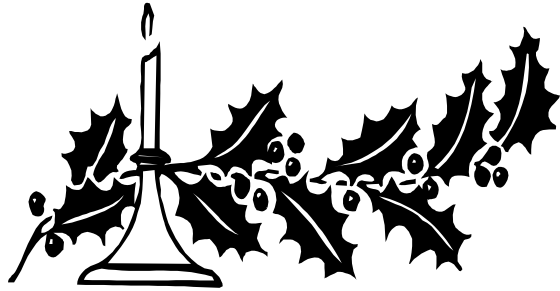


# STEEPLETALK



G H U R G H



## Christmas Eve Vesper Service December 24, 4:30 p.m.

The chancel will bloom with poinsettias for this intergenerational service of readings and carols. The service begins at 4:30 with one half hour of preludes, and will end with the traditional singing of "Silent Night" by candlelight.

The Congregational Services Committee invites everyone to provide cookies and other sweets for this year's reception after Vesper services. You may either deliver these items anytime before December 24, or bring them with you if you are planning to attend Vespers.

Two requests: (1) please write "Vespers" on the container if you deliver them early, and (2) do not use nuts. Sugar-free items are welcome. *Thank you so much for your help.*

## Gather with Fellow UUs for Annual Goal Setting

The Council, in conjunction with the Board and the Stewardship Committee, is planning a **Winter Wonderland** on **Friday, January 11, 2002 at 6pm**. As in, "I wonder what the new year holds for us! I wonder what fun activities and programs we can cook up! I wonder what our most pressing operational needs are! I wonder who our new minister will be (and how will we pay her/him??)!" Come to the annual **Goal Setting meeting** and bring your wonderful hopes and dreams. **Potluck dinner at 6** with childcare and supervised children's activities to follow, as the adults wonder together and welcome the new church year.

*In Memoriam*

**Ruth Atwood**

August 28, 1919 ~December 3, 2001

*In Memoriam*

**Nell McGlothlin**

November 12, 1913 ~ December 14, 2001

## From the Interim Minister

Why join this church? For many years I was reluctant to invite newcomers to join the churches I served. This is an inward decision, I told myself. People will join when they are ready.

I have changed my mind. Convinced that Unitarian Universalism has a unique message for independent-minded persons and families, I want everyone to know about it. And I am eager to welcome every possible newcomer into voting membership in this church.

At this church we accept unconditionally every individual who crosses the threshold. This means that we accept you on your own terms. You know yourself better than anyone else knows you. You know what “powers are crying for utterance” in your heart, soul, mind, or conscience. You know when a church you are visiting is the church you’ve been looking for all your life.

At this church we understand that life involves brokenness as well as blessing. All of us have experienced, or will experience, the death of a parent, a child, a close friend. It is at such times that the church comes into its own. Grieving, we are enfolded by loving hands and hearts. Broken, we take our first steps toward wholeness in the worshiping commu-

nity. Alone, we find companions in the fellowship of spiritual exploration. In solidarity with the oppressed, in comradeship with prophets and teachers of every age and faith, we are able to say with Beethoven, “I am never alone when I am alone.”

At this church we accept risk as the price of freedom. “Nothing is settled, everything matters” was the personal credo of a ministerial colleague, the late Jim Curtis. We create ourselves, and establish our standards of faithfulness, and honor our covenants throughout our lives. Our deepest convictions, our highest aspirations, are a work in progress. A liberal church is a place to experiment, to venture, to stand forth, to learn from our mistakes, to begin anew. Some say the great UU sacrament is drinking coffee. I say it is changing your mind.

I welcome you to this church. We’re glad you’re here. We have 261 members. Our goal is 300 members by the annual meeting in June. Also, only those who have been members for 60 days can vote to call a new minister in May. Think about it.

**David B. Parke**

### Steepletalk

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*This little tidbit from the Rev. Elinor Artman of Highlands, NC, was shared by Tom Louderback, who received it via a UU chatline.*

Here’s a new twist: I’m preparing my Christmas services, and in a book titled “American Christmas” by Jim Harrison, 1994, I came across this:

“... for years Martin Luther was credited with writing one of the best-loved Christmas songs, ‘Away in a Manger.’ ...but English history now has some evidence to dispute his authorship. An American, James Pierpont, currently is believed to be the author.”

Would this be a coup for Unitarians? :) Comments anyone? Elinor

## News and Notes

## Shared Ministry

### First Unitarian Choir Holiday Schedule

Sunday Dec. 23 9:45am  
Monday Dec. 24 TBA  
OFF until Thursday, Jan. 17, 2002

### Sunday Morning Adult Round Table (SMART)

Church library -- 9:40 until 10:45am  
Optional spiritual prelude--9:30 until 9:40

### Upcoming Topics & Events

**December 23: NO MEETING TODAY**

**December 25: No SMART meeting this evening.**  
(Next meeting Jan. 22)

**December 30: "Starting Anew with the New Year"**  
with **Bruce Behny** moderating.

**January 6: TBA**

We need your help! We would like to get some topics relevant to the current crisis. We need presenters to talk about areas such as history, religion and economics that could address some of the background issues behind the terrorist attack. The presentations should not take sides about how to respond, but merely give enough perspective to allow people to make their own decisions. Contact **Bob Parish** at xxx-xxxx, or at [rdparish@aye.net](mailto:rdparish@aye.net)

Future events will be planned based on what needs the congregation expresses, and what individual members volunteer to share.

### Kroger Buck Sales

Our Fiscal to Date

(as of 12-9-01)

Sales = \$8,130

5% Profit for 1st U = \$407



Hello, everyone! By the time you read this, the Shared Ministry Committee will have hosted Board Presidents (current and future) and Council Chairpeople (current and future) and Nominating and Personnel up in our choir room "office."

We will have plied them with food and given them an update and vision for shared ministry.

We're also hard at work on the **Brag Day luncheon** after the Sunday service. Mark your calendars for **January 20** when we will disprove the old adage "There's no such thing as a free lunch." This will be your chance to express appreciation to others for what they do for our church, and to receive thanks for your own contributions. Oh, and to eat lots of good food.

The Shared Ministry Committee wishes you all joy and peace this season and in the coming year. Take care, and we'll see you in church.

*Laura, Kathy and Kathy*

(Thackeray & Drehmel)

### Shared Ministry Coordinator *Laura Jennings*

Home phone: xxx-xxxx

(Call at home from 9am - 9pm)

E-mail: [sharedministry@firstulou.org](mailto:sharedministry@firstulou.org)

### Search for a Job with Support of Friends

If you are out of work or thinking about a job change, please join the Job Seekers support group. We will meet in the Parlor on **Wed., January 9, at 7:30 pm.**



## REviews

A couple of weeks ago, I attended a meeting that began with a check-in period in which **Jen Lavery** invited each of us to share a favorite thing about December. I will confess that my initial, private, thought was, "What's to like about December!" or something equally Scrooge-like. I am a lover of endlessly slow, steamy summer evenings, cicadas screeching, lightning bugs hovering, abundant greenness. In December, these soul-sustaining pleasures seem like distant memories, tauntingly out of reach.


Wrapped up in my own *winterdread*, I found myself surprised by how easily others around the table were able to extol the virtues of December: the intense brightness of the starlight, the return of Orion to our night sky, the beauty of the trees stripped to their bare, essential beauty. In the short days and long nights since that check-in, I've found myself more attuned to and appreciative of winter's gifts. (Thank you Jen!) As I prepared an Upstairs Chapel service focusing on Winter Solstice, I began to reflect on winter's meanings and possibilities.

As the days grow darker and colder, many of us feel the urge to draw inward. Might December be an invitation to introspection? Could our hurried, hurried holiday busy-ness be some sort of manic de-

fense against a natural urge toward repose? Consider the possibilities if we were to heed nature's call to close down a bit... reflect more... DO less. Consider quiet evenings with family, more time spent in front of a fire, reading aloud or reading alone, taking some moments to simply be. At a time when peace on earth seems increasingly elusive, perhaps we might find some sustaining moments of peace in our own hearts and minds.

I think that I could learn to love December.

Yours with love, and with hopes that you'll find peace and tranquillity in the season.

Lisa 

### R.E. Announcements

□ On **December 23**, R.E. Committee member **Kathie Johnson** will be leading **holiday crafts in the Open Classroom from 10:45 - 12:00**.

□ On **December 30**, there is **no R.E. programming for children or youth**. (Nursery care will be provided.)

□ New class: "**Being a UU Parent**" will meet **Sundays in January, 9:45 - 10:45 in the R.E. Library**, upstairs. **Melissa Draut** and **Lisa Willner** will co-facilitate.

□ **Our new R.E. semester begins in February. We are looking for one adult to work with Melissa Draut, co-leading the 1st and 2nd grade class.** If you're thinking you'd like to try out teaching, this is a great opportunity to work alongside an experienced and talented partner. Contact Lisa for more information.

□ Teacher orientation for the new semester will be held in January. Please stay tuned to *Steepletalk* and the official church listserv for more details.

# Happy New Year!

**Lisa Willner**  
**Religious Education Director**

Church office  
(502) 585-5110

Home  
(502) xxx-xxxx

E-mail  
dre@firstulou.org  
lisa@scruton.win.net (at home)

Office Hours  
Monday 10 - 3  
Tuesday afternoon & evenings  
Wednesday 11-3  
Friday is Lisa's day off.



## Church Members

### Carol Uebelhoer

by Joan Beal

Though Carol Uebelhoer is a new member, you might have sworn she's been around First U for years. This is, no doubt, because of the rapidity with which she has plunged into First U issues and organizations. Carol joined in June after attending for about a year.

Carol and her partner of 24 years, **Jo Ann**, had known of First Unitarian through social justice work. When **xxxxx**, their daughter, turned 3, she attended a

Bible school in the community in which they were living. When one of the days was designated "Sin Day," Carol and Jo Ann knew it was time to seriously



look at what they wanted for their daughter's religious experience. After checking the First U web site, they began attending.

Carol was raised in Fort Wayne, initially as a Roman Catholic. However, as the daughter of a feminist mother who left the church when women were excluded, Carol was churchless until she found First Unitarian.

She and Jo Ann moved from Old Louisville to Otisco, IN twelve years ago. They live on 110 acres, with **xxxxx** (now almost 6), a flock of chickens, horses and goats. Her outside work is as a computer network administrator in the U.S. attorney's office in the Bank of Louisville.

At First U, Carol works in R.E. and has lately been involved in helping to restart Interweave, providing a place for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and polyamorous people. Carol was also the main organizer of the spontaneous First U demonstration

last June, supporting the congregation of Central Presbyterian when it was besieged by a loud, anti-gay, homophobic crowd.

Carol values First Unitarian for its R.E. program, for not sweeping issues under the carpet, and for the openness to talk, fight and argue when necessary. First Unitarian can only be strengthened by this new member's activism (maybe even general rabble rousing?) and willingness to plunge into all the facets of the life of our church.

*Did you  
brush your teeth  
this morning?*



**But what if you didn't have toothpaste—  
or a toothbrush?**

*If you're homeless, you lack basic personal hygiene items like a toothbrush or toilet paper.*

**That's why HELP needs help!** Our church is a partner in the downtown community ministries' support of the HELP office. HELP supplies the **most essential needs** for the minimum comfort of the **homeless and the poorest of the poor**. We urgently need:

- deodorants
- toothbrushes
- toothpaste
- tissues
- toilet paper
- soap

**Please leave donations in the large box near the hall entrance to the Social Hall.**

P.S.—**Kroger Bucks** are more than welcome! Pick up an envelope at the Kroger Bucks table in the Social Hall after 2nd and 4th Sunday services.

## Church Matters

### Interweave Meeting

January 9, 2002

7:00 P.M. in the Social Hall

**Interweave** is a group of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Intersexed and Transgendered people and their friends who meet monthly for support, snacks and interesting discussion. This month's topic is "Being a Cantaloupe in an Apples and Oranges World." We will explore the topic of bisexuality in a discussion led by **Debbie Silverman** and **Tom Stevens**. Come to put your own 2 cents into this lively discussion. Let's all explore and explode some stereotypes on this issue: "They'll sleep with anything that moves," or, "if we were left to our own devices, we'd all be this way," and many, many others. See you there!

### Time to Sign Up for Circle Suppers!

The Activities Committee will sponsor a series of three Circle Suppers beginning in February (seems like a long way off, but not really!). **Circle Suppers are a great way to get better acquainted with church friends, as well as enjoy good food and good company.** Each month (February, March, and April) a different household will host a dinner and provide the main course. The guests will provide the other parts of the meal as specified by the host.

Eight people usually attend a dinner, although the numbers may vary, and each month a different combination of participants will be together. Hosts are encouraged to invite a new church member or friend if a substitute is needed, or if room for extra guests is available.

We will begin taking sign-ups for Circle Suppers in the Social Hall in mid-December. Whether you've done this many times before, or this will be your first experience with Circle Suppers, please join the fun! If you have any questions or need more information, call **Mary Ballard** at xxx-xxxx.

### UUWF Seeking Members

The Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation (UUWF) has requested our membership renewal. The former Women's Alliance belonged to the UUWF for years. Recently, women in the church have tried to continue this tradition.

The UUWF designs and develops projects such as "Cakes for the Queen of Heaven." They also recognize and honor women living and dead with the **Clara Barton Sisterhood** and **Susan B. Anthony Roll of Recognition**. They have published books and papers available for reading and study. All members receive the publication, "The Communicator."

Dues are \$15.00 per year. If you are interested in joining, write a check to First Unitarian Church and mark it "Women's Alliance." The membership list will be sent in mid-January. Questions? Call **Joan Beal** (xxx-xxxx) or **Joan Johnson** (xxx-xxxx).

### HELP Make Mardi Gras Party and Auction a Success

Our attention has mainly focused on our national tragedy. Our community meanwhile has dire needs-- government assistance and employment income are both diminished.

In coordination with other agencies, Central Louisville Community Ministries distributes the household and personal necessities collected in those HELP boxes (like the one in the hall of the church). In addition, this organization offers stop gap assistance to a constant stream of emergency needs for food, utility bills, medications, and transportation.

Therefore, HELP is sponsoring a **Mardi Gras Party and Fund Raiser on Friday, February 8, 5-7:30, at Calvary Episcopal Church**, 821 S. 4th St. (next door). There will be wine, appetizers, and dessert--and an auction of items from member churches. Start thinking of an item or service to contribute, and plan to come to the party-- it will absolutely be great fun.! Admission, \$5.00, for retirees, \$3.00 Call **David Parke** (585-5110) or **Betty Herz** (xxx-xxxx) after Jan. 3 for information.

## Calendar: December 20 - January 13

### December

- 20 Thursday**  
7:00pm Care Group (library)  
7:30pm Choir (sanctuary & rm 210)
- 21 Friday**  
6:00pm CUUPS Yule/Solstice potluck/circle -  
(sanctuary, SH)\*
- 22 Saturday**  
2:00pm Ruth Atwood Memorial Service (sanctuary, SH)
- 23 Sunday**  
9:45am Choir rehearsal - Rm 210
- 24 Monday—CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED**  
4:30pm Christmas Eve musical prelude  
5:00pm Christmas Eve Service
- 25 Tuesday—CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED**  
*Christmas*
- 27 Thursday**
- 30 Sunday -- No RE Program**
- 31 Monday—CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED**



### January 2002

- 1 Tuesday—CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED**
- 2 Wednesday**  
12:45pm ROMEOS (Piccadilly Cafeteria)  
5:30pm Social Responsibility Committee (library)  
7:00pm Worship Committee (social hall)
- 5 Saturday**  
3:00pm Nell McGlothlin Memorial Service  
(sanctuary)
- 6 Sunday**  
9:45am RE - Parenting Teens Support (parlor)  
9:45am RE - UU Parent (RE library)  
12:15pm Sunday Luncheon  
1:00pm OWL (rm 205)
- 8 Tuesday**  
7:00pm Council Meeting (library)
- 9 Wednesday**  
7:00pm Interweave (social hall)  
7:30pm Job Seekers (parlor)
- 10 Thursday**  
6:10pm Finance (library)  
6:30pm RE - Growth Through Loss (parlor)
- 11 Friday**  
6:00pm Goal Setting - All Congreg. (SH/Kit)
- 13 Sunday**  
9:45am RE - UU Parent (RE Library)  
1:00pm OWL (rm 205)

## Just among ourselves

**Tom and Carolyn Louderback** have been accepted into "Just Faith" which is administered by The Merton Center at Bellarmine University. This is an intensive nine month social action program in "the Christian peace and justice tradition."

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family of **Ruth Christine Huber Atwood**, a long-time church member who died December 3. A **memorial service** will be held in the sanctuary on **Saturday, December 22, at 2pm.**

**Lost Coat:** Sunday, December 9, someone took my coat by mistake from the coat hooks in the hallway at church. It's dark blue with a brown collar. Please bring it back next Sunday. **Tom Louderback**

The congregation extends its sympathy to **Sue and Frank Slesnick** and their children upon the death of Sue's mother, **Elizabeth Baranovic.**

We send love and sympathy to the family and friends of **Nell McGlothlin**, a leading force in our congregation and a champion of Unitarian Universalism. Nell died peacefully at her home on December 14. The **memorial service** will be held **Saturday, Jan. 5, at 3:00pm** in the sanctuary. Memorial gifts should be made to the First Unitarian Church Endowment Fund or to ACLU of Kentucky.

Please keep **Cathy Leary** in your thoughts with love and sympathy as she deals with the recent death of her sister, **Virginia Marie.**

**First Unitarian Church  
809 South Fourth Street  
Louisville, KY 40203-2115**

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**Celebrations of Life**

*Sunday services begin at 10:55 a.m.*

**December 23**      **Christmas Sunday. *In Bethlehem.* David B. Parke** will present an original retelling of the birth story. Music Director **Michael Megahan**, principal clarinetist of the Louisville Orchestra, will play a clarinet solo.

**December 30**      ***Personal Resolutions and Universalist Unitarian Resolutions.*** Come and light a candle for the New Year. A worship committee service.

**January 6**      ***Friendship.* David B. Parke** will speak. We take friendship for granted. Yet it is a gift second to none in the human world. Emerson describes friendship as “an order of nobility.”

**January 13**      ***Great Expectations.*** The **Rev. Cynthia P. Cain** will speak in a pulpit exchange. We welcome Cynthia Cain, minister since 1999 of the UU Church of Lexington. Of this sermon she writes, “A look, theological and otherwise, at how expectations can be an impediment to our happiness.” **David Parke** speaks in Lexington this Sunday.