



The UUCC Chronicle

December 2019



Worship: 10:00 AM

December 22

True Meaning of the Holiday Season
Roddy Biggs, Guest Speaker
Gates Craighead, Coordinator

December 29

UU Pilgrimage
Ivan Cordrey, Speaker
Tracie Craighead, Coordinator

January 3

A First Nations Perspective on Spirituality
Sayota Knight, Speaker
Tracie Craighead, Coordinator

Reflections: 11:00 AM

Every Sunday after Worship, approximately 11:00 AM; Co-facilitated by Susan Ford and Deanna Lack

Reflections is an informal, non-judgmental, small-group discussion of the sermon topic. Participants share thoughts and insights or just listen. All are welcome.

NOTE: For those who prefer to congregate outside the group, please keep noise directly adjacent to the Reflections group to a minimum. Thank you!

A Candle in the Window

There are many traditions that are observed during the holiday season. There are a few traditions that span across cultures, religions, and time to become well-known staples of the holiday season and beyond. One of these traditions is placing a candle in the window.

Candles have been placed in windows for many years and for many reasons. They have been used to signify safe spaces, as a religious expression, as protest, as vigils, and used as a guiding light. The tradition of placing candles in the window in the United States has been used to welcome home both travelers and family. Today travel is so fast paced. We can watch the sun rise over the ocean on the east coast and watch it set over the ocean on the west coast. Until recently, that was not the case. Travel was long an arduous – and during the winter it was very cold. There weren't masses of streetlights and signs to guide you to shelter. But there were candles. A candle in the window could mean the difference between a miserable, cold night outdoors or a warm shelter with food and fellowship. Likewise, candles guided folks to home, hearth, and love.

With the modernization of our culture and the advent of electricity, quick travel, and other conveniences, candles in the window have become a thing of the past for daily use, showing up in the windows of homes for a short time during the holiday season. However, as

Unitarian Universalists, we have not abandoned the ideal of the candle. Each Sunday, we light our candle in the window – the chalice – to let travelers and family alike know that they are welcome. All are welcome here.

By Kathy Perdue



31 West First Street, Cookeville TN 38501

Deanna Lack, CLM

Traci Craighead, Board President



Pet Tales II – Return of the Cat

Until the last few years, my wife has always had a cat. My career took us overseas some time ago, and she had to give her cat away. The event was very traumatic for both cat and wife. She would afterwards say what a relief it was not having to deal with a finicky eater and the litter box. Being a wise spouse, I knew to close my mouth and breath through my nose.

Our house is almost complete, and here comes the cat into our life. The nighttime temperature dropped into the teens, and someone had abandoned a female kitten in our neighborhood. The cat was crying pitifully but was afraid to get too close to people. My wife finally found the cat and enticed her into our garage with food. Starved and bedraggled, the cat still took time for a rub and purr before attacking the food. Expressing gratitude is so important.

Upon reflection, how many of us Unitarian Universalists are like a stray cat? Discouraged, embittered, or disappointed with the religion of our youth, we leave it. But, where to go? At some point, we begin the search for somewhere we can find warmth, safety, and spiritual nourishment. We may cautiously enter the door to the sanctuary but sit near the front door, ready to bolt. Often, we have long tales of pet peeves, daring anyone to threaten them. What kind of welcome do we find? Does someone welcome us in a nonthreatening manner? Does this seem to be a safe space, offering shelter from the storm of worldly events?

If we are fortunate, we begin to feel comfortable fitting in with our new community. We all agree to a covenant to be respectful of ourselves and each other. We can finally relax a little, accepting that if someone steps on our long tail, it was accidental. Now come the purrs of contentment. We have a place that accepts us as we are, imperfect though we may be!

How do we show gratitude? If we are contented, we should make a pledge to support the works of our congregation. Also, we want others to know of our sanctuary of support and understanding. However, we do not go house to house proselytizing of a better way. We do not wish to convert anyone -- we merely offer moral support as everyone treads their individual spiritual paths. However, we can always be ready to offer a greeting of acceptance to each other and to our guests.

Let us therefore make more of an effort to remember the feelings of once being lost but now found within our sacred community. Others must see by word and deed that we are sincere in our efforts to spread our love and acceptance to everyone. Only then can we feel free to lap up our cream of hope for the future. Come, let us build the “purrfect” society.

We’ll build a land where we bind up the broken.

We’ll build a land where the captives go free,

Where the oil of gladness dissolves all mourning.

Oh, we’ll build a promised land that can be.

By: Charles Zuller



Notes from the Editor

The short piece, “A Candle in the Window”, that I wrote was inspired by a tradition that we have started in our home a couple of years ago. Over the past few years, almost everyone one of the members of our growing tribe have experienced the untimely passing of friends and family. To help us cope with our loss and to commemorate those souls, I set out a special holiday candle holder with a solitary tapered candle when I decorate for Christmas. Before we open our presents on Christmas morning, we take a moment to light the candle for those who have gone before us. May their flames live on in our hearts during the holidays and throughout the year.

There are so many holidays happening right now—I dare not try to list them for the fear of leaving one out. No matter if you celebrate all of them or you celebrate none of them, may your days be blessed and restful and may you move into the new year with peace.

By Kathy Perdue



Events

Remember, with winter fully upon us, some events are subject to the weath-

Guest Speaker

Sunday, December 22 @ 10 AM

Roddy Biggs of the First UU, Nashville, will join us and share the topic of the true meaning of the holiday season, bringing a message of hope for those struggling through the holiday season. A rose ceremony will follow.

First Sunday of the Month Potluck!

Sunday, January 5 @ 11 AM
Sunday, February 2 @ 11 AM

For the Potluck, please bring a cooked dish or a store-bought item or contribute \$3 in the donation tin toward the meal or offer to wash or dry dishes. When you bring food, please bring enough to serve all who wish to enjoy your dish. And EVERYBODY wishes to enjoy your tasty morsels!



Compassionate Communication

1st & 3rd Wednesdays
Wednesday, January 1 @ 6:00 PM
Wednesday, January 15 @ 6:00 PM

Compassionate Communication is an effective tool for resolving differences. This training will aid you in better understanding other people and in having other people better understand you.



Story for All Ages

Sunday, January 12 @ 9:30 AM
Sunday, January 26 @ 9:30 AM

Whether you are a young kid, or a not-so-young kid, come listen to the story for all ages, where we can all learn through wonderfully illustrated literature!

Meditation

Monday, December 23 @ 6 PM
Tuesday, January 14 @ 6 PM
Tuesday, January 28 @ 6 PM



Contact Deanna Lack for additional details.

Chalice Circle

Tuesday, January 14 @ 7 PM
Tuesday, January 28 @ 7 PM

Contact Gates Craighead for additional details.



Mindful Movement

Mindful Movement will resume in the Spring. See you there then!

Social Justice Committee

Sunday, January 5 @ 11:30 AM



Board Meeting

Sunday, January 12 @ 11:30 AM

Current Board members, incoming Board members, and all those interested are welcome!



Board Meeting Highlights

By Susie Zuller, Secretary

As the UUCC lay minister, Deanna Lack reported that to date, November 17, she still has not heard from the Commissioned Lay Minister program as to whether she has been accepted. However, De said that she is reading from the CLM book list and is continuing her usual ministerial duties of two Sundays per month of sermons, congregational care, and representing UUCC in the community.

Gates Craighead, chair of the CLM committee (composed of Gates, Janie Finch, and Rochelle Turner) reported the committee in conjunction with De decided they needed to survey the congregation. Gates stated, "We want to make sure this is a smooth transition and that everyone's needs are being met. I took ten questions from the UUA's generic congregational survey and tweaked them to fit our congregation." Gates has posted the survey on the UUCC Facebook group and has e-mailed it to congregants. If you still need to complete your survey, please do so. If you have already completed it, thank you!

Rochelle Turner, community outreach coordinator for the VROOM grant, reported she is in training for how to administer the grant and is working with other partners. She has been doing other community outreach with LGBTQIA+, 50+ Elderhood, Power of Putnam, and Equal Justice Initiative.

Although Jenifer Crone, treasurer, was absent, Charles Zuller, past treasurer, summarized and updated the treasurer's report that Jenifer had e-mailed the Board. Charles stated that only 64% of pledges for 2019 had been received, but that the Sunday offertory was keeping UUCC in the black. "It may not be as dire as it looks," he stated. The Board

agreed to keep moving forward.

Worship coordinator Gates Craighead reported that Sunday speakers and service coordinators are filled through December. However, there is still need for greeters. If you would like to be either a speaker, service coordinator, or greeter, please talk with Gates or anybody you know who has done these very important jobs.

Tracie Craighead reported she will soon be installing the electronic key pad on UUCC's front door.

De, Susie Zuller, and Dylan Eralie reported they are all working on fundraisers.

The Board discussed Rochelle's suggestion of how to best disburse funds from the VROOM grant. No decisions were made.

The Board approved Melissa Bean's request to distribute the *Focus magazine at UUCC*.

The next Board meeting was set for Sunday, December 8, at 11:45 a.m. Members and friends of UUCC are welcome to attend.

November 2019 Income and Expenses

Income	4311.32
Expenses	5028.36

This holiday season, remember:

rest. = restoration

Happy Holidays, Everyone!