



## Notes from Norm

Greetings,  
The holidays have arrived! By the time you read this we will already have celebrated Kwanzaa. The Yuletide Fair (Saturday, Dec. 10) is the next big event. **Tiffany Taylor** and the Kitchen Elves have been working night and day to prepare tasty holiday gift-giving treats. On December 14 all are invited to Chalice Night for Tiffany's Restaurant and the decorating of the church for the holiday season. On Sunday the 18th we will have our annual Children's RE Holiday Celebration of Life service. This is one of the most popular services of the season and for many people, the whole year. Also, on the evening of the 18th, you can go to the CUUPS Yule Circle and celebrate the approaching Winter Solstice.

Holiday sounds have been filling the air at church recently. In anticipation of the Christmas Eve Vespers the choir has been steadily growing in number of voices and quality. Meanwhile, on Sunday mornings, the Choir for All Ages has been rehearsing for the RE Holiday service. To further musically enrich Vespers, our Music Director, **Rebecca Johnson** has arranged for a Brass Ensemble to play for the service. For well over 65 years Vespers has been the most festive night of the year at First Unitarian. The Preludes start at 4:30 and Vespers is at 5 p.m.

In an every-6-years-or-so twist of the calendar, Christmas and New Year's Day are both on a Sunday. This year Christmas is also the first day of Hanukkah, so our Celebration of Life on the 25th will have a decided Hanukkah flavor to it. On New Year's Day a special Celebration is being planned to mark the turning of the year.

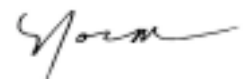
After several frustrating efforts, I am happy to report that we have finally been able to connect through the Kentucky Refugee Ministries with a family who has relocated to Louisville in

the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. We collected over \$2,000 for our Flood Relief Fund. The Social Responsibility Committee has decided to match that with another \$2,000 from our Kroger Bucks Fund giving us over \$4,000 total. In the best spirit of the holidays, our church's generous gifts will be used to 1.) assist flood relief efforts with our Partner Church in Nagyenyed, 2.) support targeted UUSC/UUA efforts in the Gulf Coast region, and 3.) help right here in Louisville with our newly "adopted" family.

In a paradoxical way, the winter holidays are both some of the darkest days of the year and some of the brightest. With all of the holiday festivities and commitments to our own families, friends and personal plans, the next few weeks can easily overwhelm many of us. The holidays can seem even more overwhelming for those who may not have any family or close friends nearby. They can be especially difficult for those who are dealing with either their own or a loved one's serious illness or illnesses. Personal difficulties in relationships and other life transitions (jobs, moving, etc.) can be even more stressful during the holidays. And, for those who have lost love ones since last year's winter holidays, the season can be a painful reminder of those deep losses. If each one of us can share a little of our own light and love with some who may need a little extra in their lives these days, we will all make it to the brighter days.

Thank you all once again for allowing me to serve as your minister. **Kathryn** and I send each of you our very best wishes for the season and the new year to come.

Peace,



by **Henry Lieberg**

The Board of Trustees convened for its regular meeting on Thursday, November 17.

- The Junior High Class asked for permission to hold a Youth Conference at the Church in April 2006. The Board approved the request.
- Finance Committee reported on the three Funds of the Church: General, Capital Assets and Endowment. It was also learned that according to the Treasurer, we are many thousands of dollars behind in the payment of pledges. It was stressed that if a pledge is made, one should also try and pay it. The Treasurer suggested that a minimum financial commitment be made by the membership - maybe \$30/mo - to ensure some basic income.
- House and Grounds Committee reported that the Church building is now 18 years old, and that is an age which often requires repairs in structures. Money is needed for various repairs.
- The Conflict Management Comm. gave an interesting report that will bear fruition in early 2006.
- Finally, a contract with Kaviar Forge to build a new Church sign was approved.

from **JoAnn Dale**, Chalice Night Team Leader  
Beginning preparations for the second half of the church year, the Chalice Night Team pauses to thank everyone for making Chalice Night an evolving success, to reiterate the two principles of our operating philosophy: First, Adult RE provides the Wednesday night framework, but YOU define the content. You may offer a book study group, a class or course in a matter of interest to you, a film (whether to entertain or to provoke discussion), an activity (handwork, cooking and crafts have all been offered), or simple fun and fellowship (games, music, or?).

Second, all programming is open to everyone and is not designed to foster isolated groups. Our fervent hope is for the programming to weave a tapestry that reflects the energy and diversity in our congregation and in our community.

For the spring semester, the programming scheduler is **Geneva Fry**, the host coordinator is **Janice Molnar**, the greeter coordinator is **Joe Edmiston**, and the service coordinator is **Jo Ann Dale**. If you have an idea, a request, a concern, or a question, contact one of us or **Lisa Willner**. We wish you joyful winter holidays, and we look forward to seeing you when regular Chalice Night programming resumes on January 11.

## STEEPLETALK

Published every two weeks (with exceptions) by  
**First Unitarian Church of Louisville**  
809 South 4th Street, Louisville, KY 40203

Next deadline: **Friday, December 16, 2005**  
(covers **December 25 - January 14**)  
(3 weeks)



**Editor:** Claudia Runge

**Contact us:** [editor@firsttulou.org](mailto:editor@firsttulou.org)



### Wednesday, December 14

**Dinner:** White chili, Biscuits, Coleslaw, Christmas cookies

**Program:** A fun event for the entire family! Be joyful and sing, all while decorating the church for Yule, Hanukkah, and Christmas. If you are a Chalice Night regular, come assert yourself in the decorating process. If you are unfamiliar with Chalice Night, this is your opportunity to sample **Tiffany's** wonderful cooking and get to know some First Uers, old and new.

## REviews

The current Religious Education semester ends in January. Many thanks to our wonderful R.E. teachers -- **Joyce Schweickart, Kathy Thackeray, Roger Bradshaw, danielle rogers-candee, Jo Ann Dale, Kent McDaniel, Carol Uebelhoer, Patty Kannapel, Beverly Moore, Jim Schweickart, Phil Candee, Seana Golder, and Blair White** -- for the time, creativity, and energy they devote to the children and youth of First Unitarian Church. While some of these generous folks will continue to teach through the second semester, others will be taking a break, and there are still a few second semester teaching slots to fill.

As our new semester begins in February, we will continue to offer these classes:

- **Preschool** -- *Celebrating Me and My World*, a celebration of the wondrous qualities of self and the world around us.
- **Primary** -- *Around the Church, Around the Year*, an introduction to the Unitarian Universalist community and the faith and practices of Unitarian Universalism.
- **Intermediate** -- *Bibleodeon*, an experiential program introducing young Unitarian Universalists to stories of the Hebrew and Christian Bibles.
- **Middle School** -- *Neighboring Faiths*, an exploration of world religions featuring field trips to diverse places of worship within our community.
- **Senior High** -- This combined class/youth group is designed to help participants take some time to connect with their deeper selves and to reflect on what they believe and what really matters. The curriculum *Words to Live By: Creating a Personal Credo* provides some class content. There is also a focus on group develop-

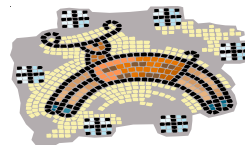
ment and identity. The class participates in afternoon field trips/social action outings approximately once a month.

While teaching Religious Education is an important ministry to our congregation, it can also be a wonderful thing to do for yourself! Our teachers often say how much they learn about Unitarian Universalism from the curricula and from the children, and there is always a lot of great energy upstairs on Sunday mornings.

If you'd like to become an active part of our R.E. community, I encourage you to speak with me.

Peace,

*Lisa*



### R.E. Announcements--Holiday Edition

#### R.E. Holiday Celebration of Life Update

a. The **R.E. HOLIDAY CHOIR FOR ALL AGES** continues to rehearse in the Social Hall, Sunday mornings 9:45 - 10:45 through December 18. For more information, contact **Lisa Willner** or **Joe Edmiston**.

b. On **December 18**, all children and youth Kindergarten - Senior High are asked to **arrive at church by 9:30** for a run-through of the service. Preschooler parents - please check with your child's R.E. teacher for your arrival time.

#### Children's Social Action Update:

a. **Fundraiser for Project Warm.** Our Religious Education students have already raised

## R.E. Announcements

## S.M.A.R.T.

\$260 for Project Warm by selling holiday cards. Cards will continue to be available while supplies last. They will be on sale in the Social Hall after upcoming Celebrations of Life, or contact Lisa to place an order.

**b. Stocking Stuffers for Central State Hospital.** As you go about your holiday shopping, remember the adult residential patients at Central State Hospital. We invite you to fill the stockings hanging along the stairwell with your donations of small wrapped candies, playing cards, hats, warm slipper socks, gloves, mittens, inexpensive wristwatches, small art/craft supplies, puzzle books, etc. These are often the only presents these individuals receive, so please give generously!

**c. Support the human rights efforts of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee** by “feeding” a **Guest at Your Table**. Collection boxes are available at church now, and may be turned in on Christmas Eve.

➡ **Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality education class for 4th and 5th graders:** The program begins in January with a Parent and Child Orientation session after church on January 8th. If you know of individuals who might wish to participate, or if you are a 4th or 5th grade parent who missed the initial parent meeting, please contact **Carol Uebelhoer** (xxxxxxx@xxxxx.com) for more information.

➡ **Coming of Age date changes:** There will be a breakfast gathering for all participants and parents on January 21, 10:00 in the Social Hall. The third quarterly meeting has been re-scheduled to February 3, 6:00 - 9:00 at a location to be announced. (Please note that these dates are different from those previously published and adjust your calendars.)



### Sunday Morning Adult Round Table

Church Library  
Sharing at 9:30am

Program - 9:40 until 10:45am

- **December 11--*Born Again.....and Again.....and Again.*** In a sermon to GA 2005, Rev. Robert M. Hardies describes how spiritual transformation can exist only when we are “transformed by love.” Great Sermon Series.
- **December 18--*Moral Values for a Pluralistic Society.*** How might the moral and ethical grounding of Unitarian Universalism be given greater voice in the public square? Continuation of the UUA Study Action Issue.
- **December 25--No Round Table**

Do you know of a sermon that would be great for First U folk to talk about? Sunday Morning Adult Round Table is offering a Great Sermons Series this year. Once a month, we will read a sermon and discuss it. Please send your ideas to [smart@firstulou.org](mailto:smart@firstulou.org), or contact **Jasmine Walston, Jane Martin Buckley, Grace Levitan, or Lisa Willner**. When available, a link to the sermon will be provided on Round Table’s upcoming events page of the church website, [www.firstulou.org/re/roundtable.html](http://www.firstulou.org/re/roundtable.html), for those who wish to read it prior to the program.



## Just among ourselves

Please keep **Peg Kesler** and her family in your thoughts. Peg recently had a mastectomy and has been diagnosed as having Stage Two cancer. Her family reports that she is recuperating nicely right now, is increasingly mobile, and has been fortunate to have family and friends to support her. She would welcome calls, cards, and e-mails. Her contact info. is [xxxxxx@xxxx.com](mailto:xxxxxx@xxxx.com) and xxx-xxx-xxxx. Mail should be sent to xxxxx xxxxxx in Bloomfield, KY.

We are pleased to announce that **Anne M. Calvert**, former member of First Unitarian and mother of **Kendra Calvert**, who was raised in this church, and **Fred H. McMahon** plan to marry on December 30, 2005. We wish them much happiness and good fortune.

**Joanne Graf**'s mother has recently been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Our thoughts are with Joanne, who has been traveling, when she can, to Philadelphia to help during this difficult time.

If he is following doctor's orders, **John Durham**, our building supervisor, is resting. To help John adhere to those orders, **Jeanne Reed** will coordinate delivery of meals to him. Call Jeanne at xxx-xxxx if you would be willing to cook something for delivery to John. Jeanne is thinking that he probably needs something taken in two or three times a week.

On a related note, we are pleased to announce that **Jim Fry** has been employed by the church to temporarily fill in for John Durham while he's on bed rest. Although we're used to seeing Jim do lots of work around the church, now he's official!

We send loving and heartfelt sympathy to **Kay Woodworth**, whose father died recently.



All church members and friends are invited to join **Tiffany, Doug, Chloe, and Will Taylor and Anne Miller** for their **13th annual Holiday Open House** on **Sunday, Dec. 18**. Drop by any time from 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

to sip a cup of warm cider, enjoy a plate of homemade cookies, and talk with friends new and old. Directions: <http://xxxx.xxxxxxxxxx.xxx/~xxxxx.xxxxxx/> or call xxx-xxxx.

### The Principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.



# Music Notes

from **Rebecca Johnson**, Music Director

The music program for Vespers promises to be a crowd pleaser this year. We anticipate exciting preludes (beginning at 4:30pm, December 24), and the choir is preparing lovely songs for the program (beginning at 5:00pm). For those who plan to sing in the choir at Vespers, please note the final practice schedule leading up to the “big night.”

- Thursday, December 8 -- 7:15pm
- Sunday, December 11 -- 10:00am
- Thursday, December 15 -- 7:15pm
- Sunday, December 18 -- 12:30pm
- Thursday, December 22 -- 7:00pm - 9:00pm
- Saturday, December 24 -- 3:00pm



## Lisa Willner Religious Education Director

*Telephone*  
(502) 585-5110 (Office)

*E-mail*  
dre@firstulou.org

*Office Hours*  
Monday 10:00 - 2:00  
Tuesday 11:00 - 2:00  
Thursday 11:00 - 2:00

*Additional times available by appointment.*

# Church Matters



## Reminder and Thanks from Congregational Services Committee

- **Please remember to bring cookies, sweet treats, or finger food to Vespers, 4pm Saturday, Dec. 24.**
- Thank you for the increase in coffee donations. We still have a way to go before we “break even.”

**David Runge, CSC**

## Concert for Peace Featuring Harry Pickens

Keneseth Israel Congregation of Louisville and Interfaith Paths to Peace will present a “Concert for Peace” at **Keneseth Israel on Thursday night, December 15, at 7:00pm**. The concert is free and open to persons of all religions, as well as those who do not identify with any religion. Donations are welcomed; proceeds will be divided evenly between Keneseth Israel and Interfaith Paths to Peace.

Harry Pickens, an accomplished pianist and composer, as well as a board member of Interfaith Paths to Peace, is well-known to many members and friends of First Unitarian..

## Place Nametags Here!

The **Shared Ministry Committee** has placed a basket on a small table near the door at the Library Lane entrance/exit. The purpose of this basket is to allow you to **place your nametag in it BEFORE you leave our church.**



## Shared Ministry

by **Linda Givens**

Did you know that opportunities to use your talents abound at First Unitarian?

### Did you know if....

- you like to write
- you are good at creating promotional materials
- you would enjoy creating news releases
- you enjoy exploring ways to advertise events
- you like to work with others in doing all of the above

### And – Did you know if...

- you enjoy planning and/organizing social events with others
  - you enjoy engaging others in “fun” activities
  - you like working as part of a “lively” team
- .....then First Unitarian has some interesting opportunities for you.

Please contact Shared Ministry co-chairs, **JoAnn Dale** and **Phil Candee** or **Shared Ministry Coordinator, Linda Givens** for more information and for directions about how to put your interests and abilities to work here.

*Linda*

**Linda Givens**

**Shared Ministry Coordinator**



**Office Hours**  
**Monday - Thursday**  
**11am - 4pm**  
**Friday off**

**502-585-5110**  
**sharedministry@firstulou.org**

## Social Responsibility

### Hurricane/Flood Relief Update

from **Dennis Thompson**

Your Social Responsibility Team is very happy to report that through the generosity of First Unitarian members and friends we have accumulated at least \$2,026.50 for flood relief. Accounting has had the wonderful problem of keeping up with donations that continually come in. Social Responsibility will match via Kroger Bucks which brings the total to \$4053.

This week we learned of a family from New Orleans's 9th ward that has decided to make Louisville their new home. We will be meeting with some of the family soon to determine what their needs are and how we can help them get settled. For now we are sending Partner Church \$1000.00, the Southwest UU for Gulf Coast flooding \$1500.00. and the rest for the family. More news forthcoming soon.

### Fair Trade Chocolate for Sale!

from **Jill Harmer**

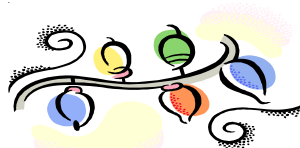
The Social Responsibility committee is selling Fair Trade chocolate after some church services. Buying this chocolate is good for your soul, taste buds, the farmers in Central America, the rainforests which do not have to be cut down because this is shade grown-and grown longer--and 60 cents of the \$2.50 cost per bar goes to First U.

### Kroger Cards Available Dec.11

You will be able to purchase Kroger Gift Cards in the social hall after the service on Dec. 11. See **Claudia Runge** to purchase your card, which will be loaded with \$20.00. For every dollar that you spend at Kroger, using your reloadable card to pay, four cents will come back to First Unitarian. It's an easy way to support our church's social concerns programs.

# Building Use Calendar: December 8 - 24

## December



**8 Thursday**  
 5:30 pm Personnel Committee – Parlor  
 6:00 pm Yuletide Fare Cooking Session  
 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room  
 7:00 pm Finance Committee – Library

**9 Friday**  
 7:00 am Yuletide Fare Set up – Entire Church  
 6:00-6:30 pm Yuletide Fare Cooking Session – Kitchen  
 7:00 pm Christian Fellowship – Library

**10 Saturday**  
**10am Yuletide Fare – Entire Church**

**11 Sunday**  
 9:30 am Conflict Management Team - Parlor  
 9:30 am SMART – Library  
 9:30 am Choir for all Ages – Sanctuary  
 10:00am Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room  
 10:55 am RE Classes – RE Classrooms  
 10:55 am Celebration of Life – Sanctuary  
 12:15 pm Social Responsibility – Library  
 12:30 pm Flute Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room  
**1:00pm Wreath Making Class – Social Hall**  
 1:00 pm Middle School Youth Group – RE Classrooms

**12 Monday**  
 11:30am Brownbaggers (Tentative) – Library  
 7:00pm Interweave – Parlor

**13 Tuesday**  
 12:00pm Staff Meeting – Norm’s Office  
 6:00pm Activities Committee – Parlor  
 7:00pm Church Council – Library

**14 Wednesday**  
**5:30 pm Chalice Night**  
**Xmas Tree & General Decorating**

**15 Thursday**  
 5:00 pm \*Private event – Sanctuary  
 7:00 pm Board Meeting – Library  
 7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room

**16 Friday**  
 6:00 pm \*Private event – Sanctuary/Soc. Hall/ Kitchen

**17 Saturday**  
 12:00 pm Brownbaggers at Farmington

**ALL DAY RE Service Preparations/Decorating – Sanctuary**

8:00 pm \*Sienna Group – Choir Room

**18 Sunday**  
 9:30 am Conflict Management Team - Parlor  
 9:30 am SMART – Library  
 9:30 am Choir for all Ages – Choir Room  
**10:55 am Celebration of Life – (RE Holiday Service)**  
 1:00 pm Middle School Youth Group – RE Classrooms  
 12:30 pm Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room  
**5:30 pm CUUPS: Winter Solstice – Soc. Hall/Kitchen/Sanctuary**

**20 Tuesday**  
 12:00 pm Staff Meeting- Norm’s Office

**21 Wednesday**  
 5:30 pm Chalice Night – Social Hall

**22 Thursday**  
 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room

**23 Friday**  
 Vespers Decorating  
 7:00 pm Christian Fellowship – Library

**24 Saturday - Christmas Eve**  
 3:00pm Choir rehearsal – Choir Room  
**4:30 pm Vespers Prelude**  
**5:00 pm Vespers Service**



*\* Denotes outside group or activity, not officially affiliated with First Unitarian Church.*

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

**Return Service Requested**

**Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Louisville, Kentucky  
Permit No. 146**

### **Celebrations of Life**

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

**December 11**      *Innocence and Trust.* **Rev. Norm Stewart, Worship Associate Linda Givens.** Recently I overheard someone say that the Christmas holiday is all about innocence as personified in the birth of a child many years ago in the little town of Bethlehem. Innocence is not a virtue UU's are known for lifting up very often. How might we use the holiday message of innocence to help us build trust in our shared ministry together here at First Unitarian?

**December 18**      *Angels and Messengers.* Religious Education Program. Join us as our children and youth present our annual Religious Education Holiday Celebration of Life. The Choir for All Ages will sing.

**December 25**      *Happy Christmas, Merry Hanukkah.* Rev. Norm Stewart and the Elves. Our Celebration of Life today will be a simple service marking both Christmas and the first day of Hanukkah which begins at sundown on the 25th this year.