

DECEMBER 2004 HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Allegheny ADVOCATE

monthly newsletter of allegheny unitarian universalist church

DECEMBER 5

World AIDS Day Sunday

Rev. David McFarland

The Rev. McFarland explores his experience in serving people living with HIV/AIDS while he was minister of the Provincetown AIDS Ministry. He will be joined by Mr. Clifton Maxwell, a volunteer from the Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force and Prevention Point Pittsburgh. Pieces of the AIDS Memorial Quilt will be at the church for this very special worship service of remembrance and hope.

DECEMBER 12

Communion Service 10:00 AM

Reader: Jeanne Zang

Keeping It Natural On An Urban Farm

Randa Shannon & Barb Kline

The owners of Mildred's Daughters Urban Farm will share the evolution of their sustainable five-acre farm in Stanton Heights and discuss urban farming as a component of a sustainable future.

Song & Soul 5:00 PM

Rev. David McFarland

DECEMBER 19

Sand Mandala Service 9:30 AM

Linda Deafenbaugh

A Celebration Of Light (All Ages)

Worship Team

The holidays offer a great time for the entire Church family to be together. Please join us for this celebration of light. The Religious Education program, Rev. Dave, the Music Ministry, and the Program Committee will present an hour of spirited worship for the whole family.

DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve Service

Jane Dirks, CLL

You are invited to attend our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

DECEMBER 26

Fasting for Dafur

Lawrence Wray

What is the value of what we do in our faith practices? This will be a reflection on the genocide in Sudan and on the role faith practice may have in ending the suffering of others (and in sharing it?).

DECEMBER 31

New Years Eve Celebration & Service 8:00 PM

Our Annual New Years Eve festivities begin at 8 o'clock with an Open House. The Meditation Service is at 11:00. Following, we welcome in the New Year on the church steps at midnight.

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

ADVOCACY AND MINISTRY

Rev. David McFarland

The Challenge Of Healing

Whatever your political leanings, the past election certainly calls attention to this country's deep divisions. And division is a spiritual issue. When we separate our left from our right, our mind from our heart, our Peter from our Paul, our yin from our yang, imbalance is the only outcome.

Throughout the campaign, I longed to understand what the religious right was thinking and where their priorities were. It occurred to me less often to try to make myself understood.

In his victory speech, the president pledged that he would earn the trust of those who did not vote for him. Thanks to the president's invitation, I plan on writing him to explain what it would take for him to earn my trust; to try to make myself understood.

Not only is communication about figuring out what the other is saying, it's about making myself clearer and more understandable. That's sometimes much harder. Maybe that's why, like apparently most Americans, I talk

mostly to those who already agree with me.

Whenever I disagree with someone, I try to take a deep breath and remember their and my humanity before I slash and burn. On the Church Board, if we disagree with an idea or suggestion, we first affirm something good about the idea before we launch into what we believe is bad. It's not always easy. But there's no reason that trashing another person's idea should be easy.

The challenge of the Universalist faith is to seek out the beauty, the good, the divine in all. The challenge of affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every person includes the challenge to communicate—really communicate—with those who have come to different ethical, political, and spiritual conclusions. If we Universalists can't do that, how much hope can there be for the outside world? If we are to live up to our first principle, my friends, the first step is up to us.

Let the healing begin.

Blessings, Rev. Dave

The challenge of the Universalist faith is to seek out the beauty, the good, the divine in all

IN THE CHURCH

AIDS Quilt At Allegheny

Sections of the AIDS Memorial Quilt from the Names Project Foundation will visit our sanctuary during the week of World AIDS Day. On World AIDS Day itself, Wednesday, December 1, from 4:30 pm until 7:00 pm, these sections will be on display in the church sanctuary. At 7:00 pm there will be a brief, informal service remembering those who have died with HIV/AIDS.

The Quilt pieces will again be available for viewing throughout the day on Saturday, December 4 (times will be announced). On Sunday, our Worship Service will focus on the spiritual impact of AIDS on folks in Pittsburgh and the world. A volunteer from Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force will speak and the sermon will be offered by Rev. Dave. All events are open to the public. Please plan to join us.

Caroling!

Please join us for our annual caroling event on Monday, December 20, in the evening. Hot chocolate will be served afterwards in Founders Hall. Watch for details!

Christmas Eve

Traditionally our Church has had a party after the Christmas Eve Service open to anyone attending the Service. This year the party will be held in the church unless someone who lives near the church would like to volunteer to host it.

If you are interested in having the party at your house, call Ann Sitrin.

continued

Welcoming The New Year

Looking for an alternative to the usual frenetic New Year's Eve festivities? Why not join us at Allegheny's annual Open House and Meditation Service! This traditional event has been a favorite for those who prefer a more personal and reflective New Year's Eve.

Join us from 8:00 until 11:00 for conversation, readings, food, drink, and song. Be with us for the whole time, or just stop by. The Meditation Service begins at 11:00 and offers a reflective pause on the cusp of the New Year. The countdown and first toast follow at midnight on the church steps.

Please consider celebrating with us. Bring some food item, beverage and your favorite poem or song. See you there!

DownUnder Coffee House

This month the DownUnder Coffeehouse will feature an open mic night, with a variety of performers taking the stage. Rick Wells, a wonderful songwriter from First Church, will start off the evening. A host of additional performers will be stopping by, as the night progresses.

The coffeehouse is open from 7:30 to 9:30 on the third Saturday of every month. Baked goods, desserts and beverages will be for sale during the concert and the coffee is always free. Suggested donation for the special open mic night is \$3.00.

Welcoming Visitors

In the past few months we have had an increasing number of visitors on Sunday mornings. Often visitors arrive early and after being welcomed by the Greeters they stand around with no one to talk to while the Greeters welcome others.

If you can get to church a little early on Sunday mornings please introduce yourself to anyone who looks new or unfamiliar. Remember your first few visits to the church and make the experience warmer for someone else.

We know we have something special and this is one easy way we can share it.

Fuud For Thought

Plan to come AND explore Unitarian Universalism in depth over lunch with Rev. Dave. Starting next year, Dave will host a once-a-month lunch after social hour to explore a topic of our UU faith.

Fuud for Thought will feature a casual lunch (vegetarian and omnivore sandwiches) and lively conversation about the core of Unitarian Universalism. Look for notices in future newsletters. Call Rev. Dave at 412/322-4261 if you're interested.

Guest at Your Table

December is Guest at Your Table month! This as an annual campaign in support of our UU human rights organization, The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, which teaches people of all ages about human needs, human rights and sharing.

We provide small boxes to be placed on the table, to invite into our homes people from around the world who need our support in their struggle for basic human rights. The gifts we place in the boxes multiply "the Power of You and You" in protecting human rights! The boxes will be collected on at the beginning of the New Year. Thanks for your continued generosity in supporting this organization.

If you have any questions about this project, please see someone on the Membership Committee or go directly to UUSC's website: www.uusc.org/guest2004.

Contacting Rev. McFarland

Rev. David McFarland's "hours of operation" when he is working on Church business are on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. The best way to reach him during these days is the church's phone number, 412/322-4261.

His days off are Tuesday through Thursday, but he can be reached for pastoral emergencies during those times at his home office number, 412/867-1250. By respecting these hours, we as a congregation can assist David in the often-difficult task of maintaining a ¾-time commitment.

December is
Guest at Your Table
month!

GREEN PERSPECTIVE

Jeanne Zang

Home Energy Myths Debunked!

Myth #5: It uses less energy to boil water if you start with hot water from the tap.

The facts: It essentially uses the same amount of energy (and costs essentially the same amount of money) whether you use hot or cold water. If you use hot water, you've already paid to heat the water in the water heater.

Myth #6: It is more energy efficient to leave your computer running when not in use.

The facts: Any time you can turn off your computer it will save energy. However, turning the computer off and on several times a day may cause excessive wear and shorten its life. Many computers now have energy-saving 'sleep' features that save energy when the computer is not being used.

Myth #7: Cold water from the tap will freeze into ice cubes faster than hot water.

The facts: Actually, hot water freezes faster than cold water because it evaporates, leaving 25 percent less water to freeze.

(Source: Portland General Electric)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Kris Thomas, DRE

Winter Faire

On Sunday morning, December 12, the RE program will hold our traditional Winter Faire. The children will make crafts they can then give as gifts, and there will be lots of yummy holiday treats and cheer!

RE Schedule Reminders

Please remember that there will be no RE program on Sunday, December 26 or January 2. On January 9, we will begin our month-long social justice program, where we will learn about and do projects related to homelessness.

FROM THE COMMUNITY

Holiday Gift Idea

Need a sure-to-be appreciated gift idea for the winter holidays? How about a relaxing, stress-reducing, professional massage therapy session by Allegheny's own Jesse Virago, LMT?

Jesse's office is conveniently located near Shadyside hospital, and she has gift certificates available at 412/875-6170 or: jessevirago@yahoo.com.

SERVING THE CONGREGATION

Greeters

December 5

Jill Brethauer and Pat Snowden Dittig

December 12

Kathy Kozachenko and Anne Thompson

December 19

Jeanne Zang and Andy Schwarz

December 26

Pat Downey and Elaine Staab

Refreshments

December 5

Susan Hillman and Charlie Snowden

December 12

Lynn Glorieux and Hazel Leroy

December 19

Ann Sitrin and Rebecca Davis

December 26

Betty and Jane Schwarz

Special Message From Tim & Rev. Dave
Our thanks to the entire Allegheny UU Church community for welcoming us to Pittsburgh. The calls and cards and invitations and care packages and rides and meals have made us feel quite at home.

Sunday,
December 12
is RE's annual
Winter Faire

December 2004

			1	2	3	4 ATW Vigil 12:00
5 Giant Eagle certificate sign-up Choir 9:30 am What We're About 12:30 District NA 1:30 pm	6 Board of Trustees 7:30 pm NA 7:00 pm	7 Program Comm. 7:30 pm Hanukkah begins at sunset	8	9 PIIN monthly meeting 7:00 pm	10 Newsletter Deadline!! (We're Serious)	11 ATW Vigil 12:00
12 G.E. cert. delivery Choir 9:00 am Communion Service 10:00 am RE Winter Faire Soc. Just. 12:30 Song & Soul 5:00 pm	13 NA 7:00 pm	14	15	16 Shelter Meal 9:00 pm	17	18 ATW Vigil 12:00 DownUnder Coffee House 7:30 pm
19 Choir 9:30 am Holiday Service (All Ages)	20 Annual Caroling NA 7:00 pm	21 Winter Begins	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 7:30 pm Reception follows	25 Christmas Day
26 Kwanzaa begins	27 NA 7:00 pm	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve Open House 8:00 pm Service 11:00 pm	

January 2005

						1 New Year's Day
2 Choir 9:30 am Giant Eagle certificate sign-up District NA 1:30 pm	3 Board of Trustees 7:30 pm NA 7:00 pm	4 Program Comm. 7:30 pm	5	6	7	8 ATW Vigil 12:00
9 Choir 9:30 am Song & Soul 5:00 pm	10 NA 7:00 pm	11	12	13 PIIN monthly meeting RE Committee 7:30 pm	14 Newsletter Deadline!!	15 ATW Vigil 12:00 Coffee House 7:30 pm
16 MLK Sunday Choir 9:00 am Communion Service 10:00 am What We're About 12:30 pm	17 Martin Luther King Day NA 7:00 pm	18	19	20 Shelter Meal 9:00 pm	21 RE Games Night	22 ATW Vigil 12:00
23 Choir 9:30 am Social Justice Comm. 12:30 pm What We're About 12:30 pm	24 NA 7:00 pm	25	26	27	28	20 ATW Vigil 12:00
30 Choir 9:30 am Mid-Year Congregational Meeting 12:30 pm	31 NA 7:00 pm					

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 Jaime McLeod or Donald Zeilman

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Allegheny Unitarian
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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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Welcoming Congregation

Jaime McLeod

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we are a spiritually diverse, activist congregation