

DECEMBER 2002

Allegheny ADVOCATE

monthly newsletter of allegheny unitarian universalist church

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

DECEMBER 1

AIDS Awareness Day

Kim Breneman

AUUC member and health professional, Kim Breneman, has done work with people infected with HIV/AIDS. As this tragic disease continues to debilitate people and spread in various parts of the world, Kim will help us become more aware of its effects in our community.

DECEMBER 8

Hanukkah Celebration

Rev. Art McDonald

Though not an especially major Jewish celebration, Hanukkah has these wonderful themes of miracle, hope and liberation attached to it. This morning Art will reflect upon these themes that we share with Jewish members and friends.

DECEMBER 11 7:30 PM

Communion Service

Reader: Donald Zeilman

Allegheny's own form of this traditional Service – for the strengthening of community.

DECEMBER 15

Faith and Plenitude

Lawrence Wray

What can the birth story of Jesus mean for a Unitarian Universalist congregation at a time of war? Reflecting on the role of doubt in our faith journey, Lawrence will discuss Unitarian Universalism's openness to life experiences and our capacity to hope and to strive and to be transformed.

Sunday Services at
Allegheny Unitarian
Universalist Church
begin at 11 o'clock.
All are welcome!

DECEMBER 22

Meditation 10:00 AM

Join Linda Deafenbaugh for a sand mandala meditation.

Winter Solstice Service 11:00 AM

Linda Deafenbaugh

This will be an intergenerational Winter Solstice/Holiday celebration in which we will decorate our Christmas Tree. We are grateful to Linda for the creative way in which she always helps us celebrate our "natural" world.

continued next page

DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve Service 7:30 PM

Rev. Art McDonald

Our annual Christmas Eve Service will feature the choir. The Service will be followed by a party at John Engberg's House on Resaca Place.

DECEMBER 29

The Meaning of Kwanzaa

Rev. Art McDonald

During this holiday season, Kwanzaa, that African-American celebration of key principles – unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith – will be the focus of today's Service.

DECEMBER 31 8:00 PM

New Year's Eve Open House & Meditation Service

Bring your songs, stories, poetry, and instruments to our New Year's Eve Open House, beginning at 8 o'clock, as we share this time together. The Meditation Service begins at 11:00 o'clock.

Join us for
the Down Under
Coffee House on
December 21st.
Songwriter & singer,
Shannon Mier will be
featured. The fun
begins at 7:30 in
Founders Hall.

IN THE CHURCH

Welcome New Members

As of this writing, Beverly Darwin, Maryann Sonick, Susan Hillman, Kathy Graham and Sheryl Rodriguez have signed the Membership Book. Congratulations and thanks for bringing your gifts and energy to our congregation.

Adult Education

We are meeting every other week working on a book entitled: *Is the Bible True?* It's a good read and there is always time to join in. This month we'll meet on Wednesdays, December 4 & 18, at 7:30 pm. There are books to purchase for \$5. See Art.

Guest at Your Table

The annual holiday program from the UU Service Committee, *Guest at Your Table*, the month-long effort to raise funds for the Service Committee's many advocacy and service projects, kicks off on November 24 with the giving out of the collection boxes. We'll gather them at the Winter Solstice celebration. The idea is to put money in the box every day for the entire month.

What We're About

Membership co-chair, Jane Dirks, committee member, Lynn Glorieux, and Art McDonald will lead an orientation session on Unitarian Universalism and our Church for newer folks on Sunday, December 8 at 12:30.

Holiday Greetings

The Card Tree will once again be placed in the Emerson Room this holiday season. Members and Friends are invited to hang cards, pictures, or other expressions of their holiday thoughts on the tree.

Coffee House

Don't miss our monthly Coffee House on Saturday, December 21, from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Shannon Mier, son of Jeanne Zang, will be performing.

Women's Group

The Women's Group has decided to meet just once a month on the second Monday starting in December. See you on the 9th at 7:00 pm.

BOARD BUSINESS

Kathy Kozachenko

An Evening of Celebration

On Saturday, December 7, the Board of Trustees along with the Capital Campaign Committee is hosting “An Evening of Celebration” to thank our members and friends for the contributions that have made our newly renovated Founders Hall a reality. As many of you know, some funds were borrowed from our savings to enable us to complete the project. Entering the third and final year of the capital campaign, the committee will update us on our progress in replenishing our savings as we strive to finish paying for Founders Hall.

But this is also an evening to celebrate and to honor a long-time member for his many contributions. Minister Emeritus, Jesse Cavileer, will be the first recipient of the *From The Heart Award*, an award to honor a member for his or her outstanding contributions to our church. It is with great joy and gratitude that the Board will present this honor to Jesse on behalf of the congregation.

This festive evening would not be complete without LIVE ENTERTAINMENT! “Andre the Great” will thrill us with his magical feats and “The Dancing Demons” will show us what tap dancing was like in the hey day of the 30s & 40s.

We have tried to design an evening that will delight the tots, the teens, in-betweens, and all the rest of us! Light refreshments and drinks will be served (at no cost). Please let us know if you will be able to attend so that we can make sure that we are amply supplied. You can RSVP to the

church telephone number, to myself or to Art. Hope to see you on the 7th! The event will begin at 7 o'clock and will run until...

HOUSE UPDATE

Planning For The Future

The House Committee has been busy preparing estimates for potential capital building projects. As we come into our last year of the Community Spaces Capital Campaign, and face some major building repairs, the Committee has identified the need to start planning our capital efforts for the future.

Three project groups are being explored: A grade-accessible lobby at the back of the church that has the potential of providing access to both internal floors; exterior work that involves replacing the metal in the roof, repainting the exterior, and repair to trim and stucco; and interior renovation/restoration in the Sanctuary and Emerson room that includes electrical upgrades.

The Committee hopes to have this preliminary information by late winter to allow for long range planning and grant writing this Spring. There will be lots of congregational participation and input in the process, so watch for meeting notices and other ways to provide your input.

Join us for an evening of celebration in appreciation of support for the Community Spaces Capital Campaign. December 7 at 7:00.

SERVING THE CONGREGATION

Greeters

December 1

Martha Ellis and Jacqueline Ellis

December 8

Beth Halliday and Richard Graham

December 15

Andy Schwarz and Benita Campbell

December 22

Barbara Barnes and Jane Schwarz

December 29

Andy Schwarz and Melanie McDonald

Refreshments

December 1

Charlie Snowden and Kathy Graham

December 8

Melanie McDonald & Jill Brethauer

December 15

Betty Schwarz and Jeanne Zang

December 22

Ann Sitrin and Lynn Glorieux

December 29

Jane Dirks and Emily Davidson

Development and Change

I am constantly amazed at the way newer people in the congregation step up to the plate and take on leadership roles. Often members of the congregation don't believe they have the skills or talents to perform certain vital roles. Nevertheless, over and over again, I have observed in my 12 years at Allegheny how individuals do what it takes to learn a new role and dedicate him or herself to the task. It's exciting and, as a religious leader, incredibly satisfying to see potential realized and to encourage that potential. As I was sitting at last month's Board of Trustees monthly meeting, I looked around and realized that we have had tremendous transition in leadership and key roles in the past few years, yet we continue to develop and build this religious body in new and exciting ways. Though you love those generous souls who are willing to perform a duty for many, many years, its is a sign of development and moral and spiritual growth when key roles can be confidently passed on to new members.

In the past couple of months, we have had discussions about future planning – goals, objectives, dreams, etc. As I looked back over the last 12 years, I realized that every five years or so, we have done some long-range planning. I began at Allegheny in 1991. In 1993 we developed a long-range plan, which we revisited and updated in 1998. Sounds as if 2003 is not a bad time to look at that again, and imagine another 5–10 years. As we were reading through the 1993 plan, under a section on growth, it was stated that we hope to have grown to between 75 and 125 members by 2015! We were about 25–30 members in 1993. We all laughed as we realized we reached 85 members in 2001. What a treat. Although growth in numbers is not the most significant indicator of a healthy, important and dynamic congregation, it sure helps lift the spirit and pay the bills. Every once in a while it is nice to look back as one looks ahead to see where we've been and where we might expect to go. It will be an interesting process that the Board will involve the entire congregation in as we plan for the next period of congregational life. We expect the January 26 mid-year town meeting to address this plan. Stay tuned.

Neighborhood or Community?

Linda Lefever, AUUC member, and Executive Director of Northside Community Development Fund, an agency dedicated to economic development in our area, asked me to share opening remarks at their annual community celebration. I didn't exactly know what the assignment was or what would be helpful to say. However, given my awareness of tensions on the North Side among various constituencies, I thought it might be of use to offer a few thoughts on what some of us are hoping to accomplish by our presence, and ministry, and work efforts. Reflecting on a recent meeting with other North Siders who were concerned about social service programs and street behavior, I realized that most of us, at one time or another, would prefer to exclude someone or some group from our midst. It may be mentally challenged people, or homeless folks, or poor people or gay folks or black people or rich individuals or professionals; someone or some group with whom we feel little affinity. Or whom we find unpleasant. But there's the challenge of our Universalist tradition; everyone gets to heaven! So everyone ought to have a place at the table. So I decided to draw a distinction between neighborhood and community. A neighborhood, I imagined, can be pretty interesting, and diverse, but it is just a group of individuals living in close proximity. But a community is a place where people are in relationship. And a healthy community is where all are invited to participate, despite major differences. Linda's group has the word community in the title, not just neighborhood. How great! And Linda is giving her best shot to helping to get everyone at the table. What a great vision. The North Side has its challenges, but it has many people who are here to be part of community not just live in an interesting, diverse neighborhood. Hopefully, Allegheny is a force for making the ideal of community real. The feedback I often get is that many look to us for just that contribution. What a joy to have such a purpose. What else could one ask.

NCM – 20 Years

Recently, one of our partners, Northside Common Ministries, celebrated its 20th year as a food pantry, shelter and transitional housing

The Northside Common Ministries Food Pantry needs your help! Please bring canned and dry food items to church. The donation basket may be found in the Emerson Room.

ministry. Allegheny members, Diane and Mac McMahon, are two vital staff people for this ministry in our community, and they received wonderful affirmation for the committed they have offered. The event took place at Riverview United Presbyterian Church, and over 200 people participated. The food pantry at NCM is the largest in Allegheny County! The shelter sleeps 25 per evening and the transitional housing programs 10–15 more.

20 years ago, I was on the staff of the Thomas Merton Center and, among other things, in charge of developing clusters of Merton Center members in various Pittsburgh neighborhoods. One of the early clusters was right here on the North Side. Out of that cluster, the idea for a food pantry, and ultimately, NCM, was hatched. It was great reflecting on how several small meetings of 5–6 people can help create a ministry that serves thousands. It was a great celebration and a time when I was proud that Allegheny contributes, in some small way, to NCM's vital ministry. But times are lean and the need is growing. Our food donations and shelter meals help a lot.

Our congregation recently lent some support to an artists' group in Pittsburgh, FLUX, so that they could sponsor an event on the North Side. We were happy to support such an effort. As part of their gratitude, they asked attendees to bring can goods and other foodstuffs to be delivered to our local pantry. They filled eight large baskets, which Andy Schwarz and I delivered to the Food Pantry.

Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network

At the moment, PIIN's four Task Forces, Economic Development, Youth Recreation, Education, and Civil Rights are meeting and interviewing key public officials in order to find out what the issues are and how we should define our work. It's a pretty exciting time and is slowly gaining momentum. Six to eight congregational members are involved in one or another of the Task Forces. For a congregation our size, that's pretty good. However, it would be great to have 10. So it's not too late to pick one. Greg Dietz, Jeanne Zang and Kathy Kozachenko are point people along with me in this effort. If you would like to know more, talk with one of us. And, please put in your calendar now, *February 20, 6–9 PM, for our major assembly at which we hope to announce key accomplishments and commitments.* We are aiming for

1000–1200 people at Wesley Center AME Zion Church on the Hill. We had 23 from Allegheny at our last assembly when we chose issues. Our leadership group would love to have 35 on February 20. Can we do it? A sign-up sheet will be circulating soon.

Anti-War Rallies

We have committed ourselves to a presence against the threatened war on Iraq every Saturday at noon in front of our church. The first week we had 20; last week 30. It would be great if we could keep growing this presence. Many of us are of the opinion that there is widespread opposition to this military approach. Why not join us. It's energizing – and important. January 25h is slated as a major regional demonstration against any war effort.

Peace and Blessings to all, Art

HISTORICAL NOTES

Although we have been hosting a New Year's Eve open house and Service for a few years now, the idea is not a new one in our congregation.

The North Side Unitarian Church *Bulletin* offers us a taste of how New Year's Eve was celebrated here some seventy years ago.

New Year's 1929 brought this notice: *This annual event – a church institution – will be an affair in keeping with all past celebrations.*

The central activity of the evening was the meal, described for the 1930 celebration: *This is probably one of the most beautiful customs of this church. Seated around a table the entire length of the Sunday School room (Founders Hall) as one great family . . .*

Details were also provided for the gathering on the eve of 1931. *Festivities will begin at 8:30 o'clock with dancing and cards, and, following our custom, we will be seated around the table as the bells and whistles announce the birth of the New Year.*

New Year's 1932 was celebrated with a *dance* and a *Watch Service*. Attendees were promised *an unusually fine orchestra, good refreshments, and nothing left undone to greet the New Year in royal style.*

It's great to know that having fun and being together is not a new custom for our congregation on New Year's Eve! Please join us.

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CONTACTS

The *Allegheny Advocate* is published monthly (except August) by Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church. Submissions must be received by the third Friday of the month preceding publication. Contributions or inquiries may be directed to Donald Zeilman

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Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church
1110 Resaca Place
Pittsburgh PA 15212

December 2002

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<p>1 Choir 9 a.m.</p> <p>No RE classes</p> <p>Giant Eagle certificate sign-up</p>	<p>2 Board of Trustees 7 p.m.</p> <p>NA 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>3 Program Committee 6:00 p.m. at Max's Allegheny Tavern</p>	<p>4 Adult Education: <i>Is the Bible True</i> 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 Capital Campaign Celebration Event 7:00 p.m.</p>
<p>8 Choir 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Giant Eagle certificate delivery</p> <p>New member orientation 12:30</p>	<p>9 Women's Group</p> <p>NA 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>10 RE Committee 7:30</p> <p>House Comm. 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>11 Communion Service 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>b</p>	<p>12 PIIN Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. Wesley Center AME Zion</p>	<p>13 Newsletter Deadline</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15 RE Winter Faire</p> <p>Choir 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>16</p> <p>NA 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 Adult Education: <i>Is the Bible True</i> 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>19 Pleasant Valley Shelter Meal</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 <i>The Down Under</i> Coffee House 7:30 p.m.</p>
<p>22 Choir 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Meditation & Winter Solstice Intergenerational Service</p>	<p>23</p> <p>NA 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve Service 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>b</p>	<p>25 Christmas Day</p>	<p>26 Kwanzaa begins</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 Choir 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>No RE classes</p> <p>Social Justice Committee 12:30 p.m.</p>	<p>30</p> <p>NA 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>31 New Year's Eve Open House 8:00 p.m. Meditation Service 11:00 p.m.</p> <p>b</p>				

January 2003

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 New Year's Day	2	3	4
5 Choir 9:30 a.m. Giant Eagle certificate sign-up	6 Board of Trustees 7 p.m. NA 7:00 p.m.	7 Program Committee 7:30 p.m.	8 Communion Service 7:30 p.m. b	9 PIIN Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. Wesley Center AME Zion	10	11
12 Choir 9:30 a.m. Finance 9:30 a.m. Giant Eagle certificate delivery	13 Women's Group NA 7:00 p.m.	14 RE Committee 7:30 House Comm. 6:30 p.m.	15	16 Pleasant Valley Shelter Meal	17 Newsletter Deadline!!	18 <i>The Down Under</i> Coffee House 7:30 p.m.
19 Choir 9:30 a.m.	20 Martin Luther King Day NA 7:00 p.m.	21	22	23	24	25
26 Choir 9:30 a.m. Mid-Year Congregational Town Meeting 12:30 p.m.	27 NA 7:00 p.m.	28	29	30	31	