



Island Passages

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF WHIDBEY ISLAND

P.O. Box 1076, Freeland, WA 98249 • 360-321-8656 • www.whidbey.com/uucwi/

January 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						New Year's Day 1
2 4:00p -5:15p Service: Soap Box Sunday 4:00p -5:00p CRE 5:15p Build Your Own Theology (p. 3)	3 8:30a World Events Discussion Group at the Lighthouse Café	4	5 building concept feedback due (p. 3)	6	7	8 9:00a -11:00a North End Koffee Klatch (p. 3) 11:30a CRE meeting (p. 3) 2:00p -4:00p Welcoming Congregation workshop (p. 3)
9 2:00p Choir practice 4:00p -5:15p Service: Four Spiritualities: An Introduction 4:00p -5:00p CRE 5:15p All-Congregation Potluck and Building Discussion (p. 3) GAYT ends (p. 3)	10 9:00a Worship Committee meeting at Trinity	11	12	13	14 9:30a Social Action Committee meeting at Trinity	15
16 4:00p -5:15p Service: Music: Pathway to the Spirit 4:00p -5:00p CRE	17 ML King Day 8:30a World Events Discussion Group	18 7:30p Book Discussion: <i>A Chosen Faith</i> (p. 4)	19	20	21 newsletter deadline	22
23 2:00p Choir practice 4:00p -5:15p Service: The Journeys of Unity and Devotion 4:00p -5:00p CRE	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 4:00p -5:15p Service: Messages and Insights from Islam 4:00p -5:00p CRE	31	Additions and updates can be found on the calendar on the congregation's web site: http://www.whidbey.com/uucwi/				

January 2nd — Soap Box Sunday

Six UUCWI members will use this Soap Box Sunday service to share a personal point of view, passion or concern related to "the inherent worth and dignity of every person." Dave C., Malcolm F., Nancy S., Bill G., Linda G. and Frank A. will each take 3 minutes to address the UU first principle.

Future Soap Box Sundays will provide forums for the sharing of thought-provoking and personal perspectives on other UU principles.

Lay Leader: Toyan C.

Membership Representative: Baird B.

- CRE Youth: Everyone Is Special from the *We Believe* curriculum

January 9th — Four Spiritualities: An Introduction

with the Reverend Kit Ketcham

Have you wondered about why you are comfortable with some spiritual practices and doctrines and uncomfortable with others? Reverend Kit Ketcham will introduce a way of looking at spiritual preferences which may answer this question for you. This is the first in a series of three sermons addressing spiritual preferences.

Lay Leader: Joann C.

Membership Representative: Malcolm F.

- CRE Youth: Caring for All from the *We Believe* curriculum

January 16th — Music: Pathway to the Spirit with guest speaker Alan Merson

I have been listening to, studying, playing and composing music most of my life, but it still remains a mystery to me. Therefore, I have to conclude that it contains elements residing beyond the five senses with which we apprehend the world around us. Somehow it speaks to us from a realm far removed from ordinary life. I must, therefore, equate it with a spiritual reality generally masked by the routines and imperatives of daily life.

Emerson says it best: "Music takes us out of the

actual and whispers to us dim secrets that startle our wonder as to who we are, and for what, whence, and whereto." The greatest composers have penetrated that distant realm and brought back to us glimpses of what they saw. I hope to illustrate how a genius such as Beethoven achieves this.

Lay Leader: Sally E.

Membership Representative: Roy B.

- CRE Youth: Weaving Our Lives Together from the *We Believe* curriculum

January 23rd — The Journeys of Unity and Devotion

with the Reverend Kit Ketcham

Some spiritual seekers are attracted to spiritual practices and religious ideals which invite visionary thinking, imagination, speculation, and possibilities; others prefer to specialize in personal helpfulness, practical support for others, stories instead of abstractions. Rev. Kit Ketcham will describe these seekers and link them to personality types.

Offering Recipient: Parenting Course (page 6)

Lay Leader: Sarah R.

Membership Representative: Tim K.

- CRE Youth: Freedom to Learn from the *We Believe* curriculum

January 30th — Messages and Insights from Islam

with guest minister the Reverend Jamal Rahman

Sufi spiritual leader Jamal Rahman will share messages of spiritual growth and development, illustrated by parables, quotations and stories.

Reverend Rahman is a member of "Circle of Love," an interfaith group of friends who gather together in search of global spirituality and community. This diverse collective is actively engaged in education, music, interfaith worship, healing, fundraising, and service projects.

Lay Leader: Bob L.

Membership Representative: Baird B.

- CRE Youth: Global Village from the *We Believe* curriculum

Congregational News & Events

Build Your Own Theology, January 2nd

A brief meeting will follow the service for those interested in forming a Build Your Own Theology study group. Details of time, place, and texts will be discussed. Please contact Sally E. for more information.

The Building Committee Needs Your Input by January 5th

Give the committee your ideas about the building plan. You should have received a packet with some first-concept drawings and questions to get your creative juices flowing. (If you did not receive this, contact Roy B. Please return your suggestions to Roy or anyone on the Building Committee by January 5th. (Remember that the drawings so far are just ideas for a first phase building. If we grow as we hope, we'll add on and/or build a separate sanctuary.)

North End Koffee Klatch, January 8th

North End Koffee Klatch will meet at Whidbey General Hospital's West Wind Cafeteria from 9-11 on January 8th. Join other Northenders for a convivial morning of coffee and conversation.

CRE Brainstorming and Planning meeting, January 8th

Anyone interested in learning about, planning for, or helping with our Children's Religious Education program is invited to a brownbag luncheon meeting at Siri's home at 11:30.

Welcoming Congregation Workshop, January 8th

Our Welcoming Congregation workshops, taught by Reverend Kit Ketcham, will begin on January 8, from 2-4 at Trinity Lutheran Church. Our first session will be an examination of "what we know and how we learned it." We will also make some decisions about scheduling; how long a process shall this be, what subjects are most important to cover, and what do we have to accomplish to be designated an official Welcoming Congregation with the UUA?

Other sessions in the series are these: the common elements of oppression; gender socialization and homophobia; racism and

homophobia/heterosexism; HIV/AIDS; the radical right; religion and homosexuality; experiences of BGLT people; history; bisexuality and biphobia; transgender identity; how homophobia hurts us all; and "now what?"

During the series of workshops, which can take up to two years depending on the schedule chosen, we will offer movie nights, panel discussions, perhaps field trips, and guest speakers. The workshops are open to any person interested, whether they are UU or not.

We hope that a good solid core group of interested UUCWers will attend every session; this provides a good "critical mass" for discussion and group cohesiveness. However, it is okay to just come to the sessions that most interest you. Each session will be announced in the newsletter monthly.

At the end of the series, the congregation will vote to become a Welcoming Congregation. For this reason, it is important that as many people as possible attend the sessions.

Generally, workshops will be on a Saturday afternoon from 2-4, on the weekends that Rev. Ketcham is on the island.

If you have questions, Reverend Ketcham is happy to answer them by email or phone (kitketcham@aol.com; 206 781 3098).

Guest At Your Table, January 9th

Please return your Guest At Your Table collection boxes or envelopes to Roy B., Nancy S., or Malcolm F. on or before the 9th. All collections go to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

All-Church Potluck and Building Discussion, January 9th

The Caring Connections Committee will sponsor another potluck following the service on January 9th. Please bring a main dish, salad, or appetizer to share. The CCC will furnish dessert and beverages. If anyone can stay to help cleanup, please let Carol B. know, or just stay and help.

During the potluck dinner, the Building Committee is planning to hold a brainstorming session to talk over ideas that have been gathered from the packet forms (see the related article above).

Whole-Church Book Discussion, January 18th

Join the UUCWI Book Group at 7:30 pm on Tuesday, January 18, at Trinity for a discussion of the book *A Chosen Faith: An Introduction to Unitarian Universalism*. Authored by John Buehrens and Forrest Church, this book is the classic introduction to Unitarian Universalism. This book was selected by the Book Group this year as the book the whole congregation should read. James Luther Adams says, of it: "The old-timer as well as the 'come-outer' will find *A Chosen Faith* irresistible... Engaging, seductive, infectious." Dave C. will moderate the discussion. If you send him an email message, he'll send you a copy of the discussion questions ahead of time.

Rally for Equal Rights and Marriage Equality, February 14th

Put Valentine's Day on your calendar, grab your sweetheart and join Reverend Kit Ketcham and a contingent of UUCWIs at the Washington Statehouse to rally for GLBT equal rights legislation and marriage rights for all couples. Training for meeting with legislators will take place at 9 a.m. in churches and synagogues near the statehouse with skilled progressive lobbyists and members of the Religious Coalition for Equality, an interfaith clergy group advocating for equal rights.

For more information, go to the RCE webpage at www.religiouscoalition-wa.org/. Reverend Kit Ketcham is an active member of the steering committee for RCE and her picture is on the webpage!

We can get there in a variety of ways: Amtrak, a charter bus with others from the north end of the Sound, or carpools. In the February newsletter, details will follow.

~ Reverend Kit Ketcham
(Editor's note: See a related article on page 6.)

Social Action Project Article

Our Baskets for Books project was featured in the current issue of the *UU World* on page 45 and at www.uuworld.org/2005/01/newssocialwitness.html#baskets.

2005: A Year to Stand Up for Moral Values

By Dave C., UUCWI President



During the last few months of 2004 we have heard a lot about moral values. Media have given widespread coverage to statements by "religious right" spokespersons concerning moral values. Have the religious left and middle abandoned moral values?

It is time we became our own spokespersons and informed those around us that our religious movement has some very definite and strong moral beliefs, thank you! Some of them relate to our patriotism, as well – another word *not* owned by the "religious right."

As Unitarian Universalists we believe in *Justice*, and in the *Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Person*. Thus we believe that it is morally wrong to lock up any person – even those who regard us as enemies – without accusing them of specific crimes and giving them a fair opportunity to defend themselves – in open court, with legal counsel. This is a patriotic position as well as a moral one: this country's founders shared a strong commitment to fairness. Fear or cultural differences do not justify exceptions to this moral principle. Homosexual persons are not special cases with abridged rights.

We believe in *Religious Freedom*. Therefore, we believe that it is morally wrong for us or anyone else to impose religious behaviors on others who don't share the belief. Again, this is a patriotic issue as well; this country was founded as a haven for those who sought religious freedom. Let's resist those who would dismantle the separation between church and state, a principle that provides major protections for these freedoms. Let us acknowledge that issues such as abortion are complex and worthy of debate, but let us also acknowledge that no single position has a monopoly on values.

We serve the cause of *Truth*, and demand it of our national and local leaders and press. Woe unto those who lie and spin, cheat and steal, use public resources for personal ends, and accept money for favors, betraying the public trust!

What do you believe? Does anyone else know what you believe? Do you speak as a member of our religious movement, when you do?

Moral values and patriotism are turf that must be occupied or ceded. 2005 may be crucial.

From Our Minister

Dear UUCWI friends,

As we enter a new calendar year, there's often a certain letdown in energy; the holidays are over, we're bored with the old stuff in our lives, we make resolutions to change our unhealthy habits, and we look forward to spring, when we can get out in the garden, on the water, wherever we love to spend the warmer days.



That makes January a great time to start a new project, an indoor project! And I have one for us. In January, we will begin our Welcoming Congregation work, the effort to learn more and change what inaccurate assumptions we may have made about gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

We will ask ourselves what it means to be truly welcoming, what we may believe about sexual minority issues that may cause us to be a little uncomfortable sometimes, and what we can do at UUCWI to reach out to the GLBT community more effectively. This is exciting work and you will learn more about it elsewhere in this newsletter.

But I want to address a concern that often underlies our efforts to be welcoming, whether that's with sexual minority folks or other "Others." We want results! We want sexual minority folks to come to UUCWI, we want ethnic minority folks to join us, we want families with children to join us, we want more people to join us on the UU path and sometimes it seems as though our efforts don't

produce the desired result.

If our desired result doesn't occur, we're frustrated and wonder if it's worth the effort, the dollars, the time and energy. We get tired of putting out when we don't see the result.

For example, at one time many in the congregation wondered if it was worthwhile to put a lot of energy into religious education if we were only going to get a few children on Sunday. In fact, some wondered if UUism was really more of a religion for adults, not children.

But other thinking prevailed, and the religious education program was beefed up and supported financially. Gradually we have added several families with children to our ranks. Most members came to understand that we need children in our religious community, that families are essential to our growth and maturity, and that children need the support and nurture of a religious faith that teaches them to think critically about what they believe and how they live.

It took awhile to get to this point. And I use this example to demonstrate that we often think we are welcoming when in fact we look like a closed community to others. We may not realize that our words and attitude may be daunting or even discouraging to others. When we question whether it's worth it to reach out, we shoot ourselves in the foot!

We can't do everything, but we must do what we can. And as we do, we will see the success of our efforts.

Much love,
Kit

Meet Our New Chaplain

I graduated from Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University, Master of Arts in Theological Studies 1994. Immediately after graduation in Fort Worth, I officiated at a Colorado funeral service, then on to Alaska to provide nondenominational worship and pastoral services for Christian Ministries in the National Parks Glacier Bay for the summer.

My experience includes pastoring a country church (Paradise, Texas) during graduate school; interdenominational hospital chaplaincy in Colorado; pastoral services in Wyoming (including services in a drug rehab center and local jail); Alternatives to Violence education in Wyoming

prisons (certificated); University credit AVP training in Ohio with John Looney (received governor's award for peace work); Clinical pastoral education in All Saints Hospital, Fort Worth; CPE at Fort Logan Mental Hospital, Denver; and I served as substitute pastor for home church in Ohio when the minister was on sabbatical.

~ Sally Ann E.

Caring Connections

The CCC has been sponsoring the all-church potlucks the 2nd Sunday of the month when Kit is here. They have been very well attended and lots of fun (see the related article on page 3).

Jean H. is back home from her stay at

Whidbey General. Please send cards or call to see if she would like a visit. Sandy M. made it through her knee replacement and is doing very well. A card and a call to see if some help is needed would be appreciated. She is back home as of Monday the 20th. Thanks for all you do to help and connect to each other.

~ Carol B., Chair

Special Offering: Parenting Course

The November 24th issue of the *South Whidbey Record* featured an article about a parenting-skills course taught at the Island County Jail. Intended to improve the parenting skills of inmates, this course includes topics such as controlling anger, communicating, and adapting to being a parent again after months away from one's family. The Social Action Committee will donate part of our offering on the 23rd to help fund materials and instruction.

Member News & Notes

Wanted: A Place to Sleep in Seattle

Gretchen V. is looking ahead to a demanding term in her pursuit of a nursing degree. She would be very grateful if anyone could help her find a place to stay in Seattle a couple of nights each week for the next term. Right now, she thinks that she'll need to stay in the city on Monday and Tuesday nights, but that could change. If you know of a place she could stay, please contact her.

From the UUA

Freedom to Marry, for All People

At the 1996 General Assembly, delegates voted overwhelmingly to call for the legalization of same-sex marriage. The Unitarian Universalist Association has a long-standing and deeply held commitment to support full equality for bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender people, going back 33 years to 1970. The Association, through action of its General Assembly and congregational actions, has advocated for nondiscrimination and hate crimes legislation; our ministers have

performed ceremonies of union for same-sex couples; and now, the Association directs its attention toward the support for legalized same-sex marriage. Notable among these actions:

- Non-discrimination in ministerial employment, in 1980
- Support of gay and lesbian services of union, in 1984
- Supporting legal equity for gays and lesbians, in 1987
- Opposing legalization of discrimination against gays, lesbians, and bisexuals, in 1992
- Support of the Right to Marry for Same-Sex Couples, in 1996.

On December 21, 1999, then-UUA President John A. Buehrens wrote to then-Vermont Governor Howard Dean, in support of the Vermont State Supreme court's unanimous decision that Vermont must guarantee the same protection and benefits to gay and lesbian couples that it does for heterosexual couples. In March, 2000, Unitarian Universalist ministers and lay people were active in giving testimony and providing support for an action taken by the Vermont legislature in April, which established Vermont's landmark Civil Union Bill.

On April 11, 2001, seven gay and lesbian couples (including seven Unitarian Universalists) brought suit in Suffolk, Massachusetts Superior Court, asserting that the couples had all been denied marriage licenses and seeking to gain the legal recognition "that same-sex couples -- whose relationships are as loving and as committed as those of heterosexual couples -- have an equal right to civil marriage."

Nearly two years later, on March 4, 2003, the case was heard in the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. While a decision in this case is pending, interfaith support of freedom to marry for same-sex couples continues to grow, as demonstrated at a June 5, 2003 press conference held by the Religious Coalition for Freedom to Marry and hosted at UUA headquarters.

Meanwhile, efforts by Unitarian Universalists to support equal rights for all persons continue. As support to grant legal standing to same sex couples gains momentum, the voices of several individual members of the UU clergy have been heard on this issue, and the list of UU clergy

supporting same-sex marriage (and who refuse to sign marriage licenses until such rights are granted to all) continues to grow. The Rev. Fred Small (Littleton, MA), the Rev. F. Jay Deacon (Northampton, MA), and the Rev. Kathleen McTigue (Hamden, CT) have spearheaded action in their communities along with other members of the clergy, and media coverage of their positions is included here.

UUA President William G. Sinkford, speaking after a decision on the U.S. Supreme Court case, *Lawrence et al v. Texas* was handed down, said, "Laws aimed at discriminating against bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender people are affronts to all people, no matter their sexual or gender orientation. These laws have been used to separate and divide us from one another; their intent is to support discrimination and make some people in our country second-class citizens. Unitarian Universalists across our country will continue [our] efforts, grounded in faith, which call us to support everyone's full humanity, everyone's ability to love, and everyone's value in the world."

On May 17, 2004, Massachusetts became the first state to legally recognize same-sex marriages. The UUA's president and staff cheered as couples applied for marriage licenses all over the state and hosted the wedding of Julie and Hillary Goodridge at UUA Headquarters. Three days later, after the waiting period imposed on most couples by Massachusetts law, fifty same-sex couples were married in historic Arlington Street Church in Boston.

UUA Joins UU Service Committee in Seeking Aid for Tsunami Victims

(Boston, December 28, 2004) The Reverend William G. Sinkford, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association, has announced that the UUA is joining with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee to send aid to disaster-affected countries struck by an earthquake and tsunami on December 26. The disasters have killed tens of thousands and caused billions of dollars in damage to over fifteen countries, with death tolls and damage estimates still climbing.

Sunday's initial earthquake struck 100 miles off the coast of Indonesia's Sumatra Island at around 7:00 a.m., measuring 9 in magnitude on the Richter

scale, and was part of a powerful series of earthquakes that triggered enormous tidal waves which swept across the Indian Ocean, striking coastal regions of Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, Burma and Malaysia. The tsunami also swept across the low-lying islands that make up the Maldives and brought destruction as far away as coastal East Africa.

Along India's southeastern coast, several villages are reported to have been swept away, and thousands of fishermen—including 2,000 from the (Madras) Chennai area, who were out at sea when the seismic waves swept across the waters and have not returned. Thankfully, the Unitarian Church in Chennai is reported not affected by the tsunami.

Millions of people are homeless and the disaster survivors face impending disease from polluted drinking water, dead bodies and lack of sanitation. Sinkford said, "I urge all Unitarian Universalists to be generous, in this season of light and giving, and to help the UU Service Committee bring aid to those who have been touched by this unspeakable tragedy."

He continued, "I send my prayers and offer my deepest compassion to the survivors and their families, and grieve the loss of the many thousands who died in this horrendous tragedy."

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is accepting contributions for relief and reconstruction in the areas affected by the tsunami. A portion of the aid funds will be channeled through three grassroots, indigenous organizations that are partners of the UUA's Holdeen India fund. Dr. Charlie Clements, President of the UUSC, stated that the Service Committee will work with partner organizations in other tsunami-affected countries to identify priority needs by area.

Donations can be made through the UU Service Committee's website (www.uusc.org), or checks may be made out to 'UUSC,' noting that the donation is for Tsunami Relief in the memo box.

Checks can be mailed to:
Tsunami Relief Fund
UU Service Committee
130 Prospect Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

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PO BOX 1076
FREELAND, WA 98249
(360) 321-8656

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of Whidbey Island**

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members, call
UUCWI voice mail at (360) 321-8656.

Minister: Kit Ketcham (206-781-3098)
Chaplain: Sally Elder (360-675-3314)

Our minister and chaplain are available for rites
of passage ceremonies (including ceremonies of
commitment or union) and pastoral visits.

Newsletter Information:

News, announcements, events, and other items of
general interest to members of the congregation
should be submitted in writing by the 20th of each
month to editor Nancy S., uucwi@whidbey.com.
Short faxed
items may be acceptable; call for more
information. Items submitted after press time will
appear in the following month's newsletter if
appropriate. Time-sensitive late items will be
posted with the announcements and/or on the
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