

Universalist Anchor



Words by Rev Lillie

Hope

When I was a little girl, an electronic toy was a transistor radio or an electric train. Even young adults, in their twenties and thirties today, can say that Christmas toys have changed dramatically since they were children.

Christmas presents have changed a lot in our lifetime. What hasn't changed throughout human-kind's story is the reason for presents and celebrations in this midwinter season. Known by many names and observed in many cultures, especially those cultures that have a clear changing of seasons, the Winter Solstice has always been celebrated to mark the lengthening of days and the return of light.

Whenever humans go through a time of darkness—environmentally, emotionally, or spiritually—they have always found a reason and a way to celebrate coming out of the darkness into the light.

We, as a people of faith, are invested in the mid-winter celebration of the birth of a child 2013 years ago somewhere in Palestine. Truth, history, and facts notwithstanding, we believe that a very special human being was born around that time and a religion of hope grew up around his story.

Hope is part of our physiology, as well as our psychology. We can lose hope and become depressed organically which destroys our inherent human tendency to “hope for the best in life,” or we can become depressed emotionally or spiritually in response to life's situations.

Loss of hope, sociologists tell us, can happen communally and culturally.

It is understandable that one of the Palestinian tribes who had been subjugated for many hundreds of years would have cause to hope for a Messiah. And it is even more understandable that the people on the margins of that culture would readily follow a charismatic leader whose stories and parables promised hope for everyone.

Today, in the midst of our successful lives, it is understandable that we, too, might lose our own per-

sonal sense of hope because of world and societal events.

It is difficult to live without hope.

We are fortunate enough to live in a time that when there are organic reasons for our lack of hope; medicine can and does help us. It is also fortunate, that for those of us who suffer from seasonal affective disorder, commonly called “winter depression” there are remedies for us, too.

And for those of us who suffer from loss of hope because of life's challenges, we can be helped, too. Sometimes it is through medicine; sometimes through therapy; and sometimes through spiritual discernment.

If we have lost hope, we are called, as a people of faith, to explore the promises of the babe in the manger. As we intentionally discern the meaning of Jesus' birth for our lives, we can begin to live out that promise of hope for ourselves and for others.

If we have not lost hope, we need to examine our lives and decide whether we are living out the promise of Jesus' birth for ourselves and for others.

However it is for us, we are called to live out the promise of Christmas.

Giving presents and celebrating the love of family and friends can be as challenging as it is joyous. Keep in mind that underlying all these activities there is a very human need to celebrate hope—hope for a better life—for ourselves and for all people of all nations, for now and the future.

Happy holidays,

Pastor Lillie

If you are receiving this newsletter via email and would prefer to have it by regular mail, let the office know.

Remember this shopping season and anytime to go to AMAZON.COM through the UNMC website so the church will get a percentage of anything that you buy!

Children/Youth Religious Education

Christmas service, December 16

The young people of our church will be working on their Christmas service most of the month of December. December 2 they will be learning about Advent and how that fits into the Christmas picture. On Sunday, December 16th, they will be leading the service as their gift to the church community for Christmas. It will be a wonderful, joyful worship experience. Please be sure to mark your calendars and come.

Youth Group Begins!

Starting **January 6th**, the church youth group will be meeting every Sunday, 7:00 pm. Young people in 7th grade and above are welcome. Please contact the office at 202-387-3411 for more information.

Mitten Tree

R.E. is asking you to please help our D.C. neighbors suffering from the cold by trimming the mitten tree in the church foyer with items of warmth—hats, scarves, mittens, gloves . . . any size/color is appropriate. The donations will be delivered before Christmas, and hopefully, before the really cold weather sets in.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, December 2: Hanging O' the Greens after church in the sanctuary. Everyone, newcomers, especially, are invited to share in this UNMC tradition.

Monday, December 3: 7:00 p.m. Board Meeting in Parlor

Friday, December 7: Salsa for CASA at the church. Doors open at 7:30pm. Salsa lesson 8pm \$10 - \$20 sliding scale. Learn how to salsa / and dance to salsa grooves provided by one of the District's finest salsa bands! CASA responds to the call for international solidarity with grass-roots indigenous and campesino movements by maintaining two centers in Mexico for education, support and activism.

Sunday, December 9: 12:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Service Committee will hold a special worship service "A Drumbeat for Darfur." Afterwards, they will host a training session for those who want to contact their Congressional Representatives.

Saturday, December 15: 6:00 PM Caroling and Potluck. All are invited. Please contact the office at 202-387-3411 for more information.

Saturday, December 22: at 6:00 and **Sunday Dec 23,** at 4:00 at the church: The Urban Philharmonic Society presents Handel's Messiah.



Chancel Flowers

Mary Templeton, Coordinator

December 2—Chancel flowers given in memory of Mary K. and H. Jerome Graham, organist emeritus, by their daughter, Sally and son-in-law Doug Simon.

December 9—Open

December 16—Chancel flowers given in remembrance of his parents, Alma and Ashley Rich, by Alan H. and Priscilla Rich.

December 23—Chancel flowers given in memory of Dorothy Boyd Chapman by Mary Simmons.

December 30—Open

Poinsettias are given:

in memory of Kevin Joseph McNamara by his daughter, Jillian McNamara and David, Byron, and Averell Gattton

in honor of Mary Simmons by Mary S. and Al Templeton

in loving memory of family members who have died by Reverend Lillie Henley

in memory of Paul Bocskor by Catherine Bocskor in remembrance of Clint McCully's parents, Ed and Eloise McCully, by the McCully/Sandberg family

in loving memory of Jennifer Sandberg's parents, Sandy and Pat Sandberg, by the McCully/Sandberg family

in loving memory of her husband, Walter H. Wood Sr, by Estelle Wood

The poinsettias will be in the sanctuary until Epiphany, January 6

Flowers for Advent and Christmas

As you see, UNMC is in need of contributions for chancel flowers and poinsettias for the Christmas season. PLEASE call the office at 202-387-3411 ASAP so that our church will look its best for the holidays. Tributes will be noted in each Sunday's order of service.

Caroling and Potluck Saturday, December 15, 6:00 PM

Caroling last year was so much fun that we're singing again this year! We'll gather at the church and proceed to carol down 17th St toward Dupont Circle. Our delicious potluck will follow our caroling. Everyone is invited. Please contact the office at 202-387-3411 for more information.

Other activities may be added during this holiday season so check the church website for updates.

FIRESIDE CHAT AFTER THE SUNDAY SERVICE

Beginning December 9th Rev. Henley will host a gathering in the second floor library after church on Sundays.

After greeting everyone after the service, she will meet with newcomers, guests, and anyone interested in a fireside chat. This will be an opportunity to discuss religion and theology, the various ministries of UNMC, membership, or opportunities for service.

There will be coffee, hot tea, or hot chocolate.

Anyone new to the church, as well as members and friends are invited. The schedule for fireside chats will be in the order of service each Sunday.

LELAND PLACE

A New Time for Leland

We're going to get started a half hour earlier this month — at 2:30 p.m. Saturday Dec. 16. That's when we will gather in the church kitchen for our next Leland Place dinner.

More than a dozen residents of Leland — a halfway house on North Capitol Street for men recovering from addictions -- enjoyed a pre-Thanksgiving feast on Nov. 17. The centerpiece of the meal was Chicken a la Nick— Nick Bowden, that is.

Thanks to Nick and fellow planner-shopper Angela Khaminwa for a wonderful meal — as well as volunteers Catherine Robbins, Mike and Alex Dillon, Pastor Lillie, and Dave and Emily Skidmore.

Chicken a la Nick, by the way, is boneless chicken breast wrapped and bacon and smothered in Campbell's mushroom soup and sour cream. They went perfectly with Angela's honey-mustard carrots as well as smashed potatoes, homemade cornbread, salad and sweet potato pie and pecan ice cream.

Interested in the next dinner? RSVP to the office at 202-387-3411. Volunteers generally split the cost of the meal (around \$15 to \$25 per volunteer). If you'd like to donate time, but not money, see Pastor Lillie or Dave.

SERVICES

Saturday December 1: 5:00 p.m. Contemplative Vespers Service in Chapel

Sunday, December 2: First Sunday of Advent – Celebrating *Hope* – Rev. Henley will preach “The Light of Hope in the Darkness of Life.”

Sunday, December 9: Second Sunday of Advent – *Love* – Dr. Charles Clements, President and CEO of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee will preach on *love*. As president of Physicians for Human Rights he represented that organization at the treaty signing for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and a week later at the Nobel prize ceremonies.

Sunday, December 16: Third Sunday of Advent – *Joy* – the children and youth of the church will celebrate Christmas with the congregation. There will be Christmas songs, skits, and *joy* for everyone. Please join us in worship lead by our treasured and cherished young people.

Friday, December 21: 7:00 p.m. “What Do You Do When the Holidays Hurt?” A healing service offered by the Worship Committee

Sunday, December 23: Fourth Sunday of Advent – *Peace* – “Let There Be Peace on Earth and Let It Begin With Me” will be Rev. Henley’s sermon.

Monday, December 24: 8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service will be “Lessons and Carols,” a UNMC tradition, with familiar readings and Christmas hymns that will nourish and comfort our spirits!

Tuesday, December 25: Noon Christmas Day – a Christmas Communion service

Sunday, December 30: “Is it the End or the Beginning?” A sermon by Rev. Henley. How do you know when something ends? Where is the beginning of a pursuit?

Safety Announcement

The Board has decided that in order to ensure the safety of our members, friends and visitors, it is necessary to have someone stationed at the front door of the church during the entire Sunday worship service. On those days when there is no volunteer, the doors will be closed at approximately 11:15 AM. If you should arrive at church and find the door locked, please knock and one of the greeters will let you in. The Board regrets any inconvenience that this may cause.

SHARING OUR PLATE

Each month we share 10% of our free-will plate collection with a non-profit organization that works in our neighborhood and gives to those in need. For December, the recipient of Sharing Our Plate will be **Whitman-Walker Clinic**. Whitman-Walker Clinic is a non-profit community-based health organization serving the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region. Established by and for the gay and lesbian community, the Clinic is comprised of diverse volunteers and staff who provide or facilitate the delivery of high quality, comprehensive, accessible health care and community services. Whitman-Walker Clinic is especially committed to ending the suffering of all those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

A thank-you note from Casey Trees, a Sharing Our Plate recipient:

Dear Reverend Henley:

On behalf of everyone at Casey Trees, I want to thank you for your donation to our organization. These moneys will go toward the purchase of a tree at one of our planting events that will be scheduled for next spring or fall. I encourage you and your congregation to think of us if you have any ideas about tree planting in your community – we would be honored and humbled to assist.

Have a wonderful holiday season.

Regards,
Mark Buscaino | Executive Director | Casey Trees

FOR LOVE OF CHILDREN'S NEIGHBORHOOD TUTORING PROGRAM NEEDS YOUR HELP!

For Love of Children's Neighborhood Tutoring Program (NTP) is a highly structured back to basics reading and math program for students who are currently performing below grade level. Volunteer tutors are matched one on one with students and they continue to work with one another for the entire school year. Time commitment is about 2 hours/week excluding holiday weeks and school breaks. No experience needed and training is provided! Call or email today for a list of program times (evenings and weekends are available), locations and training dates! 202-349-3512 or ntp@floc.org. A child is waiting for your help!

TUTORS NEEDED AT FAIRCLIFF PLAZA WEST – AND CHRISTMAS PRESENTS!

Faircliff Plaza West Community Center provides after-school tutors and programs for students in sixth to twelfth grades, social and recreation activities for teens 13 through 18, and an all-day summer program for children and youth. Visit their website faircliffplazawest.org for more information on their programs and mission.

The Center also provides computer training, ESL classes, yoga and other self-enriching programs for their adult residents, many of whom are from the Dominican Republic and other South American countries.

The children of Faircliff Plaza also need winter coats and other cold-weather clothing.



Juan, Carlos, Miguel, and Kimberly, above, are all siblings. The three boys recently arrived from Dominican Republic. Their mother and her sister have been living in the US for some years and after much effort, the boys have finally been reunited with their family. The boys are in the process of learning English, and the tutor is one of our volunteers Tom Palmer.

Santiago De Angulo, the director of the programs will be glad to speak with anyone who feels called to help the families of Faircliff Plaza West. You can contact him at 202-332-1151 or by email at sdeangulo@faircliffplazawest.org.

The Center's mission is to provide community activities and educational and social services to the multi-cultural residents of the Faircliff Plaza West apartments and the immediate surrounding community. The center also acts as a resource to obtain information about community services offered in the area, with an emphasis on social, health, economic, education and recreation needs.

Faircliff Plaza West is within walking distance of UNMC on Clifton at 14th St NW. The Center was created with grant monies from the developers of this Columbia Heights property renovation project in 2005. The partnership consists of Somerset Development Company, Eagle Point Enterprises and Faircliff Plaza West Tenant Association.

Board Notes

UNMC Board Meets the First Monday night of each month at 7:00 p.m., and is an open board meeting. Below left are board members at the November meeting: David Burton, board secretary Elizabeth Crawford, Jennifer Sandberg and moderator David Gatton. Below right are David Gatton with back to camera, Al Templeton, Lisa Harris, Jeff Jacobs, Greg Wigle, and board treasurer Brian Pepper. Not pictured is Rob Bertram who was out-of-town.



On January 12, the Board has scheduled an all-day leadership retreat.

On January 20, we will have the semi-annual congregational meeting. It has been moved to January to give the Board time to organize the next steps for financial issues, the McKim organ, and the pledge campaign.

WELCOME & MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Welcome & Membership Committee arranged for Pastor Lillie and UNMC to be a featured story with pictures in the Washington Times', "The Capital Pulpit" column on Nov. 12. Recently, the church purchased advertising space in the Dupont Circle and Logan Circle House Tour books, the Washington Blade and the monthly neighborhood Intowner newspaper. New outdoor replacement banners and newcomer mugs have also been ordered with budget funds. On November 5, UNMC hosted a Dupont Circle Citizen's Association (DCCA) meeting. In addition, press releases for special events and holiday services were sent to the Washington Post, Washington Times, Washington Blade, Washington City Paper, Intowner, Craig's List, Dupont Circle Citizen's Assoc., DC's Metro Weekly and the Dupont Current. Free weekly community calendar listings for church services have also been published in the Washington Blade and DC's Metro Weekly. We are currently investigating placing public service announcements on radio, tv & cable and creating a church brochure for bulletin boards, information tables and kiosks. Furthermore, we've obtained information regarding the possible replacement of our lighted outdoor sign with a larger double-faced lighted outdoor sign for the corner of 16th & S Sts. The Welcome & Membership Committee has also looked into possible networking, events and venues for a young people's church group. In addition, Ron Eanes has volunteered to chair the Welcome and Membership Committee upon Elizabeth Crawford's resignation.

The *Universalist Anchor* is published monthly for the members and friends of the Universalist National Memorial Church in Washington, DC. It is also on our website, along with Rev. Henley's sermons, and announcements and activities.

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Joe Lawson, Music Director

Mr. Kirk Denton, Organist

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Our Mission (adopted May 2002)

We create a loving community
for worship and service
in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

We welcome all and respect individual beliefs as we grow
together



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