



UUMAN TIMES

Unitarian Universalist Metro Atlanta North

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December 2015

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In the Interim: The Truth About Rudolph

My childhood Christmases in Maine were mostly idyllic. Occasionally it would rain instead of snow, but always there was balsam, presents, pie, and relatives who didn't lock horns over the turkey. I was a student minister of a certain age in New Haven, CT when I realized those halcyon holidays were over for good, whereupon I fell into an epic slump. I confided in my supervising minister. She gave me advice I will never forget: *You'd better get over that. It's already November.*

I got over it. I have a collection of winter holiday heart-warmers to which I add every year. I also keep a file of holiday stories unsuited to the Christmas Eve pulpit. Here are a few favorites.

There was the Winter Solstice service that began with opening words by Diane Lee Moomey...

Again did the earth shift
 Again did the nights grow short,
 And the days long,
 And the people
 of the earth were glad
 and celebrated
 each in their own ways.

Science Guy approached me after the service. He said, *You know the earth doesn't really do anything at the moment of solstice, least of all tip over.* I replied, *Yes, I know. It's poetry, not science.* He nodded. *Just as long as YOU know the difference.*

On Christmas Eve a gaily-wrapped copy of Roger Highfield's book *The Physics of Christmas* appeared on my desk. *It all looks so effortless,* writes Highfield, *Santa manages to deliver millions of gifts on Christmas Eve, maintaining his smile and composure all the while. His support team: a few reindeer and a handful of diligent elves. Only an innocent child would swallow this propaganda.*

Reindeer could be customized for flight by means of genetic manipulation. They could be bred to grow stabilizers, even wings. We may have underestimated one of Rudolph's key features. No, not the nose, his headgear. British geneticist Matthew Freeman writes, *Reindeer have a curious arrangement of gadgetry on top of their heads which we...naively assume...exists for the males to win females. This is absolute nonsense. The antlers are actually fractal vortex-shedding devices. We are talking not aerodynamics here, but antlaerodynamics.*

Freeman posits that Santa is not only a right jolly old elf, but a theoretical physicist.

Historian Stephen Nissenbaum wrote *The Battle for Christmas*. Starbucks cups don't faze Nissenbaum. He is simply a plain old curmudgeon. Christmas has pagan roots in agricultural Europe. The Puritans tried to ban pagan ceremonies, but they underestimated the persistence of one custom, *partying*. Celebrating Christmas Eve liquidly in their mansions, the British *squirearchy* introduced class conflict to the countryside. To go *a-wassailing* was *trick or treat* with blackmail. Gentry who gave a generous treat of alcohol fortified by cash could count on a devoted workforce—until next Christmas.

Clement Moore, beloved author of *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, was not a right jolly old elf. He was an aristocratic American businessman who applied his minor literary talent to making Saint Nicholas a *commercial* emblem. Moore was opposed to democracy. He said it would only stir up the working classes.

Finally, a vintage Italian blessing for the winter festival season that I do speak from the pulpit:

I salute you.
 There is nothing I can give you which you have not,
 but there is much that while I cannot give, you can take.
 No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in
 it today.
 Take heaven.
 No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this
 present instant.
 Take peace.
 The gloom of the world is but a shadow. Behind it, yet
 within our reach, is joy.
 Take joy.
 And so...
 I greet you with the prayer
 that for you, now and forever,
 the day breaks
 and the shadows
 flee away.

UUMAN

Ministerial Search Committee

News You Can Use – December 2015

Your Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) is pleased to provide you with another installment of News You Can Use—an update on what we've been up to. We want to hear from you throughout the search process, so read on to learn how to get in touch with us.

What has the MSC been doing?

We have gathered input from the congregation through cottage meetings, interviews with staff, and an online survey. We are analyzing the survey results and finalizing a report.

Our committee Treasurer, working with UUMAN's negotiating team, has written a draft ministerial agreement based on UUA guidelines.

We have been gathering photographs, data, and other information for an introductory packet that will be sent to interested ministers. Many thanks to all who have helped us complete these tasks!

We have completed a Congregational Record for posting onto the UUA transitions website. The CR is our best opportunity to attract ministers' interest. It describes UUMAN's history, strengths, opportunities, and hopes for the future. Prospective ministers will be reviewing it during December.

What will happen over the next couple of months?

After reviewing the CR, candidates who are interested in UUMAN will notify the UUA. We expect to have a report from the UUA in mid-January with a group of candidates identified. We will then send our informational packet to each candidate, and begin reviewing the ministerial records.

Communicating with You

- We will continue to provide you a 5-minute update on our work from the pulpit on the last Sunday of every month.
- We will continue articles in the monthly newsletter, the UUMAN-Times.
- We will send out updates and time-sensitive information via UUMAN Announcements and the UUMAN Facebook page.
- We will be present during coffee hour after every service at the MSC table in Fellowship Hall. Look for our bright pink name tags and ask us a question!
- We will continue to post important information to the MSC bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

How to contact the MSC

- Email: search@uuman.org
- In person: before and after Sunday services; look for the people wearing bright pink name tags.

In faith,

Dirk Bender, Joe Creech, Laura Keck, Lyn May, Shelley Nagrani, Miriam Patanian, and Phillip Seaver

FROM THE GARDEN

Hello Fellow and Potential Gardeners,

We've finished our work for the year and are looking forward to a long winter's rest. From mid-March to mid-November, we meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month. We usually work from around 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. or noon. UUMAN Announcements are sent out the Friday before each work day. See you again in March 2016!

—Claire Sullivan

UUMAN Gardening Group
cbsullivan@bellsouth.net



Camellia



Newly-Planted Yellow Pansies



Newly-Planted Purple Pansies



Camellia In Bloom



Life Celebrations

We want to commemorate the happy occasions in the lives of our UUMAN members and other friends of UUMAN. We are looking for Naming Ceremonies, Graduations, Marriages, Anniversaries, Retirements, and Birthdays. Please submit the information about your special day, in the month prior to the event, to Claire Sullivan at cbsullivan@bellsouth.net

Date	Celebration
12/2	Amelia J. of the MCY program is celebrating a birthday
12/9	Presley C. of the MCY program is celebrating a birthday
12/12	Ryan Vidal is celebrating a birthday
12/13	Dominic Read is celebrating a birthday
12/15	Carole Herman is celebrating a birthday
	Maggie M. of the MCY program is celebrating a birthday
	Duco vdB. of the MCY program is celebrating a birthday
12/16	Lucy K. of the MCY program is celebrating a birthday
12/17	Joaquin F. of the MCY program is celebrating a birthday
	Bruce Langston is celebrating a birthday
12/18	Karen S. of the MCY program is celebrating a birthday
12/23	McPatti Langston is celebrating a birthday
12/27	Nathan S. of the MCY program is celebrating a birthday
12/28	Lachlan K. of the MCY program is celebrating a birthday
12/29	Sue Greenspon is celebrating a birthday

HALLOWEEN FUN

Cute and clever costumes and Halloween fun for all.



A Month of Sundays

Date	Topic	Speaker
12/6	Maybe: An Advent Reflection Advent is a time of anticipation and as long as we expect, as long as we hope, someone will light a candle against the prevailing darkness—and neither the winds of hate nor the gales of evil will extinguish it. —John A. Taylor	Rev. Cynthia Prescott
12/13	Stories in Music Join us in a musical service featuring our Chalice and Family Choirs as well as other small ensembles as we journey through music and its profound meaning in our lives.	Music Director: Huu Mai
12/20	A Solstice Walk Rev. Michelle Boshears joins UUMAN in celebrating Yule. In addition to being a minister with Circle Sanctuary, a pagan congregation in Augusta, Rev. Boshears is the mother of UUMAN member Jen Saltzman.	Pulpit Guest: Rev. Michelle Boshears
12/22	Winter Solstice Vespers, Tues. 7 p.m. Dress warmly. Weather permitting, we will meet outside for short meditation service on the longest night of the year.	Rev. Cynthia Prescott
12/24	Christmas Eve (Thursday) 4:00 Christmas Pageant: "Would You Like to Hold the Baby?" 7:00 Candlelight Service	Rev. Cynthia Prescott Music Director: Huu Mai
12/27	Recognizing the REAL Miracle As we consider the miracle of Jesus' birth, the return of the sun after the Solstice, and prayer for healing in the face of illness, it might take an existentialist view to see where the miracle really lies.	Rev. Kim Palmer

December Events

Date	Event
2nd Sunday of each month, after the service, in the sanctuary.	21st Century Humanism focuses on the philosophy of mankind as the center of all things, informs members of Humanism's nature and history, and emphasizes free and frank discussion of the effect on humanity of past and present events, safe from the influence of contravening public opinion. For more information, contact John Peltier at peltier.john@gmail.com
Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 in Discovery Hall	Circle of Women We aim to develop a warm nurturing circle of trust where we can share ourselves and our lives. Contact Kate Hudson hudsonkd@bellsouth.net or Linda Etheridge lletheridge1@gmail.com
Wednesdays from 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.	UUMAN's Painting Group Come paint with us in a relaxed atmosphere with a glass of wine. All are welcome. There is a fee but half is donated to UUMAN.
Weekly on Wednesdays at 12:15	Daytimers The Daytimers group discusses contemporary, thought-provoking topics such as current political issues or social trends that may affect everyone at some level. All are invited to attend. For information, contact Dan Ben-David at dan@uuman.org
Fourth Saturday of the month at 7:30 p.m.	The Common Grounds Coffee House <i>Connecting people who love to play music with those who love to listen!</i> Doors open at 7 pm (except April this year it is the 3rd Saturday). Live music and delicious refreshments, \$5 suggested donation, held in the Sanctuary.
Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the sanctuary	Centering at UUMAN Silent meditation Saturday mornings at UUMAN. Please come at 9:10 for some basic instruction if it is your first time. The meditation itself begins promptly 9:30. Please be in your seats on time. Those who wish to may stay after for 30 to 45 minutes of discussion about our experiences. For more information, contact Carolyn Bommarito at campoften@aol.com

For more information about events, see the UUMAN Events Calendar at www.uuman.org.

ABOUT THE UUMANTimes: The UUMANTimes is the newsletter of Unitarian Universalist Metro Atlanta North (UUMAN). We go live with each issue by the first Sunday of the month; deadline for submissions is typically on the 22nd of the month preceding the issue date. Please email your news articles and artwork to Becky at newsletter@uuman.org

December Events

Beginning January 28 Monday 7:30—9:00 p.m., Discovery Hall	Spirit of Life A 9-session course offering participants space, time, and community to explore their Unitarian Universalist spirituality. Each focuses on a different aspect of the spiritual life, framed by the lyrics of Carolyn McDade's song "Spirit of Life." See http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/life for a course description and session materials. Dave Hudson and Jim Saunders will facilitate.
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MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH



PARENTS NIGHT OUT! SATURDAY DEC 12 (6.00-10.00pm)

During this busy time of the year why not take some time for yourself while the young ones are *safe & having fun with friends* at UUMAN. Our Youth will take care of & play with their younger friends (infants and children, 1 - 10 years).

Have your young ones join us for Holiday (*Hanukkah, Solstice, Christmas & Kwanzaa*)
Crafts, Stories, Games, Movies & More!

Supper & healthy snacks provided!

MCY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS DECEMBER 2015

Dec 5 – Hands On Day
Dec 6 – Winter Holiday Party!
Dec 12 – Parents Night Out
Dec 13 – LNFY Holiday Brunch
Dec 20 – Pageant Dress Rehearsal
Dec 24 – Christmas Pageant
Dec 27 & Jan 3 – No RE



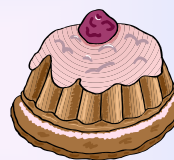
CONTACT TONIANN

Office Hours

Tuesday 9.30am-3.30pm
Wednesday 9.30am-3.30pm
Friday 9.30am-3.30pm
Sunday 9.30am-2.30pm

Office Telephone: (770) 992-3949
Email: dmcy@uuman.org

Holiday Bake Sale! Sunday December 6th



**Stock Up on Yummy Holiday Goodies...
Donations Welcome!**

Please contact Anna Hamblen - annastamps@gmail.com

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH

Winter Holiday 'Faith In Action'

Our youth are inviting us all to contribute again this year to 'Lost-N-Found Youth'. Lost-n-Found Youth (LNFY) is an Atlanta-based nonprofit whose mission is to take homeless lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youths to age 26 off the street, and transition them into more permanent housing. They operate a 24/7 hotline at 678-856-7825, a Youth Center, a 6-bed 90 day housing facility, and 3-6 month host home program. LNFY is Atlanta's only nonprofit agency actively working to take homeless LGBTQ youth off the street. Find out more at <http://lnfy.org/>

Our goal is to add to the holiday spirit at the LNFY House by providing 6 youth with stockings filled with festive goodies! UUMAN folk of all ages are invited to be Santa's special helpers to spread holiday joy. Please use this link to sign up to bring a stocking stuffer to church Dec 6-13.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CUPMeQdDGcNHzeqWfd347-2dVt597PzkRfxQbIPLjyA/edit?usp=sharing>

Here are the dates for the different elements of the project;

Sundays Dec 6-13– Collecting stocking donations at UUMAN

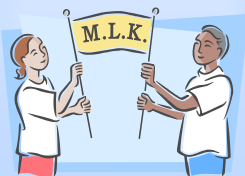
Sunday Dec 13 – A group will visit LNFY center for a holiday brunch, and drop off the stockings

Be the Change You Wish To See...

MLK Weekend Activities

Sunday January 17th
Multigenerational
Worship

Monday January 18th
March alongside civil
rights leadership in the
Annual King Day
Parade.



Martin Luther King Holiday January 17-18th 2016

Happy Birthday Dr. King!



Worship & Social Action for All Ages!



“Would You Like to Hold The Baby?”

Holiday Pageant 2015

It's not too late to join the fun...
We want YOU to participate!

ALL UUMAN's (*adults, children & youth*) are invited & encouraged to join in the festive fun.

Pageant Groups meet on Sunday December 20th
(10.50-11.30 am)

Dress Rehearsal

Sunday Dec 21st (11.45 pm)

And be sure to join us for the

Christmas Eve Family Service Thursday December 24th



Thanks to everyone who helped make the IRC
Thanksgiving Dinner a huge success.



Our Interfaith Youth Group Rocks!



Deck The Halls

Join your UUMAN friends and family for our annual

Winter Holiday Party

Sunday December 6th

Bring a gift for the 'Lost 'N Found' Youth Stockings...

And remember your camera for your photos with

Santa!

Toniann Goes On Sabbatical...

We are excited that UUMAN will offer Toniann sabbatical leave from January through April 2016.

During this time, we will hire Dana Poss as a part-time RE Coordinator, to assist with administrative tasks for our Sunday RE program. Dana will work closely with the MCY Council to continue to serve the UUMAN community.

RE teams will meet 3 times a month, as usual, during this time, with some other elements of our ministry being limited until Toniann's return. We appreciate the support of our whole community in making this a successful sabbatical for us all!

Questions? Please contact Rev. Cynthia or any member of the Sabbatical team: Merri Beth Stephens, Randy Blasch, Kara Sweeney.