

December 7 , 2011

UU Eye

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Unitarian Universalist Church of Indianapolis
Founded 1979

Sunday, December 11th: “Advent III: Joy” *Rev. Stephen Sinclair*

It is during Advent that we anticipate the coming of something that will be a source of joy: the birth of the Messiah or, for secularists, a holiday filled with love, family, and if hopes are realized, peace. Joy is not so much an emotion, but a momentary experience of that which is holy within us. It is up to us to cultivate that holy essence so that we can experience joy on a daily basis, something which will transform our lives, our relationships, and our world.

Saturday, December 17th: Winter Solstice Service (7:00pm)

Sunday, December 18th: “Advent IV: Peace” *Rev. Stephen Sinclair*

For peace to prevail it must begin in our hearts, enter into our thoughts, inform our words, and then direct our actions. We do that by acknowledging the divine within us and then asking that source through prayer and meditation to help us learn how to be peaceful so that there can indeed be Peace on Earth.

Saturday, December 24th: Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

Rev. Stephen Sinclair (4:00pm & 7:00pm)

Join us for a traditional, multigenerational, candlelight service featuring a bringing in of the greens, carol singing, and the reading of the Christmas Story. Let us celebrate together the coming of Light and the promise of rebirth. Bring your family, friends, and neighbors! *Refreshments and fellowship will follow both services.*

Sunday, December 25th: No Services

Sunday, January 1st: “Letting Go of the Past” *Rev. Stephen Sinclair*

Instead of making New Year’s resolutions which we will keep let us together as people of faith let go of those things which are holding us back and keeping us from wholeness. Resentments, hurts and grudges are the baggage which we carry on our backs and weigh us down as we journey through life. Come ready to let them go!



Services start at 9:15 and 11:00 a.m. Childcare is provided.
Church of the Warm Heart, Open Mind and Helping Hands



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Eye Deadlines and Submissions

The *Eye* welcomes your submissions about congregational life and programs. The *Eye* is published monthly on the first Wednesday of the month. Submit material by e-mail to uueye@uui.org. **The next deadline is 8 p.m. Friday, December 30.**

UUI is a Welcoming Congregation and a Certified Green Sanctuary under guidelines of the Unitarian Universalist Association.



The UU Eye

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615 W. 43rd St., Indianapolis IN 46208
Contact: 317-283-4760/info@uui.org
On the Web: www.uui.org

The UU Eye informs and sustains UUI's congregational life. It connects members and friends to our varied church activities, including worship, religious education, the arts and community actions. It presents information of consequence and interest to the congregation and also reflects and fosters our purpose as a congregation and as Unitarian Universalists.

UUI Officers and Staff

Minister

Rev. Stephen Sinclair

283-4760; minister@uui.org

Board President

Matt Bassett

509-5625; bassett.m.h@gmail.com

Office Administrator

Mara Haium-White

283-4760; office@uui.org

Music Director:

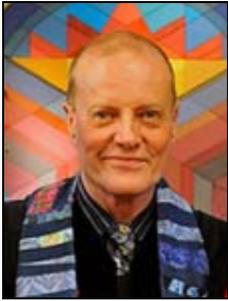
Dianna Davis

music@uui.org

Religious Educator:

Natalie Spriggs-Trobridge

283-4760; re@uui.org



Pastor's Reflections: Degrees of Separation

Rev. Stephen Sinclair

The just released results of a study conducted by researchers at Facebook and the University of Milan found that the average number of acquaintances separating any two people in the world is 4.74. Until now it was held there were six degrees of separation. That number came from a 1967 study that utilized 296 volunteers sending messages using postcards sent through the postal service. The new study used a group that was a bit larger: 721 million. That's how many

Facebook users there are in the world. Instead of scrutinizing return addresses and stamp cancellations, the scientists utilized algorithms to calculate the distance between any two people on earth. Hypothetically, that would include someone living in a village in Siberia and someone living in the Village in New York. Six Degrees of Separation is part of our collective imagination and is the title of a popular play by John Guare. Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon is a still popular parlor game employed to link seemingly unrelated film and television stars to one another. It is fascinating to think that the world is so interrelated that we are separated from a stranger on another continent by such few people, all due to the many different communication platforms available throughout the industrialized world and more and more often in countries with emerging economies.

But are we really separated by even four or five people? I believe we are not separated at all; that the sense that people are foreign, far away or unknown to us is an illusion. In reality there is no separation. Our seventh Unitarian Universalist principle refers to the interdependent web of existence of which we are a part. Christianity refers to all people as being the body of Christ and one of the Vedic (Hindu) understandings of life is that we are all part of the same pulsing cosmic consciousness dependent upon one another and all things to exist. Therefore, the perception of people being different and external to ourselves is a mistaken one. We are, in the Greater Reality, intrinsically bound to one another because we are actually one and the same Being. We do indeed express ourselves as individuals with distinct personalities. The fact that we are merely different facets of the same Divine Consciousness is obscured in order for us to live out our destinies and work through those things we have brought with us into this life from our previous ones. It is with heightened Awareness and Consciousness, brought about through spiritual practices and grace that we, like the great mystics and teachers of all religions, can realize and experience in the totality of our Being that we are not separate individuals, but rather, manifestations of a Greater Cosmic force—of God.

Imagine if every time we interacted with someone we said to ourselves, "This person and I are one." Imagine if we took a moment and saw ourselves within them and allowed ourselves to sense them within us. We could never deprive them of food or shelter. We could never strike them in anger. If we did, we would also be doing those things to ourselves.

Six Degrees of Separation—Four Degrees of Separation—No Degrees of Separation.

Peace be with you.

Pastor Stephen

Lifespan Faith Development



The holiday season is here and I am always taken back by how quickly it arrives. With so much of the media telling us to buy, buy, and buy some more, it can be difficult to remember what the season is truly about. All families, especially UU families, have different interpretations of what this season means to them. However, the basic theme of family and giving seems to be the same across the board. In my family, we really try to get the focus off of buying gifts and focus more on quality time, giving back to the community (& each other), as well as gift making.

Each year we have an advent calendar that is filled with chocolate for the 25 day countdown. I recently went to Trader Joes to pick one up and could not find one. But then serendipity happened. As I was reading through my Facebook newsfeed, I noticed something that a friend of mine, Kathleen from Ohio, is doing this year with her children: an advent calendar of 25 random acts of kindness that her children can do. Yes, 25 days of kindness. She came up with acts such as *cookies for the library, handmade card to the neighbor, pick up trash in the neighborhood, cut out ten flowers & leave them on random cars/doors, leave a special card in a library book for the next patron, take a treat to the firehouse, create your own kind deed... etc.* I immediately fell in LOVE with this idea. What a wonderful way for children to give back to their families and community.

So my family will create our own advent calendar of random acts of kindness to spread the love around this holiday season. Think about how your family can give back, not only to the community, but to each other as well. I also challenge families each year to think about what they are buying as presents, and perhaps they could buy half as much and use the rest of the money to give. Whether it be for buying items for those in need (such as the giving tree, Heifer foundation, etc.) or donating that money to your favorite organization(s), there is always someplace in need. Finally, I would like to encourage families to think about these questions as well: What type of presents are you buying? Did you support local businesses? Are your presents fair trade? Just some things to think about as you move through the month of December.

Here is a great children's story that we have read in the 2nd-3rd grade class that supports acts of kindness and giving back to the community: <http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session5/sessionplan/stories/132324.shtml>

Happy Holidays everyone! May you and your family be surrounded with love and joy this season.

Smile,
Natalie Spriggs-Trobridge, your RE director



Congregational Life



Pledge Payments Update

Through the first five months of the church year, pledge payments have not come as they should for UUI to have a successful year. Please contact Susan Porter at porter1751@att.net or 251-7346, find out if your pledge payments are on schedule. If they are not up to date, please send a check or, better, bring a check to church as soon you can.

Larry Miller, Treasurer

Scrip Orders for the Holidays

The Holidays are just around the corner and the UUI Scrip Program is ready to satisfy your every need. Looking to make a purchase at Walmart, Kohls or any of the many, many retailers we have? Buy a scrip card first and make sure a portion of your purchase comes back to UUI. Also, UUI Scrip works the same way as gift cards and everyone loves gift cards!

Find more information, including a list of participating retailers, at www.uui.org/support/bonus-bucks/.

Winter Solstice Celebration

December 17 2011; 7-9 PM

Free & open to the public

Solstice is a planetary-wide celebration of the longest night and the returning of the Light. Many religions have a Sun Child born at this time of year. This non-denominational ritual will feature readings, moments of silence, and songs that take us on a journey from the quiet of darkness to a joyous celebration of returning Light. The participatory nature of this event is perfect for families with children of all ages. When the Celebration concludes, join us for an indoor feast (please bring finger foods to share!).

Winter Solstice Chili Supper

The Family Ministry Committee and Junior High families are hosting the 3rd annual Chili Supper on Saturday, December 17th from 5:30-6:30 in the Commons before the Winter Solstice ceremony. All proceeds from this year's event will go towards the Junior High Coming of Age Program. Please mark your calendars to arrive early to find parking and join us for good eats and socializing before the ceremony begins. Suggested adult price is \$5.00 and \$3.00 for children (Free-Under 3). Warm cider and baked goods will also be sold.

Volunteers are needed to cook pots of chili. Please contact Carolyn Murphy at (317) 418-4533 or csmerac@aol.com if you can donate chili or help with the event.



Why I Joined UUI

By Kendra Wood

a Stewardship Testimonial

Over a decade ago I stopped attending church. It seemed to me no church matched my beliefs and theology. My old church was far too conservative for me and the churches I kept attending were too liberal.... until I found UUI.

Pastor had us play a game at New Member orientation. (I went to orientation not to join, but rather to see what this unusual church was all about. I knew I wasn't joining the church.) It was a game where you expressed your beliefs on various topics. He asked a question and we had to select our belief from a list of options. I was amazed at the choices. Who knew folks believed in such varying beliefs under one roof! Reincarnation, Heaven, atheism, Christianity, paganism, science etc. Not only did they believe such concepts, but they shared valid reasons for their beliefs. Many were still searching for answers too. Some of their ideas I had never even conceived of before, let alone considered as a valid view. Ben's thinking blew me away. (He is now a member as well.) I was amazed.

There were many common factors among all of us.

1. Everyone respected the others views. No one pointed a finger and said, "No, you are wrong." or "My way or you are out of here."
2. At some point you agreed on at least one topic with every individual.
3. People shared their views and experiences freely.

I joined the church the following day. I became a part of a wonderful community that supports each other as individuals instead of because they believe like "me." I have grown as a person as I search for meaning in my relationships with others including God and the Universe. I have developed a special time of reflection and prayer in Wednesday night NOVO. And on a very personal level, I forgave.

I have never been happier in my life. I have purpose, meaning and value. I am developing new friendships. My priorities are centered on my spiritual journey. I strive to let go of the insignificant petty items that want to clutter my path and my view. I look forward to continued learning and development within UUI with

Love as the Spirit of the church
And Service is its law.
To dwell together in Peace,
To seek the Truth in Love,
And to help one another.

Creative Arts

Art on the Walls

The Fine Arts Committee present the winter display in the Meeting House using Janet Cohen's quilt and the quilt sewn by Judy Pleiss, designed by Carol Erwin. On January 8th the Youth Art Display will go up. All youth through high school are eligible. Please have all artwork either in a frame ready to hang (a wire is best) or mounted or matted. Please send label information to Wendy Dougherty at Wdougherty@indy.rr.com or call at (317) 255-7039 by Wednesday, January 4.

Arty Bash—Mark Your Calendar

The annual Arty Bash, an evening of art, entertainment, and good food will be held from 7 to 9pm on Saturday, April 28. Reserve the date! It's put on by the Fine Arts Committee and the Music Committee.

UU Arts Salon for January

The UU Arts Salon will take a break for December and meet again in January of 2012. The date will be January 22, from 5-7 pm at the home of Charlotte Schrock. Her address is 5735 Carvel Avenue, Indianapolis IN 46220. Her phone number is 251-4895. Bring your creative efforts to share or just come to appreciate. We ask that everyone bring finger foods to share and try to call me or email me to RSVP if you can attend! (Liz Efrogmson at 590-6120 or lefrogmson@gmail.com).

Lifespan RE

Homecoming on Christmas Eve

Please join your UUI friends and family for the 7pm Service on Christmas Eve at UUI. Enjoy the carols, the readings, the candlelight, and conversation with your old Coming of Age buddies, your mentors, your mentees, the young people you taught in RE over the years. Parents, encourage your college students and young adults to come. Mentors, reach out to your former mentees. Founding members, give other oldtimers you know a call and invite them. This is the perfect occasion to renew old ties and to catch up. We will have coffee and snacks following the service. Please bring a plate of treats if you are able. Coffee hour by the Massicotte girls and Holly Hendrickson. We guarantee you will see someone you know!



UU Connections

For UU's for the Holidays

For your holiday shopping consider UU items you can buy online. Start at the UUA Bookstore (www.uuabookstore.org) for fantastic books (including ebooks) and gifts for all ages. There's a gift guide on the website to help. Holiday cards are available through the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (www.uusc.org/). UUSC is an affiliate of UUA.

Check out the latest issue of UU World Magazine, which is sent quarterly to all congregations members, for sources for lots of UU inspired items or just Google UU jewelry, tee shirts, gifts, worship items or whatever you wish to celebrate our UU faith. A few websites to try are

clfuu.net/shop/
www.cafepress.com
www.zazzle.com/uu+gifts
www.uugifts.net
www.uniuniques.com/

Enjoy!

UUA Recognized for Eco-Consciousness

In the November issue of Meetings and Conventions magazine, the Unitarian Universalist Association is named one of five eco-conscious groups, and was interviewed about meeting practices and experiences. At the 2011 General Assembly there were many opportunities to recycle, including all packaging and utensils of food products purchased in the food court.

General Assembly News

2012 Ware Lecturer *(from UUA website)*

Maria Hinojosa, award-winning broadcast journalist and author, has been selected as the Ware Lecturer for the 2012 Justice GA in Phoenix. She is the anchor and managing editor of NPR's *Latino USA*.

Hinojosa has won top honors in American journalism including two Emmys, the Robert F. Kennedy Award for Reporting on the Disadvantaged, and the Edward R. Murrow Award from the Overseas Press Club for best documentary for her groundbreaking *Child Brides: Stolen Lives*. Three times over the past decade, Hinojosa has been named one of the 100 Most Influential Latinos in the United States by Hispanic Business magazine.

Coordinator Selected for 2013 GA in Louisville *(from Heartland newsletter)*

In June 2013, the UUA General Assembly will be held in the Heartland District city of Louisville, KY. Jill Sampson, a member of the First Unitarian Church in Louisville, has been selected as the District Coordinator for the event.

As an active member of First Unitarian Jill has served on their search committee and as secretary of their board. Jill has degrees from Purdue and the University of Louisville and is a long time volunteer for Actors Theatre of Louisville.

Small Groups

BULBS (Birthday Unitarian Lunch Bunch) meets 1st Mondays. Pat Lawler, 329-2779 or patricialawler2@comcast.net.

At the next meeting of the **Credo Forum** we will discuss Humanism, one of our Unitarian Universalist sources. Everyone is welcome to join us on Sunday, January 1 at 9:30 a.m as we discuss issues of interest for Unitarian Universalists. For more information contact Lowell McCoskey at Monotrailbiker@aol.com.

CUUPS (Covenant of UU Pagans) meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 7 pm in the Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall. Contact Colleen Kelly, wooglet@gmail.com or Robin Chestek, 280-1354.

The **UU Downtown Lunch** group meets at 11:30 on the second Wednesday of each month. This group of UUs meets at the Sky City Café at the Eiteljorg Museum to enjoy lunch and conversation. Contact Eric Hinkle at ehinkle@eiteljorg.com.

The **UII Drum Circle** meets the first and third Sundays from 1pm to 2pm in the Commons. Bring your percussion or use items provided. This circle is open to men and women that want to experience a rhythmic community with a fun educational spirit. Contact Sandra at sgruber@mw.net, 407-1852, or on Facebook.

UII Knitting Group meets 2nd Saturdays at 10 am and 4th Tuesdays at 7 pm in the Cottage Library. Contact Judy Archer, 253-9770 or jisarcher@aol.com.

For the next meeting of the **UII Men's Breakfast Group** please contact Bob Kirk, rkirk1937@aol.com.

The next **UII Photo Club** Meeting will be on Monday, December 12 at 7 in the Library in the Cottage. The topic will be "Relationships", and you may interpret the subject any way you wish. The topic for January will be "Structures". The UII Photo Club meets on the second Monday of each month at 7 in the Library in the Cottage. If you are interested in participating, contact Wendy Dougherty at Wdougherty@indy.rr.com or 255-7039.

The **Women of UII** are invited to meet for dinner on Wednesday, December 7 at Milano Inn at 231 South College Ave. For information, contact Susan Beauchamp at 634-2448 or beauartnow@yahoo.com.

The **Women's Spirituality in Writing** group meets the third Tuesday of the month in the cottage library to listen to each others' written responses to an assigned topic. No critiquing, just an open sharing and discussion. New members are welcome. Contact Mary Glenn Rinne at mgrinne@att.net.

Happenings in December & January

SUN 11	MON 12	TUE 13	WED 14	THU 15	FRI 16	SAT 17
	Photo Club Library, 7pm	UUI Board Meeting Social Hall, 7pm	Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary, 7:30pm			Chili Dinner Commons, 5:30pm Winter Solstice Celebration Sanctuary, 7pm
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Drum Circle Commons, 1pm		Women's Spirituality Writing Group Library, 7pm				Candlelight Christmas Eve Services 4pm & 7pm
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Christmas No Services		UUI Knitters Cottage, 7pm				
01	02	03	04	05	06	07
Credo Forum Library, 9:30am Drum Circle Commons, 1pm						

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