

THE REPORTER

Newsletter of St. John's Unitarian Universalist Church

December 21, 2008

Christmas Eve Service

St. John's annual Family Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be on Wednesday December 24 starting at 7:00pm. Frank Carpenter, Jacque Rousseau and the Board will be hosting a pot luck refreshments following. Bring a holiday treat to share!



Sunday Community Services

Community Services and Children's Religious Exploration classes begin at 11:00am. Child care is available.

Sunday December 28 at 11:00am

"Darkness Into Light"

Barbara Hadden, Martha McLeod, Kathryn McDonough and others

This service will be an informal gathering for the end of the year. Join us in Krolfifer Hall. There will be coffee and edibles galore.

Sunday January 4 at 11:00am

"The Promised Land!"

Rev. Dr. Frank Carpenter

As we embark upon a New Year, let's keep our eyes on the prize of where we want to go. Let's keep hope alive and promises renewed.

Contemporary Worship Services

Contemporary Worship services are on the first and third Sunday of each month. They begin at 9:00am and are held in Krolfifer Hall. Childcare is available. Our next Contemporary Worship Service At St. John's will be on Sunday January 4.

Minister

The Rev. Dr. Frank Carpenter

Affiliated Minister

The Rev. Bonnie Meyer

Minister Emerita

The Rev. Annie Foerster

Minister of Music

Dr. Catherine Roma

Assoc. Director of Music

Rachel Kramer

Directors of

Religious Exploration

Omope Daboiku

Worship Coordinator

Omope C. Daboiku

Office Administrator

Mary Jo (Josie) Arens

Caretaker

J. Michael Skaggs

Church Office

513-961-1938

stjohnuu@fuse.net

Church Office Hours

Monday-Friday

7:30am to 2pm

Church Website

www.stjohnsuu.org

Next Newsletter Deadline

Thurs. January 8 at 5pm

Send submissions to

stjohnuu@fuse.net

Carpenter's Workshop

by Rev. Dr. Frank Carpenter

The "Winter Holiday Choral Service" on December 14 was magnificent. St. John's Choir and Minister of Music Cathy Roma out did themselves. I particularly appreciated "All Lifted Hearts." Narrators Prasanna Malaviya, Nina Tolley and JoEllen Pellman read from versions of the Golden Rule in various faiths, such as from the Buddhist Udanavarga, "Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful." The Golden Rule is a central spiritual concept. Karen Armstrong invites us to explore it on her website, the Charter for Compassion, <http://charterforcompassion.com/> The ability to identify with another proves the solidarity of all humanity.

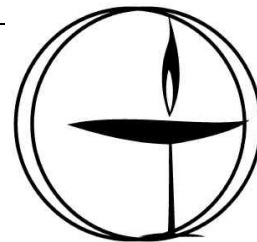
Walking a mile in another's shoes is a theme of many holiday stories: The Little Match Girl, Ebenezer Scrooge and Tiny Tim. Empathy is the core of faith, however scary it is at times to realize the other person, so different, is a mirror to oneself. At this time of year in particular we consider those who suffer acutely the anxieties of our day. The news is full of people losing their jobs at investment banks, in the auto industry and elsewhere. Less often we hear of those who have given up looking for jobs and that the number of hungry has doubled. It is remarkable how close to the homeless line some St. Johners live.

E E Hale says in our hymnal, # 457, we cannot do everything needing to be done. But that is no excuse for us not doing what we can do. As in past years, the Ministerial Discretionary Fund, with the Caring Circle, seeks to happy the Holiday for some of our families. The Funds are available throughout the year when a member hits a bump on life's path. Each Christmas Eve the Offering goes to replenish the Ministerial Discretionary Fund.

This Holiday Season, I hope you will walk a mile in the shoes of your fellow St. Johners. How much do you know about those who sit quietly besides, behind, in front of you each Sunday? Some of us are up; some of us are down. If you attend the Candlelight Service on the 24th, please give generously. If you do not attend, please send a check with a memo "Ministerial Discretionary Fund." Do unto others as you would have them do unto you this Holiday Season. --

Thanks,
Frank

Our Mission: St. John's is committed to creating a safe and caring community, working for peace and social justice, and celebrating beliefs that respect freedom of thought. We are pleased to be designated a Welcoming Congregation by the Unitarian Universalist Association, and as such we honor and value the racial, cultural, economic, religious, physical ability, sexual orientation and gender diversity of our members and visitors, young and old.



pportunities & Invitations

Game Night at St. John's

The next game night will be on Friday December 26 in Krolfifer. Everyone is welcome to attend. We have plenty of board games, card games and party games. You are also welcome to bring your own games, whether they are newly received gifts or old favorites. Stop in at 7pm or later for one game or many. Any questions may be directed to Karen Miller or Pete Asman.

-Pete Asman

Soup's On - New Year's Day

Join us as we welcome the New Year on Thursday January 1 from noon to 3pm. All members and friends of St. John's are invited to our traditional "Soup's On" party at our home, 6763 Rollymeade Ave, just off of Shawnee Run in Madeira. There will be 3 pots of hot soup on the stove, so bring things to go with that to share (no alcohol please). Children are welcome -no RSVP necessary. Call the Fencls if you need help with directions.

-Dick & Carol Fencl

Groovin' Music Series Concert

The third concert in our Music Series season will be on Saturday January 10 at 8pm at St. John's. Featured artists will be The Groove Crew. They are a diverse band of seven men and women who play incredible dance music, a la 1970s soul, Stevie, Aretha, Temptations, Martha and the Vandellas, and more. It will be the depth of winter, and whether you dance or not, come warm up with friends and family. Please join us on January 10 at 8:00pm. We're trying something different for the series. Come and let us know whether you like it.

-Cathy Roma

30s & 40s/YADA

New Year's Eve Party

Announcing a New Year's Eve party for St. Johners from Young Adults to 40's at Melissa and Pete Asman's place in Wyoming OH. Beverages and some games will be supplied; please bring food to share. We are planning two countdowns: one at 10pm for kids and others with early bedtimes, and one at midnight for the nightowls. Please contact Pete or Melissa for directions or more details.

-Pete Asman

Knitting for Peace

We are a group of about 10 women getting together about two Sundays a month to knit, crochet, or do some other fabric craft. The library is reserved from 10:00 until 10:45 on Sunday mornings on January 4, January 18 and February 1. Please join us if you're interested in making hats or scarves for children from low-income families. We welcome all ages and skill levels. Contact Debbie Combs for more information.

-Debbie Combs

Adult Forums Return in January

In our forums this past year there was no subject presented that did not have at least one person interested in hearing about or discussing it. So if you have a subject of interest, an exciting book you have read, an essay you have heard, a video you have seen, something you would really like to share and discuss with others, let me know. I have agreed to coordinate the Forums this next year but I need a lot of help. You can help by suggesting topics. Forums will resume on January 18. We will be discussing Byron Katie's process of inquiry, by which she helps people understand the difference between reality and our perception of it. Look for more details in the next issue of The Reporter.

-Ethel Ingalls

First Friday Flicks

Join us on Friday January 2 in Krolfifer Hall for First Friday Flicks. Starting promptly at 7pm we'll watch "Peaceful Warrior" (rated PG13) followed by a discussion concluding at 9:30. This is an inspirational story about the power of the human spirit based on Dan Millman's autobiographical novel describing his life as a talented college gymnast with Olympic aspirations. For comfort, please bring your own chair such as a folding lawn chair. For information about First Friday Flicks contact Debbie Combs.

-Debbie Combs

An Evening with the LAFs

Everyone approaching 50 or older is welcome to attend our Lively After Fifty gatherings. On January 9, we will be meeting at a new place for us, the Barnesberg Inn (5761 Springdale Road in Colerain Township). We will have a separate party room and will begin at 6:30pm. Reservations are required so please contact Jan Hay by Thursday January 8. Please contact her sooner if you are interested in help with carpooling plans.

-Jan Hay

Racial Reconciliation Discussion

First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati will sponsor a presentation and discussion titled "African American Family History: A Pathway to Racial Reconciliation" on January 17 from 12:30pm to 2pm. The program will be followed by a reception and a voucher to attend the Race Exhibit at Cincinnati Museum Center.

-Carol Fencl



Adult Classes

Registration for winter Adult Religious Education classes will be held starting on January 11. Classes will begin in February Full details will be available in early Jan. on the church website and in the newsletter. New on Tuesday nights will be *Lifelines*, based on a book by Forrest Church. We'll talk about discovering the shared meaning of our lives, searching for the answers to some of life's deepest questions. Carol Fencl will lead this four week group.

Building Your Own Theology is central to the core of how we UUs are responsible for developing and evaluating our own belief system. Our minister, Rev. Dr. Frank Carpenter, will lead this five week program.

Some of our programs do not require registration. These include the Adult Forums, Great Decisions and Book discussions. However, if you have let us know of your interest, we'll be able to contact you if there is a change due to winter weather or some unforeseen circumstance.

Back for its fourth year is *Great Decisions*, co-sponsored with the Global Center. This series is held after church for ten weeks. Participants are asked to read a short chapter on a current global issue before coming to the discussion to have a common starting point for the discussion.

Book discussions will be held on Tuesday nights and in the daytime. Adult Forums will be held at 10am on Sunday mornings.

-Adult Religious Education Committee

Tuesday Night Potluck

On January 6, the first Tuesday of January, we will have our monthly potluck at St. Johns. We have decided to start at 5:45pm to allow more time for socializing before some will go to 7:00 meetings. Please bring a dish to share. Soft drinks and milk are provided. Please contact Jan Hay if you have any questions or suggestions.

-Jan Hay

Among ourselves

Congregational Survey Results

A summary of results of the Congregational Survey is now available on St. John's website at Members Corner. Print copies are available by calling Josie at the church office.

-Jan Hay

Member Interest Survey

Please help us identify how your skills and interests coincide with St. John's needs for the coming years by responding to five short questions on the insert in this issue of the newsletter. The form is also available at <http://stjohnsuu.org/forms/MemberSurvey2008.doc>

Please return your form to the church and place it in the Leadership Development Committee mailbox in the church office or you can email your responses to leaderdev@stjohnsuu.org. Please respond by New Years Day. Contact Howard Tolley or Linda Heath if you have any questions.

-Howard Tolley

UUCA Hosts4Change: B&B for Obama Inauguration

Members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington-Virginia are opening their homes to fellow UU's from Jan. 16 to Jan. 22 for lodging during President-elect Obama's inauguration. Accommodations range from sleeping on the sofa, to a private room and bath, with prices accordingly. All homes are conveniently located in the D.C. metro area (mainly in Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax, Virginia) and accessible to metro (subway system). You don't have to miss out on this exciting historical event! This is a fundraiser for UUCA -- all proceeds benefit the church. To request a reservation, please visit www.uucava.org and click on "UUCA Hosts4Change".

-Mary Ann Bolton

Can We Be Greener?

David Dean told of a UU church in Akron that had a "Green Sunday" that included not only earth-centered music and theme but afterwards a convention style line-up of booths for companies who are providing goods and services to help the environment and keep energy cost down. That sounded pretty interesting. When asked how he personally helps the environment, he said that besides recycling paper and plastic, he tries to control the amount of waste he produces.

Reducing waste makes one think of our grandmothers who cautioned "waste not, want not". We sometimes complain about all the stuff they saved (especially when we have to clean out their attics), but they also lived much more frugally than we are inclined to today.

In this season of plenty, does your plenty overflow your wastebaskets and trash barrels? Let's all make a New Year's resolution to not only reduce our waist but also our waste this next year.

By the way if you have extras of those 40% off coupons from Lowe's for the compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs, pin the coupons on the Green Sanctuary bulletin board for others to take. Do it soon. They expire January 31.

-Green Sanctuary Partners

PR Committee Seeks Ideas

Your PR Committee plans to take a booth to local events to let people know about St. John's.

Where would you like us to go? Send your ideas for festivals, fairs, & fun events (with approximate dates if known) to pr@stjohnsuu.org. Also, please bring in your spare *UU World* magazines for us to hand out. They'll help us convey who UU's are and what we value. A collection box is in Krolfifer. Thanks!

*-Your PR Committee: Jan Hay,
Linda Heath, Joan Lane, Claire Wagner*

News from the Unitarians of Szentlaszlo, Romania

Rev. Mihaly Kiss, his family and congregation send holiday greetings to Rev. Carpenter and the members and friends of St. John's. They wish us good health and good luck in the work of our church. Our partners continue to provide bread each week to the elderly members of their congregation. 36 members now receive a loaf of bread weekly which is delivered by Ilonka Szasz, the president of the women's association. They plan a special meal for poor and elderly at Christmas time. With money from St. John's and from the Romanian government, they have been repairing their historic church including replacing the shingles on the bell tower and parts of the sanctuary roof. This year they celebrated the confirmation of three young girls and one boy. The entire church was filled with parents and friends. For our small partner church, this was a real time to rejoice.

St. John's has been gathering funds for several years to be used to buy a used vehicle for our partners. We will be sending \$9,000 to them in the near future. Rev. Kiss describes this as an enormous help for his congregation. He reports that the villagers too are feeling the economic crisis, but everyone is otherwise doing well. Our friends ask when another delegation from St. John's will visit them. (The Friends of Szentlaszlo is considering a possible trip next year.) In other news, the Unitarian Church of Transylvania has a new leader, a new bishop. His name is the Rev. Ferenc Balint, formerly the minister of the main Unitarian church in Kolozsvar (Cluj in Romanian), the traditional capitol of Transylvania. The new deputy bishop is the Rev. Laszlo Nagy who had been the minister in Marosvasarhely (Targu Mures in Romanian). Those who have visited Transylvania, including many members of our

choir, will remember both of these gentlemen as we visited and sang in both of their churches. A professor at the state university in Kolozsvar (Denes Mathe) and the current Romanian Minister for Small and Medium Enterprises (Jozsef Csaka) were elected co lay presidents of the Romanian Unitarians. These four people represent the executive committee of the Consistory of the Unitarian Church there. Rev. Kiss closed his greetings to us with "God bless all of you."

-Tom Darner
Friends of Szentlaszlo

Next Newsletter Deadline

The next deadline for the St. John's newsletter will be on Thursday January 8. There will NOT be a deadline on January 1. Editor Bruce Beisner will be away in Chicago during January. Newsletter submissions for the next issue should be sent to the St. John's office at stjohnuu@fuse.net and NOT to Bruce's email.

-Bruce Beisner

From the ffice

*By Josie Arens
St. John's Office Administrator*

While I am at home recovering from surgery, I am able to continue many of my office functions from home. Please continue to email any correspondence to me as usual stjohnuu@fuse.net. I will have the office phone connected to my home phone during the week 7:30am-2:30pm to answer any calls that come into the church. The phone will not be connected to my house on Christmas Day or New Year's Day. I will have access to the office computer thru my computer at home. If you need to schedule a room for a activity - form can be found on WEB page at <http://www.stjohnsuu.org/index.php.docmisc-forms> The church calendar can be viewed by going onto the WEB Page. www.stjohnsuu.org Wishing everyone a Happy and Blessed Holiday Season.

St. John's Church Calendar

Tuesday December 23

10:00am: Yoga

Wednesday December 24

Church Office Closed

7:00pm: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Thursday December 25

Christmas Day

5:00pm: Christmas Day Potluck Dinner
(Judy Cirillo)

6:45pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal

Friday December 26

Church Office Closed

7:00pm: Game Night

Saturday December 27

9:00am: CLT Rehearsal

Sunday December 28

11:00am: Community Worship Service

7:00pm: A Course in Miracles

Tuesday December 30

10:00am: Yoga

Wednesday December 31

New Year's Eve

Church Office Closed

7:00pm: Program Planning Team (PPT)

8:00pm: Earth Spirit Party

Thursday January 1

New Year's Day

12:00pmL Soup's On Party
(at home of Dick & Carol Fencil)

6:45pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal

Friday January 2

7:00pm: First Friday Flicks

Saturday January 3

9:00am: CLT Rehearsal

Sunday January 4

9:00am: Contemporary Service

10:00am: Knitting For Peace

11:00am: Community Worship Service

1:00pm: Non Violent Communications

6:00pm: Men's Group

7:00pm: A Course in Miracles

Tuesday January 6

10:00am: Yoga

5:45pm: Community Potluck

7:00pm: YADA Young Adults Discussion

7:15pm: Chalice Group-Luersson

Wednesday January 7

7:00pm: Membership Committee

7:00pm: Program Planning Team (PPT)

Thursday January 8

10:00am: Meditation

5:00pm: REPORTER deadline

send articles to stjohnnuu@fuse.net
and NOT to Bruce Beisner's email

6:45pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal

Friday January 9, 2009

6:30pm: Lively After Fifty Dinner
(at Barnesberg Inn)

Saturday January 10

9:00am: CLT Rehearsal

8:00pm: Music Series Concert

Sunday January 11

9:00am: Chalice Group-Nunn

10:00am: Adult Forum

11:00am Community Worship Service

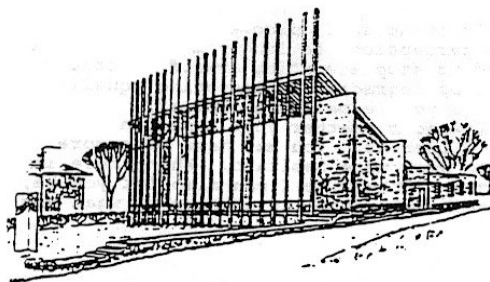
12:30pm: Adult RE Registration

12:30pm: Leadership Development

12:30pm: Szentlaszlo Bread and Soup Lunch

1:00pm: Interweave Lunch (at The Melt)

7:00pm: A Course in Miracles



Thought of the Week

“Spirit of winter rest, help us to enjoy your peace in this quiet place.

Remind us to pause during this season.

Grant us awareness, keep our gratitude fresh each day.

May the songs in our heart be blessings and insights to us and to others
and may compassion always shine forth from the depths of our hearts.”

-Christine C. Robinson

December 2008

St. John's Member Interest Survey

Although pledging your gifts and talents to St. John's by December 31 won't qualify for the 2009 tax deduction obtained with your financial contribution, the rewards of community building can be priceless. Please help us identify how your skills and interests coincide with St. John's needs for the coming years by responding to five short questions.

1. Name (Print): _____

2. Identify/list all current leadership roles and committees on which you serve.

3. In 2009 and beyond, would you consider: *(Check all that apply, with written comment if you wish. All committees and positions are listed in the People Book and at <http://www.stjohnsuu.org/index.php/docmisc-committees>)*

___ Council Director/Board Member (Comment _____)

___ Committee Member or Chair (Comment _____)

___ Other (Please specify) _____

(OVER)

4. What personal gifts/talents can you offer in areas of interest? Don't be modest.

5. Would you like to be invited to a 12:30pm session on opportunities at St. John's, offered by the Nominating and Leadership Development Committees, either Sunday below?

_____January 11, 2009

_____February 8, 2009

Please respond by no later than New Years Day either using this form or the electronic version at www.stjohnsuu.org that can sent by email to leaderdev@stjohnsuu.org or printed and sent to the Leadership Development Committee mailbox in the church office

Thanks,
Your LDC
Linda Heath, Monica Pellman, Cliff Shisler
and Rev. Frank Carpenter

