30 a.m.
- **Potluck lunch**: After the service.
- **Moral Ground Discussion Group**: Noon
- **Whispering Lake Grove Yule Service**: 5:30 p.m.
- **Gingerbread House Baking**: 5-7:30 p.m.
- **Fiber Arts Circle**: 6-9 p.m.
- **Moral Ground Discussion Group**: Noon 7-8 p.m.
- **Discusses the moral and ethical implications of Buddhism.**
- **Whispering Lake Grove Yule Service**: 5:30 p.m.
- **Gingerbread House Baking**: 5-7:30 p.m.
- **Fiber Arts Circle**: 6-9 p.m.
- **Christmas Eve Service**: 7 p.m.
- **Gingerbread House Party**: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.