



# Island Passages

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF WHIDBEY ISLAND  
 20103 State Route 525 • P.O. Box 1076, Freeland, WA 98249 • 360-321-8656 • www.uucwi.org

## December 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> Greeter: Lois C. Refresh: John Long <b>10am UU Worship</b> 11:30 African Market 11:30 Board Mtg 11:45 First Sunday Lunch 4pm Quaker Worship	<b>2</b> 8:45 m WIN 4pm Meditation	<b>3</b> 1pm Dennis' Office Hr 7pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)	<b>4</b> 10am UU Men's Group 4pm Greening the Sanctuary (Goolsby)  5pm Jewish Gathering	<b>5</b> 10am Quaker Mtg 6:30 Book Group Potluck 6:30 "Bible for Skeptics"	<b>6</b> 9am Ctte on Ministry  6pm Family Game Night	<b>7</b> 10am VAC 3pm Setup 3:30pm Vicki Robin book launch: "Blessing the Hands that Feed Us"
<b>8</b> Greeter:Gene B. Refresh: Mavis C. <b>10am UU Worship</b>  4pm Quaker Worship 5pm Quaker Potluck	<b>9</b> 8:45am WIN 6:30 pm PFLAG	<b>10</b> 10 am Women's Grp 1pm Dennis' Office Hr  7pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)	<b>11</b> 10am Membership Ctte <b>7:20 EvenSong</b>	<b>12</b> 6:30 "Bible for Skeptics"	<b>13</b> 9am Worship Ctte	<b>14</b> 1am North End Coffee Klatch (Vandervelde)
<b>15</b> 8:45 am Choir <b>10am UU Worship</b> 11:45 Music Ctte 4pm Quaker Worship 5pm Quaker Mtg	<b>16</b> 8:45am WIN 4pm Meditation	<b>17</b> 1pm Dennis' Office Hr 2pm SRC Strg Ctte	<b>18</b> 10am UU Men's Group 4pm MAGIC	<b>19</b> 6pm North End Grp (contact Sally Elder)	<b>20</b> <b>Newsletter            Deadline</b>  Circle Dinner (see article)	<b>21</b> <b>8am Winter            Solstice Service</b> 10am Work Party
<b>22</b> <b>10am UU Worship</b>  4pm Quaker Worship	<b>23</b> 8:45am WIN	<b>24</b> 10am Women's Grp 1pm Dennis' Office Hr  <b>4pm Chistmas Eve            Service</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 7pm UUCWI Movie Series- <i>Moral Ground</i>	<b>28</b> 4pm St Germaine/Bracy Wedding (Elder)
<b>29</b> <b>10am UU Worship</b> 4 pm Quaker Worship 6pm North End Dine Out (Vandervelde) 7pm Dances of Universal Peace	<b>30</b> 8:45am WIN	<b>31</b>				

“Like” us on Facebook .... Search for Whidbey Unitarian or UUCWI  
 And always check the most current version of our calendar online at [www.uucwi.org](http://www.uucwi.org)

Last call to respond to the UUCWI Music Survey (input will close on Dec 14). Thank you!  
 The survey is online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/F2CZSKY>

## **Worship Services**

**December 1:**

### **“Connected to All: A World AIDS Day Service” with Rev. Dennis Reynolds**

The disease of AIDS, while still a serious disease, no longer offers a death sentence to those who suffer from it here in the United States.

Meanwhile, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the disease rages on, devastating lives and families. From out of the darkness and despair of this dreaded disease, a light of hope and illuminating lessons of connection have emerged.

Worship Leader: Mary Goolsby

### **December 8 : “Star Mother’s Youngest Child” An Intergenerational Service presented by the Religious Exploration Children and Teachers**

As our congregation grows, so do our children, and the number of children attending the RE program is increasing too! For the advent of winter as well as the advent of the religious calendar, the RE classes are preparing a seasonal program on December 8th. The intergenerational service will include songs, artwork, and a reading adaptation of *Star Mother’s Youngest Child* by Louise Moeri. We enthusiastically request all ages to participate, as it will be truly **Intergenerational**, with welcome participation by *all*. Come and be amazed!

### **EvenSong, Wednesday, December 11, 7:20 pm (prelude)**

This month EvenSong will celebrate Christmas and include the singing of traditional carols. All are welcome at this candlelit service of readings, silent meditation and songs accompanied by harp. EvenSong is the second Wednesday evening of each month.

### **December 15: “The Gifts of the Holidays” Presented by the UUCWI Music Committee**

What are the best gifts you have ever given and why? What are the best gifts you have ever received and why? Using lots of holiday music and stories, the members of the Music Committee invite you to participate in a service that reminds us of the most meaningful things about the holidays.

Worship Leaders: Mavis Cauffman and Eileen Soskin



*“Cherish your doubts, for doubt is the attendant of truth .... A belief which may not be questioned binds us to error, for there is incompleteness and imperfection in every belief.” ~ Robert T. Weston*

### **December 21: Saturday, 8 – 9:30 am (yes, am!) “Winter Solstice/Yule Celebration”**

**with Janella Riegel**

The sun is waning and the nights are growing longer. Winter is a time for introspection and quiet contemplation. In honor of the Winter Solstice, longest night of the year, we invite you to join us in gathering for a sunrise labyrinth meditation followed by a celebration of the shift towards the waxing time of year. The Winter Solstice Celebration will be held in the UUCWI sanctuary and light refreshments will follow. Please contact Janella at [janellak@gmail.com](mailto:janellak@gmail.com) if you would like to assist with planning our ritual event or if you have any questions. Blessed Be.

### **December 22: “Midwinter Eve”**

**with Rev. Dennis Reynolds**

In this darkest time of the year, rather than seek to push back the dark, might we find ways to welcome the darkness. Though the season offers challenges for some, might all of us gain something by shifting our attitudes about the dark? Might the dark outside and dark moods within, if accepted and normalized, be places to hold and to nurture that which begins below the surface? Might night be the place where dreams are born?

Worship Leader: Janella Riegel

### **December 24:**

#### **“Christmas Eve in Song, Story, and Soft Light” with Rev. Dennis Reynolds and Terra Anderson**

As the sun sets behind the trees let us gather to share stories and songs and reflect on how the joyous message of Christmas shines bright in our lives. All ages are invited to join in this traditional celebration filled with candles and carols.

### **December 29:**

#### **“Festival of Lights” with Members of UUCWI**

The lighted Chalice is the cherished symbol of Unitarian Universalists and fire is a sacred symbol common to the beliefs and rituals of many cultures. Members of the congregation will share reflections on the use of fire in the traditions of the Solstice Yule Log, Jewish Festival of Hanukkah, African American Kwanzaa Festival, and Hindu Festival of Diwali. Join us as we prepare for the New Year with a candle lighting ceremony affirming our best intentions for ourselves, our families, our community, our country, and our world.

Worship Leaders:

Effie Brown and Mavis Cauffman

## **December Events**

### **First Sunday Lunch - December 1, 11:45 am**

We meet first Sundays at China City in Freeland. We chose several meals and share the cost including tip. All are welcome. The food is good, the price is right (especially after our senior/Sunday discount) and the fellowship is great. Contact Jelcy Romberg for more information: [jelcy@jelcy.com](mailto:jelcy@jelcy.com)

### **African Market - December 1, after the service**

On December 1 a new event is happening at UUCWI. It will be our first African Market. In the lobby and the office, we will be offering for sale products from Zimbabwe, which Donita Crosby imports each year and sells to support a service project there. There will also be Zulu beadwork and other items from South Africa sold to support a non-profit called *Thembanathi* which was founded in 2004 by Dennis' daughter, Lindsey. Our friend Jeanne Strong will also be selling her new book and the alphabet book that help fund her efforts in Uganda.

Items and gift giving certificates from these and other projects will also be on sale at Langley Methodist Church on December 8. Our congregations are jointly marketing and promoting these Global Giving events. Invite your friends to join you in exploring ways to give holiday gifts that benefit others .

### **Book Group Potluck – Thursday, December 5**

Our UUCWI Book Discussion group plans to have a potluck dinner and book exchange in place of a book discussion at its Dec 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. Members are asked to bring up to 3 books they would like to pass on to someone else in group and be prepared to give a review of each book. This potluck meeting will be held in a member's home. Please RSVP to Joan G. and you will be sent directions.

### **First Friday Family Game Night – Dec 6, 6 pm**

Bring your Family, your Friends, your Games, Eat Pizza and have Fun! Open to all!



Side-dishes and desserts welcome, but not necessary. \$10 suggested donation/family

RSVP with your pizza preference to [staylorjanow@yahoo.com](mailto:staylorjanow@yahoo.com)

### **Work Party - December 21, 10 am – noon**

The work party is an hour later this morning to allow the Solstice/Yule service to take place 8-9:30 am. Please come help with our monthly session to care for the building and grounds. The Library Committee will host this month and provide coffee/tea and a few nibbles.

### **Circle Dinner – Friday, Dec 20 at 6 pm**

This month's Circle Dinner will be in the home of Kent Vandervelde and Sally Elder. They live on the south end of Oak Harbor, so I hope some of the South Enders will join with the 'Nenders' in a fun evening of good food and fellowship. Dinner, a variation of a potluck, but with agreed upon people who will bring the appetizer, salad, veggies, main course, bread and wine, and dessert, has shown itself to be a delightful evening for hosts and guests alike. If you would like to attend this month, please contact Sally at [curlylamb@yahoo.com](mailto:curlylamb@yahoo.com)



A good time was had by all at our November Services Auction.

### ***SRC: In the Know***

Last month the Social Responsibility Council (SRC) received 39 responses to the survey designed to measure your passion for social responsibility issues. Here are highlights of the results, with some commentary on what we learned from them, at least about this limited segment of our membership.

Caveats: Without a larger sample we are unsure the responses are representative of the entire congregation. We are a very diverse group, and there is considerable dispersion in the answers to most questions, as well as in the number of persons answering them.

78% agree: "For many important causes, focused state, national or international organizations provide the best path to be heard and to accomplish change." In fact, 48% of reported monetary donations go to such organizations, with 26% going to on-island charities and the remaining 26% contributed to our dedicated offerings (\$5612 was collected in 2012). There were many favorite charities listed, with Habitat for Humanity mentioned most often.

Respondents are generous with time as well as money. The 22 who answered this question average 10 hours/month of volunteer work, and 4 donated more than 24 hours/month.

45% would give more generously if help were provided to identify organizations doing worthwhile work and efficient in their use of funds. However, 49% get all the solicitations they want, and don't need UUCWI to tell them about more of them. Furthermore, 40% are concerned that encouraging members to support nonlocal organizations will dilute giving to local charities. These responses tell us to make sure any efforts we undertake to publicize opportunities for giving should be easy to opt out of, and ought not be promoted in competition with local charities.

The prize for top cause exciting your passion goes to "*Growing a caring UUCWI community that supports members in need.*" "*Supporting human needs on Whidbey Island*" ranked second, "*Advocating for environmental protection and response to climate change*" came in third, and "*Promoting social justice and human dignity*" fourth. "*Working for peace and reconciliation*" occupied fifth place. "*Providing for disaster relief around the world*" was sixth. Answers to the financial support-ranking question were consistent with these priorities.

20 respondents wanted to know more about opportunities for advocacy, but only 2 offered to help. 10 said their passions resided elsewhere. We aren't on the picket lines, but we may be fertile ground for recruiters for justice witnessing. 59% preferred to read articles about social responsibility monthly in the newsletter, and 69% would attend a "*social responsibility fair.*" 10 persons volunteered to be points of contact for various causes. The organizations listed included lobbying as well as charitable organizations. The SRC is deciding how to respond to these offers.

I wish to convey a sincere thank you to those who participated in this survey. It has helped the SRC immensely in planning realistically how to serve the congregation as well as your causes.

~ Dave Cauffman

### ***Dennis' Musings: Shopping from the Heart***

Last month I attended my first UUCWI auction and it was a lot of fun. Suzanne and I only got caught up in a couple of competitive bidding frenzies and thus only spent a wee bit more than we had planned. The purchased events will be fun, too and will deepen our connection to many of you. In addition, it was all for a good cause.

Meanwhile, in stores the holiday marketing and shopping season has begun. American stores and their suppliers have come to count on consumers' generosity and our sometimes extravagant gift giving to keep their businesses profitable. It seems that here at UUCWI we have become somewhat dependent on auction revenues to keep the Congregation's budget healthy.

So is that a problem? Our generosity keeps things humming along here in the Congregation and beyond.

I must admit that it makes me a little bit uncomfortable to know that some members cannot afford to attend auctioned events. Nor can many consumers keep up with the advertising-fueled heightened expectations of holiday giving.

Both holiday gift buying and buying events at the auction offer questions and dilemmas for which I have no easy solution. Though I do wonder "what if?"

What if American consumers were a bit more generous throughout the year and bought just a few more special things for and spent a bit more time with their loved ones all year long? What if more

of what we gave was hand crafted, built to last, and/or offered special experiences throughout the year?

What if each of us pledged to give a bit more to the annual canvas campaign, reducing our current dependence on auction revenue? What if we worked together on more events, like the salmon bake, to which all are invited and could afford to come?

Some changes seem to be unfolding. In recent years, I have been the happy recipient of donations in my name to Habitat for Humanity and the Heifer Foundation. At a recent family wedding the bride and groom requested gift contributions that funded new wells in arid parts of India. What I give also increasingly makes a difference in the lives of artisans from nearby and far away.

Changing patterns will require consumer education and, for some, resistance to advertising. Reducing our congregation's need for auction funds will require all of us who pledge to make that amount a bit higher. Perhaps we are not yet ready to do that and yet ...

Whatever our giving patterns, both to our loved ones and to our community, may we be filled with abundance and generosity.

~ Rev. Dennis Reynolds

### ***Terra's Tales***

Most Sunday mornings I hear the worship leader say something like "it takes a community to put on a Sunday service" and they proceed to thank the RE teachers, ushers, musicians, sound techs, greeters ... Wendell Berry suggests a community *is the mental and spiritual condition of knowing that the place is shared ... the knowledge that people have of each other, trusting their concern for each other and in each other, enjoying the freedom with which they come and go among themselves.*

Gratitude is a frequent theme of this holiday season and seems appropriate as I appreciate the large *community* of caring individuals who comprise UUCWI. Just as we produce Sunday morning services, this community is a benefit to our greater island village.

When was the last time you pondered all the good that emanates from our cooperative spirit? How have you benefited from the generosity of this congregation? Have you been gifted by someone greeting you at the door with a big "hello, so nice to

see you"? Have you enjoyed a cup of coffee or tea after a service, or even the company and conversation of someone else who was drinking that coffee? Perhaps you have attended one of the many classes or films offered by Adult Programs, or an Audubon, Quaker, MAGIC or myriad other gatherings during the week in our building? Do you know who most recently fixed our septic system or removed blackberries at the entrance? Have you discovered useful information in the Friday e-news, the newsletter or on our new web site? Has the choir brought joy to your troubled soul or has Evensong provided you a quiet respite in an otherwise too-busy week? Have you attended one of the concerts and felt the love of those artists as they gifted us with miraculous music?

I am so aware of all the generous people who comprise UUCWI. They give their talents, their time, their dreams, their money. We have committees who prepare food for the hungry, who pick up furniture for Habitat, who inspire our minds and hearts through meditation and book study. We have librarians who maintain our book collection, artists who fill the foyer with beauty, passionate parents who ensure a lovely learning space and stimulating materials for our youth. Others provide food and compassion to congregants in times of suffering. How many of you enjoyed the fun of our annual auction?

Bottom line – UUCWI would not exist without the dedication of every friend and member to deliver our promise of "a beacon of hope on Whidbey Island." Please take a moment to receive my gratitude and then to **thank** someone.

~ Terra Anderson, President of the Board

### ***Chalice Circles***

Before describing how the Stewardship Committee and Membership Committee are combining efforts to strengthen our church community, here's a little history.

In the past, the Stewardship Committee conducted our annual stewardship/canvass pledge drive. During that drive, "visiting stewards" arranged one-on-one visits to survey members and friends. We wanted information about what was working and what wasn't. We also wanted to hear recommendations and suggestions. This has historically been a very important part of our stewardship program. However, we know that as our membership increases it will be more and more

difficult to find enough “visiting stewards” to conduct these interviews. In searching for a better way to reach all members and friends, the idea arose to have regular informal small group gatherings.

The role of the Membership Committee has been to greet visitors and welcome them into our congregational community. Their main worry has been finding effective ways to help folks find their way to meaningful connections within the congregation. As they explored options for ways in which to more successfully help new people to find significant involvement, they also considered small groups.

With these needs in mind both Stewardship and Membership committees proposed the formation of the formerly named “Stewardship” Circles (the name has since been changed to “Chalice” Circles).

The intent of establishing Chalice Circles has expanded to forming small neighborhood groups to meet the needs of both Stewardship and Membership. The proximity of neighborhood groups makes it easier to help one another with individual needs or catastrophic events. Also small groups are the best way to form meaningful and caring connections at UUCWI.

So what interesting activities are happening in these Chalice Circles? Each Chalice Circle plans and organizes its own activities. Some have chosen to meet monthly and others bi-monthly or quarterly. Examples of some activities include: desserts, dinners, picnics, field trip (such as the RACE exhibit at Pacific Science Center), topic discussions (such as sharing of spiritual journeys by decades), cultural activities (such as plays, music events, game nights), etc.

We encourage members of each Chalice Circle to keep in touch with each other and to plan fun and interesting activities throughout the year.

If you are not a member of a Circle but want to be please contact :

Lois Chowen [loischowen@msn.com](mailto:loischowen@msn.com)

John Long 221-4094 [johnlong45@gmail.com](mailto:johnlong45@gmail.com)  
or Corinne Ludy 321-4371 [corinneludy@aol.com](mailto:corinneludy@aol.com)



*“As we share what we have with each other, let us sing out joyfully. May abundance lead to gratitude – then to generosity.”*

*~ Elizabeth Alexander, UU Composer*

### ***New Refreshments Procedures***

We believe that refreshments are an important part of welcoming people after the Sunday service. It's often the first impression visitors have of our friendly congregation. We also believe that the responsibility for providing these refreshments should not fall on the shoulders of the few who always volunteer. We have brought the following plan to both the the Board of Trustees and the Leadership Council and gained their support. So now we're asking you to get involved.

On the back wall of the sanctuary a large calendar will be posted for the first three weeks of December. We are asking that you sign up to make the coffee, provide simple refreshments, and do clean-up one Sunday in the first nine months of 2014. Choose a date that works for you and put your name on the calendar. If you are a couple, you have that Sunday covered; if you are a single, another person will sign for that date and partner with you for refreshments.

If you don't know how to make coffee or where to get cups or how the dishwasher works, complete written instructions will be provided. Also members of the congregation who are familiar with the procedure can help you on your first Sunday.

Refreshments should be simple. We don't expect a grandiose spread. Simple fare keeps those who follow you from feeling that they've got to measure up. Cookies, rice crackers, cheese, or fruit make good refreshments.

If you aren't able to do coffee and refreshments, you might consider making a small donation to help someone else do refreshments.

Names of refreshment providers will be posted on the church calendar at the UUCWI website and will receive a reminder of their Sunday responsibility as it approaches.

We appreciate your help in making our post-service hospitality a welcoming time in which we greet visitors and spend time together.

Questions? Contact either John Long or Corinne Ludy (see contact information in column to left)

~ Membership Committee Co-Chairs



*“The great end in religious instruction is not to stamp our minds upon the young, but to stir up their own.”*

*~ William Ellery Channing*

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
of Whidbey Island**

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Ken Merrell, Trustee  
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If you wish to contact any of the Board members, call  
UUCWI voice mail at 360-321-8656.

**Minister:** Dennis Reynolds 541-517-7325  
minister@uucwi.org

**Chaplain:** Sally Elder 360-675-3314  
chaplain@uucwi.org

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

**Administrator:**  
Mavis Cauffman admin@uucwi.org

**Newsletter Information:**

News, announcements, events, and other items of  
interest to members of the congregation should be  
submitted in writing by the deadline to editor  
Cary Sinnett [newsletter@uucwi.org](mailto:newsletter@uucwi.org)  
Items submitted after press time will appear in the  
following month's newsletter if appropriate.

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