



the SUUNday Focus

December 18, 2011

Unitarian Universalist Church of Spokane

4340 W Fort Wright Dr
Spokane WA 99224
509.325.6383
www.uuspokane.org

Upcoming Services

Service Times as Listed Below

Dec 18	Doug Huigen, UUCS Member	<i>What Child is This? (9:15 am)</i>
Dec 18	Winter Holiday Pageant	<i>Would You Like to Hold the Baby? (11 am)</i>
Dec 21	UUCS Solstice Ritual Makers	<i>Winter Solstice Singing Ritual (7 pm)</i>
Dec 24	Rev. Dr. Todd Eklof, Minister	<i>Cosmic Advent Service (6 pm)</i>
Dec 25	Rev. Dr. Todd Eklof, Minister	<i>Rudolph, Santa & the Red Scare: We're All on the Island of Misfit Toys (10 am)</i>


Notices & Upcoming Events

Christmas Day Special Collection: Minister's Discretionary Fund

Our special collection on Christmas Day will go to replenish the UUCS Minister's Discretionary Fund. This fund provides emergency assistance to members and friends of our church impacted by job loss, emergency health issues or unexpected financial difficulties. Your gifts to this fund represent grace and mercy to those in need right here in our midst. Please consider contributing to this important UUCS fund by using the Special Collection envelope during the Christmas Day offertory.



Attention all hearing aid wearers!

 Make the most of our church's new "induction loop". UUCS Member Deanna Fendler, the Hearing Loss Association of Spokane's Education Coordinator, will staff an information table in the Friendship Hall today between services and half an hour after the second service to answer any questions you may have. Don't miss this chance to learn about this wonderful type of Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT).

Holiday Office Schedule

The week of Dec 25 - Dec 30, I am giving our fabulous office volunteers the option to "take the day off." Please know I will be working that week, but you may need to leave a voicemail. Thanks for your understanding. — Jet Tilley, Business Administrator. 325-6383 ext 302.


No Focus on Christmas Day

We will not be publishing a Focus Bulletin on Sunday, Dec 25. We will go back to our regular schedule on Jan 1, 2012.

Past Sermons at www.UUCSpokane.org

If the weather or other commitments keep you from attending, you can listen to Rev. Dr. Eklof's sermon or read the text at our website: www.uuspokane.org. Also check out our calendar and publications!

Got Snow Blower?

 Do you have a well-running, light to mid-weight snow blower that's looking for a new home? Would you like to gift it to UUCS? If the answer to both questions is, "Yes!" please contact Business Administrator, Jet Tilley, at 325-6383 during office hours or at admin@uuspokane.org.

Celebrating Religious Education at UUCS

No Religious Education Classes Today. All children should be in the sanctuary watching the Pageant, if they aren't in it. Pageant children meet in the Thoreau Room at 10 am.

No Religious Education Classes – Sunday, Dec. 25.

✦ Holiday Pageant: Thank You!

Thank you to all the children/youth who participated in the pageant and the parents who transported them to rehearsals and now the performance. The Thursday evening rehearsals were an exciting time for the kids as they practiced the pageant and singing, and the parents as they connected with friends. This has always been a special occasion for me because of the children's excitement generated by their participation. I love being around excited children! It's been wonderful!

Senior High Youth Group December Happenings:

- ✦ Monday, Dec 19, 6 pm - YAC Meeting in the Bartok Room
- ✦ Monday, Dec. 19, 6-8pm - Senior High Youth Group: White Elephant Party

White Elephant Gift Exchange & Holiday Party. Bring a small gift (\$15 or less) for our gift swap, and a potluck dish to share. Meet in the Bartok Room

- ✦ Monday, Dec. 26 - No Youth Group



✦ Classroom Donations for SCRAPs

Please remember to send your child with some change for their class's offering for SCRAPs. This is the organization the children throughout the RE Wing chose to help this year. Thank you!



✦ Senior High OWL Classes

Parent Orientation for our Senior High OWL class will be Sunday, February 5, at 12:30 pm in the Sanger Room. This is just for the parents. The Senior High OWL classes actually begin Sunday, February 12, at 12:30 pm in the Sanger Room. There will be 14 sessions for the youth. Please contact Diane Huigen as soon as possible as space is limited – re@uuspokane.org or 328-3158x306.

✦ Social Justice Opportunities for Teaching our Children Generosity and Caring

We have four opportunities children and adults in our church can participate in which will help someone in our community, and help teach our children about Social Justice. We have the food barrel, the sock box, our Guest At Your Table boxes, and the classroom offerings which benefit SCRAPs. The children need help from the adults in our church to make this happen. Recently, I watched as Matthew & Kyra Chambers, with help from their dad, Curt, put a sack of food in the Food Barrel. Teaching by example is huge for teaching children about generosity and caring. What a wonderful legacy!

Questions about our Religious Education programs and events can be directed to Diane Huigen, Director of Religious Education at re@uuspokane.org or 509-325-6383 x306.

✦ **Our Sharing Tree: Thank you! Today is the Deadline.**



Thank you to all the people involved with Our Sharing Tree! I heard from quite a few people about how much they enjoyed shopping for the kids and moms. Also, the group shopping where 2 or 3 people shopped for 1 mitten worked very well. We helped 17 families consisting of 17 mothers & 36 children, where the mother is the head of the household, struggling to provide for her family and attend college either at SFCC or EWU. These families appreciate your generosity! Thank you!

✦ **Our Food Barrel – A Different Kind of Happy Meal**

This is one thing our Food Barrel goes toward: Quote from The Inlander, Nov. 24: *Inside the cold Second Harvest warehouse off East Trent, volunteers in an assembly line fill paper bags with milk cartons, Chef Boyardee mini-ravioli & packages of kid-friendly cereal. The mood is jovial, but the task isn't a happy one. These volunteers are assembling 3,000 kits containing meals and snacks for local school kids who aren't getting enough to eat. The kids are the cornerstone of the Backpack Program – an initiative that aims to meet the needs of students who receive free or reduced cost meals at school during the week, but for whom food is hard to come by on the weekends.*

*Each week, Second Harvest food bank distributes 468 kits of food to schools in Spokane, Coeur d'Alene & the surrounding area that kids can take home in their backpacks on Fridays. Each kit contains 2 ready-to-eat breakfasts & dinners, snacks & milk.

*This is part of a national program by Feeding America to address childhood hunger. Blessings to all who help fill our barrel!

✦ **Guest At Your Table Box: Get Yours Today!**

If you haven't picked up your GAYT box yet, you'll find them on the tables in the Friendship Hall.

What to do with the Guest at Your Table:

- ✦ Put your box on your table & let your family add change each evening.
- ✦ Talk about what the box stands for and what the money will do.
- ✦ Share the Stories of Hope.

These boxes bring in more funds & memberships each year to support the UU Service Committee's mission than any other initiative. UUSC envisions a world free from oppression & injustice, where all people can realize their full human rights. If you would rather not use a box, we have envelopes. You can write a check to UUSC and put it in an envelope, or give your check to Diane Huigen and she will send it to UUSC. PLEASE make your check out to UUSC and have your donations, either box or check, to RE Director, Diane Huigen, by Sunday, January 8, 2012.

✦ **Warm Socks = Warm Feet = Warm Heart (A Social Justice Project)**



It's amazing how the Sock Box continues to fill up each week! Our neighbors at St. Margaret's Shelter for Women & Children and the Union Gospel Mission really appreciate your kind donation. One of the items asked for by almost every family participating in our Sharing Tree was socks. It made me realize how important our Sock Box really is. To participate, bring a pair or pairs of new socks to church & put them in our Sock Box located in the Friendship Hall. This Social Justice project will continue through March. Thank you everyone for sharing! If you have any questions please call or email Diane Huigen at re@uuspokane.org/325-6383 x306.

✦ **Important Winter Solstice Eve Information**



Our annual Winter Solstice Singing Ritual is happening this Wednesday evening, December 21st. The doors will open at 6:30 and the ritual will begin at 7 pm. Childcare will be provided and light snacks will be served after the ritual. Below is some important information for everyone planning on attending this magical evening rite and for those who volunteered to provide treats:

Carpooling & Parking – Because this event is traditionally very well attended, please carpool if possible. As well, we'd like to keep the parking spots closest to the building open for seniors and those with mobility challenges. Your cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Treat Providers – Please deliver your treats to the church anytime Mon/Tue/Wed during office hours (10 am – 2 pm) or to the kitchen door before 6:45 pm on Wed evening prior to the ritual. FYI: If you deliver to the kitchen door on Wed, please know you will need to move your car out into the main parking lot. (see above.)



✦ **Signup for SustainableWorks Energy Audit Before Dec 31, 2011 to save \$100**

SustainableWorks (SW) is a non-profit founded by the Spokane Alliance to help middle-income families do energy retrofits to their homes and in the process help prevent climate change and provide for creation of living wage jobs that stay in the community. Taken together these three missions lead to the ultimate goal of the Alliance – building community. **For those families still thinking about having SW do an energy audit to their house you should know that the price will increase from \$95 to \$195 after Dec 31.** This is because SW will no longer operate with the \$4 million dollar federal stimulus grant it received in 2009. If you sign up before Dec 31 you will have until the end of Jan. 2012 to pay the \$95. For more information or help signing up contact Jerry White 747-7637 or jerrywhiteis@gmail.com. Signup can also be done online at www.SustainableWorks.com.

✦ **Simplicity Circle Forming at UUCS in the New Year**



As a result of the Voluntary Simplicity workshops that were held during the month of October, a Simplicity Circle discussion group is being formed and will meet on the First Wednesday of every month from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. in the Cummings room at the UUCS. The discussions are open to all UU members, especially those who have been following this path for quite some time and who are willing to share their lessons and experience.

Each month the discussion will focus on a different area of a complex life and provide ways to walk a more simple path, one small step at a time.

If you have questions, please contact Georgette Thornton at 838-3808 or via email at gsthornton437@gmail.com.

Please join us on January 4, 2012 to share with others this simple living journey.



Newcomers Q & A

Attending our church for the first few times can confuse a newcomer. If you have questions, particular interests, or just plain need to know more about UUCS check the Q & A Corner at the front of the Sanctuary after each service. There will be a board member awaiting your questions!