



# THE DRUMMER

December 2010

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills

## SUNDAY SERVICES IN DECEMBER

**“Be the change that you want to see in the world.”—Mohandas Gandhi**

**November 28, 9:00 & 11:30 am**  
***UUism in Western Pennsylvania***  
**Led by Kathy Parker**

Kathy is a colleague of Jay’s in Collegium, a network of UU scholars and ministers. She has just published a history of Unitarian Universalism in greater Pittsburgh (including UUCSH), which furnishes the material for her presentation. The book will be available for purchase.

**December 19, 9:00 am**  
***Holiday Pageant & Winter Solstice***  
**Led by Cheryl Kelley, DRE**

In winter the Earth’s movements turn our hemisphere away from the sun, enveloping us in darkness and cold. But soon the Winter Solstice will mark a return of warmth and light, as we move from the shortest day of the year to ever lengthening daylight hours. This pageant will be performed by the Sunnyhill children’s and adult choirs. Musical co-leaders are Tim Zeddies and Carol Karl.



Native Americans had winter solstice rites. The sun images above are from rock paintings of the Chumash, who occupied coastal California for thousands of years before the Europeans arrived. Solstices were tremendously important to them, and the winter solstice celebration lasted several days.

**December 5, 9:00 & 11:30 am**  
***Building our Spiritual Home***  
**Led by Rev. Jay Abernathy,**  
**Interim Minister**



UUs are fascinated and terribly loyal to their buildings, perhaps because we have no creeds or other apparent objects of loyalty. We often confuse our building with our community. Both are important, and a good perspective on their value is one goal of this sermon.

**December 24, 4:00 & 7:00 pm**  
***Christmas Eve***  
**Led by Rev. Jay Abernathy,**  
**Interim Minister**

The 4:00 service will have a family focus, with several carols for children and participation by at least eight of our children. The 7:00 service will have a more meditative focus and adult participation, although children and youth are welcome. It is a service of lessons and carols, with considerable music. We will hear one of the two (very different) birth stories and contemporary voices on the meaning of Christmas. We will sing traditional carols and hear other beautiful music. There will be a short homily by the interim minister. If you have questions or would like to participate in the late service, please call or email Jay.



**December 12, 9:00 & 11:30 am**  
***The Biggest Word (God)***  
**Led by Rev. Jay Abernathy,**  
**Interim Minister**

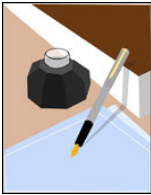
It is helpful to have a “biggest word.” It can stretch our minds and encourage us to think of a universe larger than our personal interests and needs. There is such a word, but like all words today it suffers from two problems. First, it has succumbed to “adspeak” (like the word “pure” in the Ivory soap commercial) and means too many contradictory things. Second, it is just old, worn-out, tired, and in our modern world we like zingy, made-up words with a techno sound or crude connotation. Yet, there is still no replacement, so I will use the biggest word in this sermon.

**December 26, 10:30 am**  
***It is YOUR Choice***

**Led by Julie Ann Sullivan**  
Life is all about choices. This service will give all of us an opportunity to choose what we want to “remove” from our lives and what we choose to move towards. The New Year is always a good time to refresh and renew. Let’s do it together!

### SUNNYHILL MISSION STATEMENT

“Our mission is to foster intellectual and spiritual growth by upholding a free search for truth within a liberal religious setting. In a warm, intimate, and diverse environment, we support one another on our lifelong journeys and through the transitions in our lives. Committed to Unitarian Universalist principles, we seek to build a just and compassionate community both within and beyond Sunnyhill.”

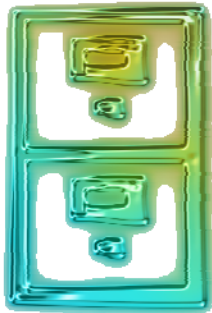


# JAYWALKING

by the Rev. Jay Abernathy, Interim Minister

I have been pacing the incredibly crowded basement room where I have set up my study in our condo. It seemed such a big room before I put up my three file cabinets, two desks—don't ask—and several bookshelves. I have been pacing the room because I have been asked to write some reports on the administration of the congregation, particularly Board responsibilities and some financial issues.

It would be fair to say that few UUs enter the ministry with the goal of attending so many meetings of committees and other groups, writing so many reports, and spending so much time



on the phone/computer trying to read all their messages. Most of us enter with the idea that we shall be great social prophets, supported by an ardent and dedicated community united behind our social vision.

When reality sets in, ministers usually adapt, in part because working with a congregation is so rewarding. One doesn't have to save the world, if one feels progress is being made with the group being served.

So, I have been pacing—which bothers Ghillie, our Cairn Terrier. He has taken to napping in the basement, which is dark and quiet, much like a dog's den in the wild, I suppose. I am trying to access my memory banks, remembering some ideas that worked and processes that seemed intuitive and easy to grasp. It almost works.

—Jay



### A Christmas Card for Sunnyhill

May this little note serve as the Christmas Card from Eileen and me. We are truly enjoying our time with you. Eileen misses church; her schedule has been very disappointing. I am enjoying my time with you, and you have given me more hope for our movement than any church in more than a decade. We wish you a happy holiday season, the celebration of your favorite holidays, good friends and good food, relaxation and comfort, peace and joy. Our love to y'all!

—Jay Abernathy  
and Eileen Schlemmer



## MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

Things are moving along quickly for the Committee. On November 6 the Committee and interested church members attended a *Beyond Categorical Thinking* workshop with Rev. Keith Kron of the UUA Transitions Office. Also in November, the UUCSH Congregational Record was submitted to UUA, the candidates' Ministerial Packets were made available to the Committee, and our Congregational Packet was finalized for exchange with candidates. Review of candi-

dates' info and phone interviews will be held during December.

Our Congregational Packet—everything you ever wanted to know about Sunnyhill—is available online. The link is for members only, and can be obtained by emailing Elizabeth or any member of the MSC. A printed copy is also available at church for your review.

The packet includes a wealth of information about our wonderful church—our history, membership,

staff, leadership, bios of the MSC, our religious education program, our history of pledging, fundraising, committee work, our program guide, results of our 2010 survey, info on the Pittsburgh region, letters of introduction, samples of *The Drummer* and *Order of Service*. It's quite a compilation and will make you want to stand up and cheer for our engaging, imperfect, resourceful, and lively community!

—Alan, Chetan, Gary,  
Jean, Louise, Patty, and Sibyl



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# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

by Cheryl Kelley, Director of Religious Education

When I was in English Composition 1 in college, we were asked to write an essay on Christmas. The teacher was delighted with one essay that talked about the excessive commercialism, crassness and materialism of this time of year. My essay was very different. I reminisced on the beauty of the holiday lights adorning the houses and the excitement I felt when I was a child. I still remember those Saturday evenings when my family would go visit my aunt and uncle on the edge of town. There was one very big house, that always had more lights on it than I had ever seen. To this day I still love driving around the neighborhood to see all the lights and decorations. This time of year can be very dark, and seeing the lights lifts my spirits up. It reminds me that I am not alone.

I also take time to reflect on the year—the good, the bad, and the indifferent. I love the quiet sound of snow falling. It can be both peaceful and beautiful, and also a bit sad.

This year's Holiday Pageant is entitled "A Winter Solstice Singing Ritual." Some of you might remember it from seven years ago. I love the

songs and the peace of mind it gave me. This was the first pageant I ever attended at Sunnyhill but I remember it like yesterday. Of all the services I have attended throughout my life, this one spoke to me in a way no other pageant has.

I asked the director, Tim Zeddies, to provide a write up for the pageant to explain it to those who have never seen it. Here are his remarks:

*In winter the Earth's movements turn our hemisphere away from the Sun, enveloping us in darkness and cold. But soon the Winter Solstice will mark a return of warmth and light, as we move from the shortest day of the year to ever lengthening daylight hours.*

I hope that all of you can join us for this pageant on December 19 to hear our children's and adult choirs perform. Narration will be provided by both children and adults. Co-leaders for this service are Tim Zeddies and Carol Karl, our music director.

I know along with the beautiful lights and good food, we can also get caught up in the commercialism of the holidays. I hope that you can tip

toe through that part in order to appreciate the spectacular beauty the holiday season can bring.

Below is an excerpt from the "Winter Solstice Singing Ritual" by June Middleton:

*It was the longest night.  
People gathered from near and far,  
In small groups and large,  
To share their fears and grief  
And the darkness in their hearts.  
A year like no other, this was,  
Testing us beyond what we'd ever imagined.*

*Day after day, week after week,  
We found ourselves growing  
And becoming sturdy  
Because there was no other choice.*

*And the Solstice fire was lit and the candles passed  
And the light of the new year's dawning  
Lifted our heavy hearts  
And brought us brightness and hope.*

Please join us in this celebration of the cycle of life.

In peace,

—Cheryl

## Silt and Sand

Reverend Jay shared an interesting article from the Alban Institute with the Board recently. The article was about accretions, which we can think of as the silt and sand that wash up and settle over a congregation, forming a pseudo-foundation. For examples, the author, Graham Standish, refers to accretions such as the choice of hymns or songs, the type of instrument used in the services, and the like. These accretions the author refers to as "junk." Congregations have actually split apart over this type of accretion; the author gives examples, and maybe you know of some, too.

I found the choice of musical instruments and songs as an example of accretions a bit jarring. At UUSCH, it seems like our accre-

tions—our silt and sand—are much more serious. Our accretions seem to create a wall—probably fairly thick—between us and keeping in contact with our Holy bond. These accretions are about whether we are a social club or a religious community; whether we can honestly open our community to outsiders and grow the faith; whether we can hang together in a Holy bond if we aren't housed in our Sunnyhill building; whether we as individuals can work past our self-interests to achieve a collective good, giving generously of our time, talent, and treasure.

For me, our stuck places on each of these issues are the real "junk." They represent the build-up of sand and silt that over time can form into rock, replacing the loving, human foundation that was in place at the beginning. Accretions that dam-

age the underpinnings of our community make the choice of song or instrument seem trivial.

During the summer, many of you participated in the Living Room Conversations. These were the first step to launching a three- to five-year long range planning process, and they helped answer the questions: Who are we as a congregation? Collectively, what do we value?

Of course the answers are never finished, and we will always have silt and sand pile up and threaten our foundation.

Let's commit to noticing the silt and sand for what it is and regularly brush it away so that we can clearly maintain sight of our spiritual foundation and the important work that we do together as a congregation!

—Margaret Hamstead  
President, Congregation/Board Chair

## CHIPS FROM THE BOARD

The Sunnyhill Board of Trustees met on November 8, 2010, and was called to order at 7:00 pm by Vice President BK Kosmach. Joining the Board was the Rev. Jay Abernathy.

Rev. Jay reported that the new worship team is beginning to be productive. He prefers that this team become institutionalized rather than be chosen by the minister. He sees a possibility of the team merging with the program committee later in the year.

The DRE and Administrator's Reports were submitted for discussion.

Carol Jaworski stated that she would like to review available data on service attendance and membership in order to ascertain trends.

Charlie Cook submitted the treasurer's report for review. Again Charlie notes that the church's financial situation is not good. Discussion followed regarding the role of directed funds and the Board's ability to use these funds for other needs. Jay suggested that clear policies should be in place for the use of these funds.

Board liaison reports were received from the Membership, Memorial, Caring, Fundraising Advisory, Stewardship and Social Justice, Communications, and Sunday Service Committees. Monthly Liaison Reports will be filed with the Board Minutes in the binder in the church office.

Ken Wagner spoke to the Board about a need to clarify the roles of the Adult RE and LifeCraft programs.

### **Old Business:**

BK submitted the revised AED facts and procedure form and AED usage form for Board approval. Jay noted that both a master calendar and "sub-calendars" should be adopted for annual facilities review, which would include the AED procedures review. The Board adopted the AED forms as submitted.

Rev. Jay submitted an attachment to his monthly report for Board review and consideration. Jay feels that the Board should properly be concerned with foundational issues and long-term changes while com-

mittees would be charged with decisions regarding the accretions to those issues and short-term changes. In this way the Board can focus on its leadership tasks regarding vision, planning, and financial strength.

### **New Business:**

*Leadership Succession Policy:* The ongoing concern regarding lack of continuity in the leadership of committees was discussed. Points of reference are the business community model for succession, succession in volunteer organizations, the role of the nominating committee, and the overall culture.

It was decided that BK will check the bylaws for policy regarding committee leadership succession, and Dorothy will check the Board minutes for discussion of the same. Board liaisons are to check with their designated committees as to whether or not they presently have a term limit for their chairpersons and/or a leadership succession plan.

*Nominating Committee Recommendations:* The Board discussed the desire to develop a policy setting forth the expectations of Board members. This policy should be in place before February when the call for nominations begins in preparation for the annual meeting in April. Stephanie agreed to review and revise the document submitted by Bob Maher in 2005 as a starting point for further discussion.

*Other New Business:* Progress is being made by Julie Ann Sullivan toward the purchase of new speakers for the sound system. BK and Elizabeth are working on the Policies and Procedures Manual. Will Page will look into the immediate succession issues with the Garden and Grounds Committee. Sunnyhill has agreed to participate in the Holiday House Tour on December 11, 2010 and decoration plans are underway. Dorothy will be the Board liaison to that effort.

The next Board meeting will be held on Monday, December 13, at 7:00 pm in the Pumpkin Room.

—Harold Behar  
Sunnyhill Board of Trustees

## OCTOBER 2010 TREASURER'S REPORT

### SUMMARY

In October our pledge income remained well below budget at about \$9,500 below budget for the year to date. Pledge status letters have been mailed to 94 members and friends resulting in \$5,500 in pledge payments during the first week of November. This is an encouraging result. Most expense categories are close to budget and the total expenses were about equal to budget. Over all, as of October year to date, our net cash flow was negative \$12,317 of which a negative \$4,066 was anticipated in the budget due to the timing of fund raising activities.

### DIRECTED INCOME AND EXPENSES

As of the end of October, the total of all Directed Income and Expenses accounts, which are accounts outside the normal budgeted income and expense accounts, were equal and totaled \$36,300 income and expense. This includes dedicated offerings, which totaled \$9,365 through October. Other directed accounts include the Tractor—\$8,100, Italian Dinner—\$1,413, Building Feasibility Study—\$10,990, Gutter Repairs—\$1,470, and Visioning—\$5,000.

—Charlie Cook



**Q:** How can I recycle pine cones?  
**A:** Add heads, hats, hands, and feet and turn them into pine cone elves.



# SUNNYHILL STUFF-N-SUCH

## Elfin Assistance Needed for Christmas Eve Service

- One or two elves to usher at 7:00 pm service.
- One or two elves to host Punch & Cookies at 4:00 and 7:00 pm services. Elves are responsible for set up only. Elves do not provide food or beverage. Elves who host the 7:00 pm service get to take the leftover cookies home to their elfin abodes!
- Donations of cookies for both services from many Sunnyhill elves. Bring a plate of favorite cookies to share after the Christmas Eve services.
- One or two elves to take down (after the 7:00 pm service) the luminaries that line the Sunnyhill driveway.

Elves (or entire families of elves) can confirm their desire to help on Christmas Eve by contacting Elizabeth at 412-561-6277 ext. 3 or [admin@sunnyhill.org](mailto:admin@sunnyhill.org).

Note: Familiarity with *The Lord of the Rings* (books or movies) is not a prerequisite for volunteering).

## Downtowners' Lunch Group

The Sunnyhill Downtowners' Lunch Group will not be meeting in December. The next meeting will be held on January 27, 2011.

## Update Your Contact Information

If your contact information changes, please notify the church administrator at [admin@sunnyhill.org](mailto:admin@sunnyhill.org) or 412-561-6277. The administrator updates addresses once monthly.

## Copies of *UU World*

Please recycle your copy by placing it in the folder marked *Membership* in the hallway.

## Remember

Please use your Sunnyhill Directory to find phone and email information. Personal contact information will not appear in *The Drummer*.

## First Friday Discussion Group

The First Friday Discussion Group will be on December 3 at 7:30 pm in the dining room. We will first have our recommendations of movies, books, and other events. Our topic this month will be "How has your celebration of the holidays changed over the years?" We will also have a CD player for your favorite holiday songs. Bring a short reading. Was-sail will be provided. Please bring your own beverage if you prefer and a snack to share. All members and friends are invited to attend.

## 2010-11 Sunnyhill Book Group

The Book Group meets on the third Monday of each month at Sunnyhill, at 7:30. Please direct questions to Dean Hazelton.

- Dec 20, "The Hound of the Baskervilles" by A. C. Doyle
- Jan 17, "The Importance of Being Earnest" by O. Wilde
- Feb 21, "The Gone Away World" by Nick Harkaway
- Mar 21, "Their Eyes Were Watching God" by Zora Neale Hurston
- Apr 18, "Water for Elephants" by Sara Gruen
- May 16, "I Curse the River of Time" by Per Petterson
- Jun 20, "To Kill a Mockingbird" by H Lee

## Did your Family Welcome a New Baby in 2010?

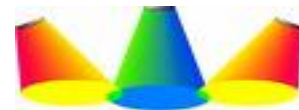
Our tradition includes recognizing in the Christmas Eve Order of Service each baby born into Sunnyhill families over the past year. Please email the baby's name, the baby's relationship to you, and the birth date to Elizabeth at [admin@sunnyhill.org](mailto:admin@sunnyhill.org) or fill out a form in the dining room by December 19. All babies welcome! Sons, daughters, grandbabies, nieces, nephews!



## Speed Pledging

Thanks to all who pledged and to all who helped.

## The Stewardship Spotlight Shines on . . .



- ☺ Dan Story, Joe Lodge, Robert Williams, & Larry Comden—they split the logs resulting from the recent storm to use in the fireplace.
- ☺ Julie Ann Sullivan—she took all the plastic, glass, and cardboard home to recycle
- ☺ Carl Bergmann, Patty & Bill Cook, Jeanette Patsakis, Tom Strauman, Angel Lozoda, Robert Williams, & Charlie Cook—first round of rakers tackled fallen leaves!
- ☺ George Williams—he finished the raking job on November 21, just in time for Thanksgiving!
- ☺ Denny McCracken—he installed and washed the dining room storm windows.
- ☺ Scott Smith—he repaired the dormer window that was damaged in the wind storm.
- ☺ Gretchen Riess, Donna Kaufman, & the entire Sunnyhill-To-Go Crew—they cooked and cooked and cooked to pull off one of the most fun and most successful Sunnyhill-To-Go fundraisers! Thanks for the great time!

# THANK YOU, SUNNYHILL-TO-GO VOLUNTEERS. WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS WITHOUT YOU!

—GRETCHEN REISS & DONNA KAUFMAN

- Janie Elliott—really the third co-chair.
- Dorothy Burns—Chicken, wild rice, and andouille sausage soup—yum! Raffle basket builder extraordinaire.
- Pat Murray—took over the marketing and advertising this year and did a wonderful job
- Andrea Reichenfeld—handled all of the artists for STG
- Jeannette Patsakis
- Sallie Beck
- Julie Ann Sullivan
- Judy Kelly—heading the lemon bread again!
- Peg Hart
- BK Kosmach
- Pam Cook
- Toni Murray
- Jennifer Manley—Vegan chicken noodle soup
- Bill and Patty Cook
- Vijay Chandhok—wonderful Indian lentil soup
- Sara Yourd
- Garth Schafer
- Carol Jaworski
- Gary VanGelder
- Tom Strauman
- John and Carrilee Hemington—made soup and baked cookies
- Russell Story—really great cookies
- Madeleine Mortimer—great chocolate chip cookies
- Elizabeth Mortimer—super fantastic cookbook!

- Tonya and Chetan Chothani
- Carolyn Corry
- Carl and Liz Bergman
- Margaret Lindquist—rushed out to make two pots of soup
- Margaret Hamstead
- Will Page—perennial butternut squash favorite
- Lisa McCracken—yummy mushroom cheese soup!
- Dennis Sweeney—made wonderful chicken soup with apples and leeks—a definite favorite this year!
- Martha Sweeney—came to our rescue and made soup and volunteered
- Jim Carter—made soup and volunteered
- Bruce and Amy Kent—provided the annual favorite—salmon spread
- Dean Hazelton—coconut green chicken curry soup
- Mary Jo Hennessy
- Jim Straub
- Jodi McLaughlin
- Wendy Weaver-Graham
- Malia Bennett
- Vinny Butz—split pea soup with ham
- Geneva Pullen—vegan split pea soup
- Lisa Smith
- Ann Price
- Judy Armstrong
- Pat Troell

## 2011 Budget Input

The Board will present a 2011 budget to the congregation on Sunday, December 19 for approval. This budget will be based on a number of considerations such as past expense patterns, anticipated 2011 needs including the expenses of a minister search and, the results of the 2011 canvass. Another source of information that should be considered is the needs of the various committees. The Board will be approving the proposed budget during the December Board meeting on December 13. Those in leadership positions who wish to suggest a 2011 budget amount for their activities should inform the Board before the December 13 meeting.

## December Services Special Times

Please make a note in your calendar about the special times for the following services:

- December 19:  
one service only at 9:00 am
- December 24:  
two services 4:00 & 7:00 pm
- December 26:  
one service only at 10:30 am



## Congregational Meeting Sunday, December 19, 11:30am

All UUcsh members are requested to attend the annual Budget Meeting on Sunday, December 19, 11:30 am. We will be voting to approve our 2010 budget. A quorum (30% of members) is necessary. The proposed budget will be available at <http://members.sunnyhill.org/docs> and in the dining room after the December 13 board meeting. If you need a hardcopy of the budget mailed to you, please call Elizabeth at 412-561-6277 or send email to [admin@sunnyhill.org](mailto:admin@sunnyhill.org).

**Last chance! Poinsettia order forms with payment must be put in the red church mailbox outside the church office door no later than Sunday, November 28.**



**Sunnyhill's Holiday Flower Fund-Raiser**  
 Brighten up your winter holidays with beautiful florist quality, locally grown poinsettias.

Plants will be available for pick-up at Sunnyhill during the week of December 5th (details to follow). Order forms, including payment, must be turned in by Sunday, November 28th. Please put them in the red church mailbox in the hallway.

Plants are grown at Janoski's Farm Market in Clinton, PA. Questions? Contact Lee Young, leeyoung9607@gmail.com

Poinsettia Size	Color	Price	Quantity	Sub-Total
<b>Small</b> 4.5 in. pot, 1 plant	<b>Red</b>	\$7.00		\$
<b>Small</b>	<b>Pink</b>	\$7.00		\$
<b>Small</b>	<b>White</b>	\$7.00		\$
<b>Medium</b> 6.5 in. pot, 1 plant	<b>Red</b>	\$14.00		\$
<b>Medium</b>	<b>Pink</b>	\$14.00		\$
<b>Medium</b>	<b>White</b>	\$14.00		\$
<b>Large</b> 8.5 in. pot, 3 plants	<b>Red</b>	\$30.00		\$
<b>Large</b>	<b>Pink</b>	\$30.00		\$
<b>Large</b>	<b>White</b>	\$30.00		\$
<b>Large</b>	<b>Tri-color</b>	\$30.00		\$
<i>I would like to donate money toward purchasing poinsettias for the church:</i>				\$
<b>Total:</b>				\$

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(make checks payable to "Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills" or "UUCSH" and write "flowers" in the memo line)

Please make note of the most attractive home pictured in the top row, center. Yes, that's us! So please, when the call for help to decorate our Sunnyhill home hits your In Box, please respond ASAP.

*Please Join the Coldwell Banker  
Rt.19S/Galleria Office for our  
7th Annual Holiday House Tour*

*To Benefit*  
**MAKE-A-WISH.**

## Tour 6 Wonderful Mt. Lebanon Homes



**Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup> • Tour: 9:30am to 12:00pm**

*Lunch served at our NEW LOCATION, Christ United Methodist Church at  
the corner of Highland Road and Oxford Drive, with level entry parking.*

Silent Auction and Raffle! (Winners must be present to win)

Donation of \$25 includes Tour and Luncheon

Tickets can be purchased @

- Coldwell Banker Office at 1539 Washington Road
- Ruby's Cleaners on Mt. Lebanon Blvd • Mt. Lebanon Floral
- Mitchell's Seafood Restaurant in the Galleria
- Barefoot Stitches on Beverly Road
- Fleet Feet on Highland Road

For more information call 412-344-0500

or visit [www.pittsburghmoves.com/rt19s-galleria](http://www.pittsburghmoves.com/rt19s-galleria)



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# STAY INVOLVED: DECEMBER CALENDAR

(VIEW THE CALENDAR LIVE AND UP-TO-THE-MINUTE AT <http://sunnyhill.org/calendar/calendar.html>)

UUCSH Calendar

Dec 2010 (Eastern Time)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 9 am - Sun Svc @ Main 11:30 am - Sun Svc @ 12:30 pm - flowers @	29	30 9:30 am - Morning 10 am - Staff mtg @ DRE	1	2	3 7:30 pm - First Friday	4 8 pm - offsite-8@8
5 9 am - Sun Svc @ Main 11:30 am - Sun Svc @ 1 pm - Young Adults @	6	7 9:30 am - Morning 10 am - Staff mtg @ DRE	8 7:30 pm - Adult	9	10 6 pm - decorating Rm 15 7:30 pm - Vegetarian	11 8 am - House Tour @
12 9 am - Sun Svc @ Main 11:30 am - Sun Svc @	13 7 pm - Board Meeting @ 7 pm - Ch Circle @ Study	14 9:30 am - Morning 10 am - Staff mtg @ DRE 1:15 pm - Ch Circle-Mara	15	16	17	18
19 9 am - Sun Svc @ Main 11:30 am - Budget Mtg 12:45 pm - Sun Svc 1 pm - Young Adults @ 7 pm - Spiritways @ 7:30 pm - Quaker	20 7:30 pm - Book Group @	21 9:30 am - Morning 10 am - Staff mtg @ DRE 7:15 pm - Membership	22	23	24	25
26 9 am - Sun Svc @ Main 11:30 am - Sun Svc @	27 7 pm - Ch Circle @ Study 7 pm - Communications	28 9:30 am - Morning 10 am - Staff mtg @ DRE 1:15 pm - Ch Circle-Mara	29	30	31	1 8 pm - offsite-8@8

## DECEMBER GREET-N-EAT SHEET

Date	9 am Ushers	9 am Coffee Hosts	9 am RE Snack
11/28/10	Uneva & Carl Pierce	Andrea & Doug Reichenfeld	Reichenfeld
12/5/10	Karen Zoller & Jean McQuillin	James Straub & Jodie McLaughlin	McLaughlin
12/12/10	Amy & Bruce Kent	Amy & Bruce Kent	Kent
12/19/10	Patty & George Williams	Harold Behar & Gretchen Riess	Riess
12/24/10	Elves needed, see below	"Punch & Cookies"	No RE
12/26/10	Judy Kelly & Julie Gouirand-Vey	Jennifer & Scott Manley	No RE
Date	11:30 am Ushers	11:30 am Coffee Hosts	11:30 am RE Snack
11/28/10	Eve Holloway & Ellen Vegh	Priscilla & Paul Laughlin	Hedin
12/5/10	Pam & Charlie Cook	Mike Madison & Susan Marquesen	Madison/Marquesen
12/12/10	Sue Richmond & Jude Ernest	John & Carrilee Hemington	Jude Ernest

Date	LIFECRAFT OPPORTUNITIES IN DECEMBER					
12/5/10	Pageant Rehearsal		S&S	Crewel Intentions	Meditation	Chalice Club
12/12/10	Pageant Rehearsal	Current Events	Poetry		Meditation	Chalice Club
12/19/10	Adult Choir	Spiritways CUUPs	Emerson		Meditation	Chalice Club
12/26/10	Adult Choir	Current Events			Meditation	Chalice Club

### From the Editor's Laptop

As I drove home from Sunnyhill on Sunday, November 21, I saw turkeys cross the road. That's not a strange sight in the South Hills. Near our home in Upper St. Clair we see turkeys *a lot*. ("Dinosaurs," my husband says when a flock strides across our front lawn. "Just remember they are dinosaurs.")

The turkeys of November 21 were crossing Washington Road, just past the Galleria. Clearly they had finished bowling and now wanted to get to the other side of the road—perhaps to take the shortcut up to the Borders bookstore?

Four lanes of traffic—two northbound and two southbound—were stopped. I was three cars back from the turkeys, but I could see them flutter one by one into the grass and comparative safety. One, two, three, four. Five. Still the traffic did not move, and people further back who could not see began to honk their horns.

The last turkey hopped into the road in the northbound lanes and walked—slowly—towards the medial divide, and I prayed: "Please, God, don't let the turkey get hit."

I gripped the steering wheel and prayed for the turkeys. What else could I do? I couldn't strap on a cross-

ing guard's vest and usher the turkeys like small children from the safety of one sidewalk to another.

I am pleased to report that my prayer was answered, perhaps by God or a simple fortuitous alignment of the stars that put caring drivers in the four cars that could ensure safe passage for the turkeys. Until those drivers moved their cars, no one moved, and the turkeys could cross the road safely.

You know that old saying: "You can take the person out of the Presbyterian church, but you can't take the Presbyterian out of the person"? I've been a happy UU for eight years: why, then, are there moments when I still say or think "Please, God"? (I can also still recite the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and sing—badly—the Doxology. The book of Ecclesiastes remains one of my favorite pieces of writing. Hemingway liked it, too.)

In June 2007, my dad fell in my parents' home. Thank God my mom called the family doctor. Thank God the doctor said my mom should take my dad to the ER. Thank God my dad is a pretty tough guy because when he got to the ER, and was taken to x-ray, we learned that my dad had a broken neck and had to go to Allegheny General. Thank God for the trauma surgeon who put five steel

plates in my dad's neck. With no shame I admit that I prayed—hard—during the seven weeks my dad was in the hospital or a rehab center.

In May 2009, the trauma surgeon released my dad from his care but then said he wanted to see my dad in May 2011. Why? Because, the doctor told my dad, men much younger and stronger than you don't survive in these situations. "You're a bit of a miracle, and I'd like to see how you're getting along two years from now."

I think my dad is a miracle: he celebrated his 89th birthday in August.

Prayer, God, miracle: great words. Handy words when I must face turkeys on highways and a dad who is a medical miracle. Do I *believe* in prayer? Do I *believe* in God? No more than I *believe* in the words *magically delicious* which really don't, in my opinion, describe the taste of Lucky Charms. But I *feel* these words. I *understand* these words.

I would like to offer these words—*prayer, God, and miracle*—as my Thanksgiving greeting to all of you, my Sunnyhill family. Use them or not as you reflect on all you are thankful for at this moment in your lives.

And Lucky Charms aside, I hope your Thanksgiving dinners are magically delicious.

Take care.

—Janie

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**"If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away." Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854**