

The
DISCOVERER
Volume 72, #85 November 23, 2008

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THE FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
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WORSHIP SERVICES

November 30, 2008 - 9:00 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.	Rev. Mark Belletini
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"Gratitude as Spiritual Practice?"

December Monthly Theme: Hope

December 7, 2008 - 9:00 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.	Rev. Mark Belletini
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"To Hope, Not Pretend"

December 14, 2008 - 9:00 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.	Rev. Eric Meter
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"The Storm Before the Calm"

♪ *The November 30 musical offering is listed on page 7.*

► **Getting to Know UU** meets Sunday mornings in Slowter Lounge after each Worship Service.

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Wednesday, November 26, 2008

9:00a UU Food Co-op
7:00p Memoir Writing Group
7:30p Men's Spirituality; Yoga Therapy
7:30p The Healing Self
8:00p Women's Spirituality

Thursday, November 27, 2008

OFFICE CLOSED
3:00p Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner

Friday, November 29, 2008

OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, November 29, 2008

4:00p Weist Wedding & Reception

Sunday, November 30, 2008

9:00a Worship Service/Sunday School
10:15a Getting to Know UU
11:00a Worship Service/Sunday School
12:15p Getting to Know UU
1:00p UU Artists

Monday, December 1, 2008

11:00a UU Handcrafts and Book Society
7:00p UU Social Dance
7:00p Healing Journey

Tuesday, December 2, 2008

10:00a Archives Organizing
1:00p Cancer Support Groups
5:30p Tuesday Night Supper (until 7pm)
6:15p Peace Pals Choir
7:00p Rising Voices Choir; Zen Meditation
7:00p Arts & Space Committee
7:00p Caring Committee; RE Council
7:00p Social Justice Committee
7:30p Worship Committee; Men's Spirituality
7:45p Spirit of Life Choir

Wednesday, December 3, 2008

1:00p Archives Organizing
7:30p Men's Spirituality; Yoga Therapy
8:00p Women's Spirituality

Thursday, December 4, 2008

9:30a Improvisational Dance
7:30p Know Yourself Better; Artist's Way
7:30p Chalice Choir

Friday, December 5, 2008

12:00p Cooking for Faith Mission
6:30p First Friday Potluck
7:30p First Friday Programs; Evensong
7:30p Interweave

Saturday, December 6, 2008

8:30a Choir Rehearsal; Zen Meditation
9:30a Memorial Garden Workday

Sunday, December 7, 2008

9:00a Worship Service/Sunday School
10:15a Getting to Know UU
11:00a Worship Service/Sunday School
12:15p Getting to Know UU
12:30p Youth Group
12:45p YASC
1:30p Bluegrass Jam
4:00p Holiday Concert (all four choirs)

Monday, December 8, 2008

11:00a UU Handcrafts/Book Society
7:00p UU Social Dance; Program Council
7:00p Executive Committee; AEP Committee

Tuesday, December 9, 2008

9:00a Newsletter folding
10:00a Archives Organizing
11:00a Senior Gathering
1:00p Cancer Support Groups
5:30p Tuesday Night Supper (until 7pm)
6:15p Peace Pals Choir
7:00p Rising Voices Choir; Zen Meditation
7:00p UU Bible School
7:45p Spirit of Life Choir

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

1:00p Archives Organizing
7:00p Memoir Writing Group
7:30p Men's Spirituality; Yoga Therapy
8:00p Women's Spirituality

7:30p Wednesdays, FOCUUS meets in the OSU Campus area. Call 447-8407.

The next issue of *The Discoverer*: **Sunday, December 7. Deadline: 1:00pm** – hard copy in the church office; or **6:00pm** – e-mail copy to olwfire@yahoo.com.

Sunday afternoon. There's no other time of the week like it. There's a high I feel after our worship celebrations. Maybe you feel it, too.

The time after our services can be frenetic, and I struggle to remember all those whom I need to check with in the days ahead, along with new names and faces of those I've just met. And still, each Sunday there's a moment when something catches my eye and I pause, take a deep breath, and rest for a moment in appreciation for the richness only found in religious community.

After getting a cup of coffee recently, I went back to see if anyone from our Coming of Age class was still around. They had left by then, heading out to rake leaves. But then I noticed a good smell coming from the down the hall. A couple was having some lunch in Room 8. I asked if they were waiting for a meeting to start. "Actually," they replied, "we've discovered that we're a week early. Come join us." What followed was a lovely conversation about the work of the church and how, in the odd moments when a room or hallway is empty and still, the quiet is made more beautiful by the shimmering echoes of everything else that goes on at other times during the week.

* * * *

Before I close, I also want to mention that on December 7, the Coming of Age class will begin its annual fundraiser. The group has decided not to offer Bean Soup again, choosing hooded sweatshirts instead. Yes, we'll be selling hoodies this year, sporting logos designed by our own Casey Pax. So save energy by turning down your thermostat, and let a new COA sweatshirt keep you warm. You'll love them.

Happy Thanksgiving, everyone.

Eric

Rev. Eric Meter

"Love what you have; do what you can; be who you are." In these uncertain times, the Rev. Forrest Church's words remind us to be grateful for what we have, and to be true to ourselves. Thank you, Mark, for sharing his wisdom and yours in today's sermon. Whatever happens, we will be sustained by our beloved First UU community. As other investments look shaky, our investment in First UU is looking pretty sound.

We aimed high when we approved this year's budget - funding music staff for a full year, increasing staff salaries to reach fair compensation guidelines, paying our Fair Share to the Ohio-Meadville District and an increased percentage to the UUA, and more. We said we would raise \$25,000 in gifts in this year's Holiday Appeal to make that budget balance.

Because investment income and pledges are lower than budgeted, we will need instead to raise \$50,000 to keep our budget in balance. This is after our church has already tightened its belt. The Finance Committee recommended cuts to most committee budgets, to some administrative areas, to staff professional development, and other areas. The Board of Trustees has approved a budget freeze, and will approve budget reductions once the results of the Holiday Appeal are known. Still, we need to raise \$50,000 in this year's Holiday Appeal to honor our commitments to keep paying our loyal staff and the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Ohio-Meadville District.

We are asking each member to give an additional \$130, or more or less as you are able. Even if you are not a member, please consider including First UU in your plans for special gifts during this holiday season. Please give generously, but realistically, given your circumstances. Your gift, of whatever size, will make a difference. Together, we can keep First UU the vital, caring community we cherish.

You may write a check, noting “Holiday Appeal” on the memo line, and drop it in the basket on Sunday or at the table in Fellowship Hall, or mail it to First UU. If it is easier for you to spread your gift over the remaining seven months of the fiscal year (\$130 works out to \$18.57 more per month, starting in December), you may increase your pledge at <http://www.firstuucolumbus.org/stewardship/holiday-appeal-2008.html>, or by completing the form available in Fellowship Hall also. Your generous gift, in the amount that works for you, will be appreciated.

In faithful stewardship: David Easter, Chair, Board of Trustees, and Gretchen Faulstich, Chair, Stewardship Committee

BOARD OF TRUSTEES - *Highlights of the November 19 meeting of the Board. Full minutes will be available on the bulletin board in the Window Hallway and on the church website after they are corrected and approved at the “December” meeting, to be held January 7, 2009.*

Staff Report highlights, presented by Michael Brennan: Mark Belletini taught UU and Christian history to two classes at Capital University, responded to various colleagues in need of pastoral help, worked extensively with two mentees, did significant pastoral work with church members, conducted marriages and memorial services, and preached at Rev. Bill Gupton’s church in Cincinnati. Eric Meter visited various covenant groups, co-led the new grief support group with Kathleen Fowler, helped lead the Coming of Age retreat, met and worked with various church committees, and reported that his pastoral work continues to increase, especially his work with the Pastoral Team. Jolinda Stephens worked with Michael Brennan to implement criminal background checks for those who work with children and youth, developed a blog and two web collaboration platforms for teachers, is writing new lesson plans for middle school, is

recruiting and organizing for OWL – 1st grade, and 4th/5th grade, and is working with First AME Zion Church on joint BREAD projects for middle school. Michael Brennan helped organize the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast, worked on budget revisions, helped organize the Holly Near concert, is working with the new Safety and Security committee, and is acting as the Sunday morning receptionist.

Treasurer’s Report: Frank Phillips reported that total income is about 14% below budget, and that cash flow is still an issue. That makes the Holiday Appeal particularly important this year, and the amount will need to be increased.

Budget Revisions: The Holiday Appeal goal will be increased to \$50,000, in order to balance the budget. The Board tabled until its January 7, 2009 meeting any action on further revisions. They also approved moving \$10,000 from the Rainy Day fund from restricted to operating funds.

Partner Church: Gretchen Faulstich reported that we have a candidate to become our partner church, and the Board approved moving ahead to partner with the Unitarian church in Bolon, Romania.

Annual Budget Drive: Carole Pruiksma reported that the campaign this year will use the “appreciative inquiry” technique, and that there will be a training workshop on that process on January 17. The campaign will run from February 1 to March 30, 2009. UUA Moderator Gini Courter will preach on Celebration Sunday, March 29, 2009.

Nominating Committee: The Board approved the committee’s request to change their name to the Leadership Development Committee. This reflects the recent broadening of their role. The motion will be presented for congregational approval at the mid-year meeting in February.

-- Bob Gordon, Secretary, Board of Trustees

KNOWING YOURSELF BETTER This AEP class will meet December 4, 7:30-9:00pm. Leave name/number at 433-0363.



SAVE THE DAY! The traditional Holiday Concert will be on Sunday, December 7 at 4:00 pm. All four choirs will perform. Special guest: the Central Ohio Brass Band.

BOOK BITES *December 16* in Slower Lounge at 7 pm. Topic is *Holidays*, and will include a book exchange of wrapped, used books, one per member, to exchange. Questions: call Kathleen 262-4025.

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS Not too many books left! Buy a book and help our Coming of Age group- \$20 each with \$4.00 going to the group. 50% off coupons for bakeries, eating places, pizza, sporting events, discount stores, arts centers, ballet, recreation centers etc. Available on Sundays through December 14, or call Karin Erickson, 833-6479.

PLAN AHEAD Are you attending one of the Christmas Eve Services and Receptions (5pm or 10pm)? If so, please bring one plate of finger food to share – sweets, fruit, veggies – nothing requiring silverware!

SPECIAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY! We're searching for an outgoing person, who loves people and live music! All Soles Contra Dances are sponsored by the First UU Social Committee and held monthly in Fellowship Hall. We would benefit from a volunteer to sit and greet dancers as they come in, and make them feel welcome. All Soles dances attract folks of all ages from within and beyond the First UU community, many of whom are visiting our building for the first time. This is a volunteer position, but the benefits are great: live music, a warm, highly social atmosphere, a great way to meet lots of interesting people, and homebaked snacks. Please email Kate Power at kate@powerkate.com or call 789-0652.

SPACE: To Boldly Bid What No One Has Before What is that, you ask? It is our theme for the *February 21, 2009 AUuction*. In order to have another successful auction, we need to fill many jobs: publicity; phonathon callers to past contributors on December 14; setup and decoration on "the day"; food preparation and donations; baked goods; silent auction assistance; kitchen cleanup after the event; help to get the church ready for Sunday services. In short, we need "many hands to make light the work"!

If you are interested in being a part of the Auction Committee, please contact Jo Anne St. Clair, 268-1923, or joastclair@aol.com OK...beam me up Scotty!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS Hap Baer, David Douglass, Elizabeth Douglass. Jana Genzer, David Hoppens, Monica Hoppens, Ferenc (Nick) Relle, Rachel Leary Relle, Audra Teague.

AYURVEDIC YOGA THERAPY

Introduction to dosha practices and vinyasas, whole body movement practices with breath. Class includes new poses, breathing practices and deep relaxation. Three classes in series - Wednesday, 11/26, 12/3, and 12/10. Drop in, or come to all classes (\$10 donation to First UU suggested). Wear comfortable clothes, bring yoga mat or towel and small blanket. Questions - call Linda Weigelt, 397-7296.

LASAGNA GARDENING AEP class on Wednesdays, January 14, 21 and ? facilitated by Wanda Hambrick.. Save your fall leaves now to garden an easier way. The class is based on the book *Lasagna Gardening* by Patricia Lanza, available in the library.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

GUEST AT YOUR TABLE. Be sure to pick up a Guest At Your Table box at the church for YOUR table... to raise money for the projects of the UU Service Committee.

SOMETHING SPECIAL! The 24th Annual Martin Luther King Birthday Breakfast Celebration will be held *Monday, January 19, 2009*. It's the largest event of its kind in the country, with more than 4000 expected to be in attendance.

This year's event will be extra-special because our First UU Chalice Choir has been invited to sing. The keynote speaker will be Rev. J. Alfred Smith, Sr., a renowned scholar, acclaimed preacher and author of more than 16 books. His most recent book, *Speak Until Justice Wakes*, is an inspiration to those who seek peace and justice.

This event will be sold out. The Social Justice Committee and the Communications Committee will be encouraging First UU members to attend and stand "shoulder to shoulder in the struggle for civil rights." You'll be inspired by a powerful celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday.

Tickets will not be available at the door. Bill Fullarton is facilitating the purchase of tickets for First UU members so that we can be seated at tables of 10. Contact Bill at 669-4970 or bfullarton@yahoo.com for more information and/or to purchase tickets.



Support Drive: Thanks to Steve Fechter and Amy Thompson, Carol Fisher and Dan Baer, Sue Sinclair, and Deanne Witiak, whose financial investments in BREAD's work for social justice in central Ohio have brought our First UU investment to \$12,240, only \$70 short of our 2007-08 total. BREAD's 2008-09 congregational and corporate support drive, including six new companies, has now raised over \$120,000. If you haven't yet done so, please write your generous, tax-deductible check to BREAD (not First UU) and mail or bring it to the church in an envelope clearly marked BREAD.

Issues: BREAD's pilot Project KEY (Keep Engaging Youth) to reduce truancy by involving the families, the schools, any needed social service agencies and the community, is continuing this year in three middle and three of their feeder elementary schools. BREAD is also working in central Ohio to expand primary health care, early childhood education, drug court capacity and utilization, and IDA's (Individual Development Accounts) for low-income residents. BREAD will offer a research training and kick-off session on *Tuesday, December 9* for anyone interested in joining one of the ongoing committees or the new committee to research the problem selected at the November 24th Annual Assembly for BREAD's research and action. Contact Alice Rathburn at 895-2109, 563-0536, or alice37@insight.rr.com for more information.

UUSC HOLIDAY CARDS They're here! UUSC's beautiful holiday cards will be available for purchase in Fellowship Hall. after the services.

ATHENS COUNTY/APPALACHIA MINISTRY We now need blankets and winter clothing. And don't forget those aluminum cans!. Please bring items to the Social Justice Table

"WARM UP APPALACHIA" - We plan to send hand-knitted afghans to Mineral, OH. Donations of yarn (whole skeins or small balls in any color) are welcome in the marked box behind Jacques' table on Sunday mornings. Yarn is knitted into 7x9 inch rectangles to create patchwork afghans of 36 or 49 blocks. Templates with directions are located in the yarn donation box on Sunday mornings. -- Gretchen Curtis, 734-1214.

EMPTY BOWLS Many thanks to everyone who helped to make November 15th Empty Bowls event a success for another year! The event raised over \$1800 for the Mid-Ohio Foodbank and we could not have done it without all of you who made and served soup, helped with setup and cleanup and came to eat soup. Special thanks to Sherri Stubbs for handling this project for us.

CARING CORNER

Our caring thoughts to **Marsha Hamilton** who had hip replacement surgery 11/24.

Our thanks to sign language interpreter **Anthony Nelson** for the many years he has provided this important service. Due to changes in his work and school schedules, November 23 was his last day with us.

DENOMINATIONAL CONCERNS

PLAN AHEAD Winter Institute 2009
The 9th Annual Winter Institute will be held at Salt Fork State Park near Cambridge, OH on February 13-16, 2009 (President's Day Weekend). This relaxing "schedule and stress free" weekend is an intimate gathering for UUs of all ages. There are outdoor activities such as sledding, hiking and cross country skiing to do; the pool and hot tub are available for use; and there's always a few board games and puzzles around for those who want to be inside. **January 23, 2009** is the registration deadline. To learn more and to register, visit: Ohiomeadville.org/conference/omdwi.html

♪ Worship Service Music ♪

November 30, 2008
9:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M.
Vocalise/Steve Bigley, euphonium



**THANKSGIVING POTLUCK DINNER
at First UU Church**

Please contact Shilah Griffeth, 599-8593,
griffethevents@yahoo.com or the church office at 267-4946, ext. 21.

As I write this, the sounds of the tabla and sitar are rising up from the Worship Center as the Krishna-centered worship of some of our renters takes place. The sun is already low, orange light casting stripes on my east wall of books from the west windows. I'm a little groggy, having just taken a nap on my couch, one of the most comfortable places to sleep in the known universe.

I'm thinking about my house-guests arriving. I've been buying and plumping new comforters to make their sleeping in cramped quarters cozier. I am excited. I've been thinking about my friend Babar, whose goodbye party I attended last night...another "ordinary loss" in Judith Viorst's term. He won't be at Thanksgiving for the first time in five years. My friends David and Tim can't come this year. Their two sons are at just the age when they are a handful right now, and they decided they would only be spending all their time with them, not with the adults at the table. Devere is up in Cleveland, looking for work. I read him the number from the Census Jobs flier posted on the bulletin board by the bathrooms, since I think he is such a good organizer and would be a boon. Still, I will miss him terribly. Leon isn't coming out from Boston this year...he's got some musical commitments in local orchestras. Andy will drop in for dessert though, which is great.

But new folks are arriving. And long time Thanksgiving Day family members like Dan will be there. It will be an entirely new table this year. Like, I have to admit, every year. Herikleitos the Greek reminds us that you can't set your foot in the same river twice. I guess the same thing is true about cranberry sauce!

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The Fire Within A sentence for contemplation: "To hope for Paradise is to live in Paradise, a very different thing from actually getting there." *Vita Sackville West, 1926*



Rev. Mark Belletini

NOTE: Rev. Eric Meter will be out of town November 25 through Saturday, November 29.

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|---|---|
| Rev. Mark Belletini, Senior Minister | Michael Brennan, Church Administrator |
| Rev. Eric Meter, Consulting Minister | Marian Garcia, Administrative Assistant |
| Rev. Carol Brody, Minister Emerita | Deb McGuire, Staff Secretary/RE Assistant |
| Rev. Wendy Fish, Minister Emerita | Joe Voltolini, Bookkeeper |
| Dick Dawson, Chaplain | Don Hippensteel, Events Coordinator |
| Jolinda Stephens, Director of Religious Education | Naoko Kobayashi, Facilities Assistant |
| Stephanie Rottmayer, SYC Director | Cathy Hausmann, Facilities Assistant |
| Tony McDonald, Music Director | David Easter, Chair, Board of Trustees |
| Doug O'Neal/Elizabeth Woodhouse, Choir Directors | Bob Graffagnino, Co-Webmaster |
| Nathan Hamm, Pianist/Accompanist | Kevin O'Neil, Co-Webmaster |

Olwen Firestone, Newsletter Editor

Faith Development for All Ages

In less than three weeks my world has been rocked twice by events I thought I'd never see in my lifetime. The first, of course, was the election of our first African American President. The second happened this Friday when Bob Jones III, Chancellor of Bob Jones University, infamous for its racism, posted a formal apology to the BJU website for that racism. The apology was, of course, aimed at its bad old past – and it glossed over that. It did not acknowledge any current racism. But that is not unusual for people beginning their journey toward racial justice. It always begins with baby steps. Once you begin the journey, if you are faithful to the spirit, an amazing world opens up. It's filled with challenges and with things we'd rather not face and it's also filled with new possibilities, new hopes, new relationships, and our own transformation.

I will follow their journey with a lot of interest, to see if they do follow the spirit or they find the going too hard. It is deeply personal. Bob Jones III is my first cousin. More than that, the lives of my birth family revolve around Bob Jones University. My parents met and fell in love at BJU. One sister and her husband have worked there all their adult lives. For more than twenty years another sister and her husband have been missionaries for a BJU mission that my brother-in-law now heads. Yet another sister is the principal of a Christian high school that sends most of its graduates there. I spent many summers as a child at Bob III's home. All of my nieces and nephews, except one, graduated from BJU.

My nuclear family was first bi-racial and is now multi-racial. While I maintained some relationship with my siblings and their families, I did not speak to my parents until a few years prior to their deaths and my children and grandchildren never knew them.

I'm not at all sure what to make of this pronouncement. I know my sisters are strongly influenced by such things. And I know that they don't have any more idea of what racism is than Bob III does. But when Bob cited the Biblical injunction to love your neighbor as yourself, a bit of hope began to grow. That particular injunction, basic to the traditional teachings attributed to Jesus, was never given much attention in the past at BJU. In fact, hearing old sermons of Uncle Bob and his father, as well as Bob III, one would think they had never read it.

In thinking about our family now, I have faced the fact that it has always been divided by more than racism. It is divided by the fact that my sisters are convinced, in all genuine love, that I am heading for Hell, and I am convinced in all genuine love that they already occupy Bedlam. The details of my experience may be somewhat unusual but now we've gotten to a place that is familiar to a lot of UUs, particularly at the holidays. How do we bridge the divide? How do we live our Universalist love that counsels us to love people as they are, not as we think they ought to be? I've been humming Dar Williams' great holiday song "The Christians and the Pagans" a whole lot the last couple of days.

I wish you a rich Thanksgiving full of real connections, knowing that sometimes those connections are fragile and tenuous. -- Jolinda Stephens, Director of Religious Education

FREE Holiday Childcare at the Church

Parents, could you use a few hours to yourself this holiday season, to shop, wrap gifts or have a few moments alone with your spouse? Well, the First UU Middle School Youth Group has a deal for you. They will watch your children at the church the afternoon of Sunday, December 14. And they won't charge you a dime. The three wonderful adult Youth Advisors and two parents will also be

around. There will be treats and fun and a great chance for your children to hang out with church friends and make new ones.

When: **Sunday, December 14, 1:30 to 4:30 pm**

Ages: 3 to 10 years old

Cost: Absolutely nothing. This is a service to the church community offered by our Middle School Youth Group. (What an outstanding way to start this season of giving!)

What Goes On in Sunday School Anyway?

The short answer to that question is: Marvelous things, funny things, moving things. But below in more detail is what happened recently in the 11 am group for 6th and 7th graders, called ***Race To Justice***. This report is by Betsy Duckworth, one of the teachers. The other teachers are Gina Phillips, Damon Reynolds and Beth Jewell. “We have been thrilled by the spirited and educated discussions by our 6th and 7th graders about the recent presidential election and how religion as well as race factored into the vote this year. Our Middle Schoolers not only understood the weighty issues of race, religion and sexual orientation in the election but also had very firm, knowledgeable and well-informed views about how those issues were being played out in the various campaigns. The Middle School teachers wish that the entire electorate was so sophisticated! Parents – you should be proud of your Middle Schoolers!”

Recently, the group celebrated Dias de los Muertos and Shane, Natalie, Carrah Anne and Will made it especially interesting and fun.

The 11 am First Grade Group, led by Julie Henderson, Michelle McNabb, Julie Reeves and Carol Ballog, are working on a chalice wall hanging to grace our walls, and the 11 am Second Grade Group is raising money to donate to the Heifer Project that supports people all over the world to feed themselves and improve their lives. Look for their table in Fellowship Hall and pledge.

And don't miss the video debut of the 9 am 3rd-6th grade group at both services on November 30. The video was shot and edited by one of our 3rd graders and his grandmother.

Holiday Sunday School Schedule

November 30 – Youth are in worship service; Elementary groups leave the Worship Center for activity in Fellowship Hall; Younger Children are in rooms 3 and 4. The Elementary groups will not return to the Worship Center during the service.

December 7 and 14 – Regular classes

December 21 – Intergenerational worship for all ages. There will be great stories (no sermon). Only the Toddler Room will be open.

December 28 – Same schedule as November 30. There will be a Labyrinth for All Ages.

January 4 – Same schedule as November 30

January 11 – Regular classes resume.

Holiday Events for Families

December 7, 4 pm – The Holiday Concert includes both children/youth choirs

December 24, 5 pm – Christmas Eve Early Service with Candlelighting (Reception to follow)

Don't Miss the Adult Enrichment Program's Winter Brochure
Hot off the press November 30...Filled with exciting new programming