



WILLIAMSBURG UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

WUUU NEWS

DECEMBER 2006



Thanksgiving Dinner, November 23, 2006, photo by Evelyn McKenney

December 3—Rev. Jennifer Ryu

Seekers after Truth—Do we seek truth in order to find an answer? Or can we find greater meaning in not knowing, but continually seeking?

This Sunday's topic will be discussed further at Monday's "Faith in the Conversation" session.

December 4—**Faith in the Conversation**, 6:30 in the Sanctuary

Join Rev. Jennifer for structured small group conversations based on the topic of the December 3rd worship service. Please come at 6:30 for a light supper (\$5.00 or whatever you can contribute). The program will begin at 7:00 and end at 8:30. RSVP to jennifer@wuu.org or office@wuu.org.

December 10—Rev. Preston Moore

Evidence of Things Not Seen—The word faith does not appear anywhere in our seven UU Principles or the six Sources of Our Living Tradition; and yet we often call ourselves a faith community. We are skeptical of deeds done on the basis of blind faith, and yet we would not call ourselves faithless. We are wary of wrapping our arms too tightly around faith, and yet troubled at the idea of pushing it away. Come look upon these dilemmas with new eyes.

December 17—Rev. Jennifer Ryu

Sharing the UU Gospel—The UU faith has saved countless lives. It has welcomed people who turned their backs on religion and had given up on developing their spiritual selves within a loving community. We know this has happened; it has happened to us. Yet, we are still reticent about sharing this faith with others. Why?

December 24—11 am—Rev. Preston Moore

O Little Town Of Nazareth—Many UUs love Christmas but have trouble with the Jesus they see portrayed in fundamentalist Christianity. On the holiday of his birth, can we embrace a story of Jesus that is meaningful from our UU perspective?

Traditional Christmas Eve service at 4 p.m.



December 25—10 am-- Special Christmas morning service led by Rev. Jennifer Ryu & Rev. Preston Moore.

December 31—Rev. David Tetrault

Greetings from the Ministers

Preston and I will be holding a special worship service on Christmas Day morning—Monday morning. Why are we doing this? After all, we will have just conducted two services the day before. We're doing this because Christmas morning is not necessarily a joyful time for everyone. Not everyone will be waking up to the sounds of giggling children and the smell of fresh cinnamon buns. Some people will wake up that morning to an empty house. My years in seminary were like that. With my parents thousands of miles away, and Preston not yet fully in my life, I woke up with nowhere to go and no one expecting me to be there. I couldn't even go to my favorite coffee shop because it, like everything else, was closed. I imagined that I was the only one sitting alone in my apartment that morning. Everyone else was unwrapping gifts and eating a high cholesterol breakfast. Of course I was wrong; I was not alone. And neither are you. If you find yourself waking up on Christmas morning wanting to be with other people, please come to the Sanctuary at 10 o'clock. Preston and I will be there. We'll sing and tell stories and enjoy each other's company and we'll have a happy Christmas.

However you celebrate this season, may you and those you love be blessed.

Jennifer

Nursery Holiday

There will be a "Nursery Holiday" on Christmas Eve when our Nursery Care Coordinators will be away in order to be with their families. Intergenerational services are planned for this day, so that WUU families may worship together.



The Nursery room will be open during worship, to provide a place for supervised play for parents with small children who become restless during services.

Bring a Poinsettia to Church

Help to brighten up the sanctuary for the holidays. Bring a large Red poinsettia to the sanctuary on Sunday, December 17th and leave it there for the Christmas Eve service. Please make sure the plant is well watered and not leaking. If you bring a plant, you may take a plant home after Christmas.



Tabernacle Band, December 17

December is here and it's time for the seasonal appearance of the Tabernacle Band. Tabernacle Band is a "no-fault" orchestra for all ages and instruments that has become a semi-annual tradition at WUU. So whether you are a musician who plays regularly or someone whose instrument hasn't seen the light of day for a while, a seasoned veteran or new to your instrument, we encourage you to come out and join the fun. We will play for the service on December 17 with Jamie Bartlett conducting. For music or more information, contact Vicki Hall.



President's Message

Amidst all the holiday preparations you may have noticed Board members and a number of other people walking around with a yellow paperback book titled *Moving on from Church Folly Lane* by Rev. Robert Latham. It's a book about church growth, and we're reading it for an obvious reason—we're

growing! Rev. Latham writes that when church attendance reaches 80% of capacity, it's time to get serious about making some changes. Whether you're trying to find a parking space on Sunday, or searching for a seat inside for service, you know we are well beyond the 80% figure. And while we have seen this coming for awhile, we are finally mobilizing our efforts to do something concrete about it.

In January, the Board members and the Congregational Planning Committee will be meeting with the Rev. Rob Isaacs for two days of intense study of the issues surrounding church growth. We know that our facilities are inadequate to handle our expansion, but just how ready are we to undertake major changes in the ways we do business? What kinds of changes do we need to make? Do we have a clear understanding of the implications such changes will have on our members? Do we have a clear sense of what our mission is, and what we need to carry it out? These are the issues we will be addressing in the weeks between now and the workshop with Rev. Isaacs. He recommended Rev. Latham's book to us as good preparation for our work together.

Several copies of the book have been placed on our library. If you'd like to read along with us, please feel free. And if you have ideas about the directions in which we are going, please share them with members of the Board or the CPC. We welcome your input! And along with all that heavy stuff, don't forget to enjoy all the wonderful activities in and around Williamsburg between now and December 31st.

Chalice Gazing: Notes from the DRE

It's time to start collecting donations for our Christmas families at Williamsburg UU, and I would like to let you know a little about one of the families we'll be helping this year. They live in Lebanon, and their brother is one of our congregants. Their sister-in-law is active in the children's programming here, and their cousins come to Fahs House on Sunday morning.

I am told that in order for a nephew to go to elementary school his mother has to pay a fee of \$1500. For many members of Williamsburg UU, that may seem a small challenge. To this family, the choice is sometimes between school and food. Whoever can afford both food and school for their children, and then has anything left over at the end of a pay period, please write a check for Beth Kennedy to pass on to this family. They are just as worthy as we are, but not as lucky.

I am told that a brother has to go to his boss at the end of each week and negotiate for his pay. He has to explain how much food and diapers cost, has to justify his needs, and then has to advocate for himself in terms of the quantity and quality of his work over the past week. Whoever gets a regular paycheck that can be counted on as part of an agreement to come to work, please write a check for Beth Kennedy to pass on to this family.

Let us remember as we enter the season of giving thanks that we are so richly blessed, and we have so much to share. There are two families...the family in Lebanon and a local family...that we will be drawing into our community with our contributions this year. If you have children, please take this opportunity to talk to them, to involve them in the giving, to let them help decide what

your family can do for another family. Let the principles of Unitarian Universalism guide you, and let there be peace on Earth.

Blessings, Sara

NOTE: If you write a check, please make it payable to WUU and place the words "Christmas Family Fund" in the memo line.

Could you be a worship associate?

WUU worship associates:

- Participate in worship with professional ministers
- Plan Worship Associate-led services several times each year
- Help to schedule summer & non-minister Sundays
- Provide assistance to guest ministers
- Work with ministers to evaluate quality of worship services

Meeting/training: Worship Associates meet for training and discussion on the first Thursday of each month, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. WUUs interested in planning and presentation of worship are encouraged to attend and explore this opportunity for lay ministry in our Congregation. **The next meeting of the Worship Associates will be Thursday, December 7 at 7:00 p.m. in the WUU Sanctuary.** For further information, contact Minister Jennifer Ryu, jennifer@wuu.org or 757-220-6830.

New Members

Welcome to Martha Elim, Kirstin Fritz, Connie Skidmore and Carol Scott



Martha Elim



Kirstin Fritz



Carol Scott

(Not pictured, Connie Skidmore)

Have You Gotten Your “Passport for Adventure” Yet?

The most exciting trips to exotic lands are taking place at WUU next summer. Using their new special WUU **Passport for Adventure**, our children will have access to cultures that they (and we) have only read about or heard of. Our summer RE program is heading in a new direction next year. After two summers at Hogwarts, we’re leaving England to explore the cultures, myths, and mores of other countries in our world. Right now we’re seeking other intrepid travelers to join us on this adventure. Think of a country that you have spent time in, or that intrigues you. Volunteer to share that country and its people with our children for one Sunday next summer. Grab some friends (or maybe some of our older youth) and have fun “traveling” to your country. We’re not sure who is going to have more fun on this adventure – you or our children. Interested in learning more or signing-up? Contact Charlotte Bush at charlowsweb@verizon.net or Tracy Shackelford at tracyharold@hotmail.com or 880-5726. This is a trip you won’t want to miss!

It’s That Time Again!!!

For years we did a mitten tree for **FISH** until we found what they really need is socks and underwear—they give one pair of mittens, three pairs of socks and three sets of underwear to each person. So, bring **NEW** socks and underwear (infant to adult, men and women) to the FISH barrels and I will see that your contribution gets under the Christmas tree this year. Any questions? Call me at 564-0025. Thanks. Dolores Moyer

Money Matter\$

The levels of activity, commitment, and energy are rising sharply at WUU. We have seen just how much we can accomplish if we pull together for a common effort. Attendance is growing every Sunday. Interest in Lifespan Education for all ages is very high. There are a record number of new members—and most have already pledged.

This year the median pledge at WUU is \$1000. According to the Census Bureau, the average income in James City County is \$55,000; in Williamsburg \$57,000: that makes the median pledge just under 2% of the average income. If we each give 5% of our income, we would raise \$490,000 (175 pledging units x \$2,800) from pledge income alone! Imagine what we can do with that amount—a full time Religious Education program; more music; paying down the mortgage and planning for expansion!

Family Yule sing!



This will be a celebration for all ages in the sanctuary on Friday, December 8, beginning at 6:00 p.m.! The evening

will feature a finger food potluck supper, recorder ensemble, singing, and ornaments for the children to make...something for everyone! And...we are expecting a special visitor for the children! Please bring canned goods and underwear for FISH.

Welcome a Guest at Your Table! Celebrate UU Faith in Action.

Please pick up your collection boxes for the "Guest at Your Table" program this coming

Sunday, November 26, if you haven't already done so. Remember that your donation of \$75.00 or more will be matched by the UU Church of Shelter Rock (New York). All boxes will be collected on December 24th. To learn more about UUSC, check out www.uusc.org.

Hymnals needed

We invite you to donate a hymnal with the option of placing in it a bookplate either memorializing or honoring someone dear to you. Donate by filling out one of the forms on Sundays and either bringing it or mailing it to the WUU office along with a minimum donation of \$30. The checks may also be placed in the collection baskets on Sundays; the memo line of the check should specify *Hymnal Donation*. Be sure to include the form along with the check so that we will have the name of your honoree(s) as well as the correct spelling and desired titles, etc. Please consider a hymnal dedication in honor of a friend or relative as a holiday gift this season! All donations should be received by the end of December.

First Night—contact Cynn timer to volunteer for First Night fun. WUU will be serving food at the William and Mary College Center. You can help raise money and be in the center of things on New Year's Eve.



Coming attractions: be on the lookout for the new picture directories.

December—WUU Events						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1 7:00 Parent Supp Group-S	2 10:00-2:00 UCG- S
3 11–12:30 Worship 11–12:15 RE all ages 2-7 WYO practice-PH 12:30 RE committee 7:00 Lifespan Class-A	4	5 10–11 StaffMtg 6:30 Silent Med-S 7:30-Jazz Practice-S	6 3:30 Yule Decorations-S 7:30–9 Choir practice	7 7–9 Worship Comm Mtg	8 6:00 Yule Sing- S	9 10:00-2:00 UCG-S
10 9-10:30 Finance PH 11–12:30 Worship 11–12:15 RE all ages 12:30 Tchr Tng Sess 3- 5 A 3- WYO Chamber Player Pro7:00 Lifespan Class-A	11	12 10–11 StaffMtg 6:30 Silent Med-S 7 Dream Gp-PH 7 WALT St-A	13 7:30–9 Choir practice	14 12:30-2 Separate Checks 7:30–9 Pers. Comm-A	15 <i>Hanukkah Begins</i> 5:00 Wedding rehearsal	16 10:00-2:00 UCG-S
17 Tabernacle Band 11–12:30 Worship 11–12:15 RE all ages 7:00 Lifespan Class-A	18	19 10–11 StaffMtg 6:30 Silent Med-S	20 7:30–9 Choir practice	21 7:15 Board meeting-A	22 <i>newsletter deadline- noon</i>	23 10:00-2:00 UCG-S
24 11–12:30 Worship Children's program 4 pm Intergenerational service	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 10 am service	26 <i>Office Closed</i> 6:30 Silent Med-S	27	28	29	30 10:00-2:00 UCG-S
31 – 11-12:30Worship service, 11:15 Multi-Age RE New Year party						

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

