

# Universalist Anchor



December 2006

**Words by Rev Lillie**

## Gratitude

In the November 20<sup>th</sup> issue of The Washington Post, Janene Mascarella wrote a special interest column on *gratitude*. She began to send thank you notes to people who had made a difference in her life. It began when a dinner party conversation turned to a “discussion of life-changing books” She went home that night and Googled the author of a book that had changed her life. She then sent him an email, telling him how much his work at had meant to her and how it had helped her through “a dark time” in her life.

To whom would you send a thank you?

Has there been anyone who did something, said something, or gave you something that changed you? What about a simple act of kindness? It doesn't have to be earth-shattering to be meaningful.

Mrs. DuBose, my second-grade teacher changed my life—I can't say exactly how, but I know she made a difference, because I have never forgotten her. So did Anne Wilson-Schaeff, author of *Women's Reality*.

My brother said something one day, a simple, yet loving remark that made a difference in my life at age thirty-eight, “Lillie Mae, you're the only person I know who sees strangers as good friends.” It shocked me, I never knew that about myself.

Sadly, Mrs. DuBose and my brother both

died before I reached a point in my life where I thought about thanking them. Others, I have made an effort to thank, and there are still others for whom I can only thank God, because I have lost touch.

What about you?

Have you written a letter of gratitude to your fifth grade teacher, or the neighbor who brought you home when s/he found you stranded across town when you were a teenager? Who helped you get through your parents' death or a divorce or lost employment?

Do your children know how grateful you are for their presence in your life? Have you ever said, “I'm glad you're my son,” or “I'm glad you're my daughter,” or “I'm glad you're my sister/nephew/aunt...” Have you called your sibling or someone special and sang into their voice mail or answering machine Stevie Wonder's song “I Just Called to Say I Love You?”

What about God?

Have you expressed your *gratitude* to God lately for your life, your family, and all the other blessings you have?

This is a good time of year to send letters or emails of *gratitude*. It is risky sometimes, even scary. I agreed with Mascarella when I read: “Each time I hit ‘send’ my heart pounded in my throat ... When I dropped the first two handwritten cards in the mailbox, I felt slight embarrassed...”

Expressing *gratitude* takes effort and does challenge us sometimes. Nevertheless, it is every bit worth it. Guaranteed!

God bless you and have a wonderful holiday season.

## Religious Education/Youth Group

By Sally Segal

The children and youth are actively engaged in their classes and are hoping to attend "The Nativity," opening Dec. 1st in area movie theaters. They also are busy planning and carrying out service projects of which the church has been most supportive . . . Thank you! The October "Spare Change" brought in \$100 which purchased 90 Matchbox cars! The R.E. children wrapped each one and mailed them to children in Balad, Iraq. The November Thanksgiving food drive with All Souls UU Church brought in 12 full paper grocery bags of food and two generous Safeway gift cards.

A special thank you to Irina Pepper for her "muscle power" assistance in delivering these bags to the distribution center! To participate in the December service projects, look for the "Mitten Tree" in the foyer. The tree is a collection site for (1) warm outer accessories and (2) toiletries/grooming items and shoe boxes to wrap them in. These donations will be given to neighbors in need. Again, thank you for all the support . . . it's making a difference!

**When was the last time you went Christmas Caroling?**

**See Advent Activities and Upcoming Events for more information!**

## Advent Activities

### Pastor's book discussion

*What's So Amazing About Grace?* by Philip Yancey.

The first three Sundays of Advent—December 3, 10, 17—Rev. Henley will host a 7:00 p.m. discussion group at the church. Call if you have questions 301-655-3798. Read Chapters 1—6 before the first gathering.

I recommend the book to everyone and invite all to gather during Advent. *Grace* is the foundation for Universalism. What do we really believe, think, and feel about *grace*? How does it affect our lives?

Philip Yancey, the author, is an editor-at-large for *Christianity Today* magazine. Yancey, also wrote *The Jesus I Never Knew*, and *Where Is God When It Hurts?*

### A Visit To The Sackler Museum After Church. *Bibles Before the Year 1000*

Please join us for a visit to the Sackler Gallery on Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, after the service. You can view information on the exhibit at the following link:

<http://www.asia.si.edu/exhibitions/current/InTheBeginning.htm> . Please RSVP to Paula Harrison if you think you can make it, although if you decide to come at the last minute, that's fine also!

Saturday, December 16, 5:00pm at UNMC. **'Tis The Season For Singing And Eating!** Jennifer Sandberg and Lisa Harris invite you to an evening of caroling through the neighborhood followed by a potluck supper. We will be joined by our friends and neighbors from All Souls Church. Feel free to

bring family and friends-- the more the merrier.

Please **RSVP to Lisa Harris** to let her know what dish you will bring to share, and the title of your favorite Christmas carol. Look forward to seeing you all there.

### 2007 UU Summer Programs in Alaska

Five Alaskan UU fellowships invite you to eco-cultural programs in June right after the Portland General Assembly or in July, 2007. See the REAL Alaska! With UU homestays in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Seward, Juneau and Sitka, UUs host parties and lead tours. We visit Tlingit and Inupiat Native Alaskans, see wildlife from bears, moose and caribou to whales, sea otters and sea lions. We visit Denali and three other National Parks. Led by Rev. Dick & Mary Weston-Jones, 12th year. [www.wuurld.org](http://www.wuurld.org), Email [alaska@wuurld.org](mailto:alaska@wuurld.org) or phone 1-888, 998-8753 for a brochure. Reservation deadline: February 28.

### Chancel Flowers

Mary Simmons, Coordinator

**December 3:** Chancel flowers are in memory of Lillie Margueritte Henley, whose birthday was December 5th. It was tradition in Rev. Henley's family to give her mother red poinsettias for Christmas.

**December 10: Open**

**December 17: (Christmas green's and poinsettias)** They are given in memory of Kevan and Joseph McNamara by his daughter Jillian McNamara and David, Byron, and Averell Gatton.

**December 24: (Christmas green's and poinsettias)** Also given in memory of Walter H. Wood by his family.

**December 31: (Christmas green's and poinsettias)** Given in memory of Mary K. and H. Jerome Graham, Organist Emeritus by their daughter Sally and Son-in-law Doug Simon.

## Sunday Services

**December 3rd-** "Jesus Has Come" and who among us proclaims the Word? Rev. Henley preaching.

**December 10th-** "That Your Love May Overflow" Jesus brought with him into the world a love that had no limits. How can this be? Rev. Henley preaching. After hospitality we will "Hang the Greens," please stay to help.

**December 17th-** Christmas is about hope and joy and wondrous hymns and carols. Our youth and our children will share the delightful stories of some Christmas favorites.

**December 24th-** "Mary and Elizabeth, the Women of Jesus' Birth" is a sermon honoring the feminine tradition of God. Rev. Henley preaching.

**Christmas Eve - 7:30 pm,** Our traditional service "Lessons and Carols"

**December 25th-** Our traditional Christmas Communion Service, Noon.

**December 31st-** "The Last Day of the Year" For what do we have the most gratitude? For what do we feel the most challenged? A collaborative service with Rev. Henley preaching.

## Christmas Shopping

Christmas shopping on-line?

**Amazon.com** a Favorite Site?

You probably know that you can buy most anything at Amazon. But, did you know that if you use the Amazon link at our website [www.universalist.org](http://www.universalist.org) the church will receive a small percentage of your purchase price?

## Sharing The Plate

The church gives 10% of the Sunday collection to a local, neighborhood non-profit service organization. The organization changes every month. For the month of November, 10% will go to the Concert for Life program which gives money for Aids patients in Washington DC and in Africa. Concert for Life has been in existence at Foundry Methodist, our neighbor, for 13 years.



## Community Service

### Feeding The Hungry — Food For All

UNMC serves as a storage center and gathering point for the community program, Food For All (FFA). This program delivers food to poverty stricken members of the D.C. community. FFA needs volunteers on Friday mornings to move food from a local food bank to UNMC. The program also needs volunteers on Saturday mornings to pack and deliver boxes of food to local residents. Please contact FFA at [jsandler@amurt.net](mailto:jsandler@amurt.net) for more info.



## Thanks!

### From House Of Ruth

The House of Ruth sent us a “thank you” for the donation we made in November. “Sharing Our Plate” allowed us to send them \$110 dollars.

House of Ruth provides much more than shelter; we offer a blend of many services and support in order to help women build the skills to achieve safety and stability for themselves and their children. Recovering from a lifetime marked by homelessness and abuse takes time, skill on the part of our staff, and great courage and dedication from the women, children, and families.

While most of us will thankfully never know the kind of suffering these families have endured, we all play a role in helping them to build new lives of stability and safety. I know that your gift symbolizes your personal commitment to assisting women and children who are striving to overcome homelessness and abuse. Thank you for sharing that commitment, with the House of Ruth.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**December 2:** 8:30 a.m. Community Outreach: Share apple cider with neighbors at the dog park on New Hampshire at 17th Street, please meet at the church.

**December 9:** 12:30 p.m. Website ministry at church— interested? Come, no obligations, need your input.

**December 10:** After service, please join us for a visit to the Sackler Gallery, 1050 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20560.

**December 16:** 5:00 p.m. Christmas Caroling in the Neighborhood! Followed by a potluck supper at the church. We will be joined by our friends and neighbors from All Souls. Feel free to bring family and friends. Please RSVP to Lisa Harris

**December 17:** The Hymnal Committee will meet after coffee hour, all are welcome. Contact David Burton, or Donna Simonton, for more information.

## Security Alarm System

The alarm system is now in place to protect the administrative suite. We need everyone who has not received a security code to come to the church office. Quawanna Thomas, our administrator will be in the office Mon-Fri from 9am-12pm, to give you a security code and training. The alarm system is now **ON**, you will need your security code to enter the church.

**IT IS CRUCIAL THAT THIS TRANSITION BE SUCCESSFUL, AS FALSE ALARMS TO DC POLICE ARE VERY EXPENSIVE.**

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.

1810 Sixteenth Street, NW • Washington, DC 20009  
<http://www.universalist.org> • (202) 387-3411

Rev. Lillie Henley, Minister, 301-655-3798, [pastorlillie@universalist.org](mailto:pastorlillie@universalist.org)

The Rev. Dr. William L. Fox, Minister Emeritus

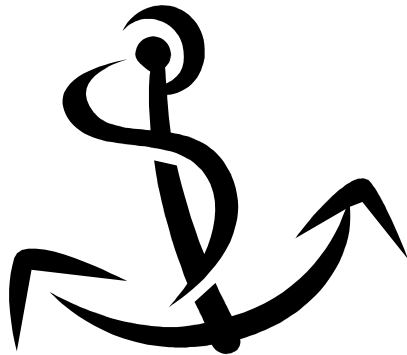
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Mr. Kirk Denton, Organist  
Quawanna Thomas, Church Office  
[office@universalist.org](mailto:office@universalist.org)

### **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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