

# *East Suburban Unitarian Universalist Church*



Sunday Services - 10:30 AM  
Religious Education - 10:30 AM

Telephone  
(724) 327-5872

Website  
<http://www.esuuc.org>

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## *ESUUC Sunday Services*

**Sunday, December 4, 10:30am-** *“Of Pandas, People and Plausibility”*- in the current debate about “intelligent design”, how do we make sense of it as UUs? What is at stake? What is the appropriate response by the courts? **Dr. Waun** will reflect on this timely topic.

**Sunday, December 11, 10:30am-** *“The Cross in the Andes”* - **Rosa Thompson** will tell us about how this season was celebrated in Peru before and after the birth of Jesus Christ.

**Sunday, December 18, 10:30am-** *“The True Meaning of Christmas”* - Our play has been compared to the American classic "A Chorus Line." Really it has. Contemplate with us the true meaning of this season and practice singing "Silent Night" quietly in your shower. All work and no "play" make UUs dull. And we are NEVER dull.

**Saturday, December 24, 7:00pm-** *“Christmas Memories”* - On this Christmas Eve we will share memories, sing carols, bless children and light candles. You are invited to **bring your memory of a favorite Christmas to share**. **Dr. Waun** will facilitate.

**Sunday, December 25, 10:30am-** *“Hear Ye, Hear Ye!”* - Composer/Pianist/Music Director **Dr. Brian W. Ogle** will perform works by Scarlatti, Mozart, and Ogle. Included will be a collection of pieces written by the composer to be played during the UU service.

**Sunday, January 1, 10:30am-** *“This Was the Year That Was”* - For those of us who are bright-eyed and bushy-tailed on this New Year’s morning, we will gather informally for a time of group discussion on formative experiences from 2005, led by **Dr. Waun**.



## *Pastor's Column:*

by Rev. Renee Waun

## *"Ready or Not" vs. Now*

I remember the childhood game of tag when I would be running to hide as one of my friends was calling out "5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30..." and finally "Here I come, ready or not!" And I was either already tucked away smugly in some wonderful hiding place, or I was dashing to jump into one because I wasn't quite ready.

I sometimes get that feeling around this time of year. Right after Halloween my neighbor down the street puts out all their Christmas décor: the giant Santa, snowman and reindeer, the sparkly "whatsits" hanging all over the shrubs along with the thousands of blinking lights that chase around in a circular pattern amid the trees.

Then it seems as if the weather has to cooperate by providing snowflakes on days when I'm just not ready to think about snowflakes. And then I am aware that the daily countdown of how many shopping days left until Christmas is already under way, and I'm ready to jump into a hiding place because I'm not quite ready for this to begin.

Yet, I know that time has this mysterious way of sneaking up on me and that eventually I will reconcile with it all, ready or not, and I will mine this season for all the nuggets of peace, beauty and love that it has to offer.

May each of us find joy where we least expect it, especially as the days sneak up on us. Life is supposed to be fun. So, let's have at it and make the most out of every day, even if we don't feel quite ready for whatever comes next. Life is lived in the moment, in the now. Let us hang on to the pleasure of our "now" and then the countdown doesn't seem quite so important.

Happy Holidays to All!



## *mUUsings from the President:*

by Maureen McHugh

*Spiraling Meditations*

According to Caitlin Matthews in the *Celtic Spirit*, the Celtic people visited groves and springs at the sacred times of the year and made the Turas. The word Turas means journey, pilgrimage and time and refers to the circular spiraling prayer and meditation forms used by the Celtic people as they walked meditatively around sacred sites. The meditative walk was always sun-wise, from left to right. This process of spiraling around "builds power, strengthens intention and brings us into attunement with our soul's thread."

We plan to make such a site here at ESUUC. A place to make the Turas, a place where we can experience "the turning of our soul toward ...spiritual light." Join us on December 3 as we build an outdoor light labyrinth. We will conduct a labyrinth workshop and create an outdoor light labyrinth, on Saturday,

December 3. The workshop will be held 12:00 to 4:30, followed by light refreshments. Please help us toward this goal by collecting plastic milk and juice jugs.

One source of meditation appropriate for the season is to contemplate an answer to the question “What do you want this year.” True wants are not those easily satisfied by pretty wrapped presents. Join us on December 3 for a labyrinth meditation on *The Gifts We Really Want*. We will conduct our first lit meditation that evening after dark (5:30?).

Once we build the labyrinth, we hope to schedule a series of meditations throughout the month of December. If there is a date you like to celebrate, let us know.

### *Split the (Collection) Plate*

In October we collected over \$200 for the Blackburn Center, which provides services to victims of domestic abuse in Westmoreland County. In November we collected money for the Westmoreland County Food Bank. We are now looking for suggestions for charities to benefit this program through the end of the year. We are primarily interested in local charities or national charities that have a local operation that we can support. Please give your suggestions and any contact information if it is available to Cathy Serventi (724-387-1155 or [treasurer@esuuc.org](mailto:treasurer@esuuc.org)).

### *Coffee Sales Start Again*

We have FRESH coffee in just in time for the holidays. Freshly roasted coffee from Building New Hope available after services on Sunday --regular, decaf, ground and whole bean--we have it all! This coffee is organic, shade-grown fair trade coffee from Nicaragua. Price: \$10 (ten dollars) per pound. Please see Cathy Serventi ([treasurer@esuuc.org](mailto:treasurer@esuuc.org)) or Kate Codd-Palmer ([community@esuuc.org](mailto:community@esuuc.org)) after church if you would like some.

### *ESUUC Seasonal Greeting Cards – on sale*

We will be selling cards with our own tapestry images after church each Sunday in November. We will also offer for sale cards distributed by the Syracuse Cultural Workers. These cards are earth friendly and produced by union labor. The cards offer multicultural, international, global, and eco images and messages. These are welcome alternatives to commercial and traditional Holiday cards. In addition to forwarding our agenda for global and multicultural understanding and peace, these cards are a fund-raiser. We will also have a limited number of peace calendars and posters. Please stop by our table and consider purchasing some cards. To volunteer to help with the card sale table, please call or email Maureen McHugh [mcmchugh@IUP.edu](mailto:mcmchugh@IUP.edu).

### *Wal-Mart Movie Screening Success*

In November, over 50 people attended our screening of the Wal-Mart documentary “*Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price*”, including many interested community members as well as members of our congregation. The screening was part of Wal-Mart Premiere Week, an unprecedented grassroots effort of over 3,000 screenings across the nation from November 13-19, 2005.

## *Choir and Music Notes*

We have a wonderful choir that is small but growing. Would you like to join us? We sing in the service about once every month, with practice **at 9:30am**, before the service on that same Sunday. Our next appearance will be on Sunday, **December 4**. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Dr. Waun [revmom@pitt.edu](mailto:revmom@pitt.edu) 412-731-2834.

MUSICIANS are invited to contact Brian Ogle our Music Director [brianwilliamogle@yahoo.com](mailto:brianwilliamogle@yahoo.com) 724-387-1190. We would like to find people who play a variety of instruments, or who sing and would find it rewarding to do so during an occasional service.

## *Support SSN when Shopping Amazon.com*

The STRAIGHT SPOUSE NETWORK is for straight spouse or partners, current or former, of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender mates with the mission to reach out, heal and build bridges. Whenever you buy anything through Amazon online AND access it from the homepage of [www.straightspouse.org](http://www.straightspouse.org), SSN will receive a small percentage donation automatically. Get the habit side door habit and expand support to those who often go into the closet at the time their loved ones are coming out. Nancy F. who facilitates a Pittsburgh straight spouse group thanks you!

Go to [www.straightspouse.org](http://www.straightspouse.org) to get to Amazon.com!

## *"Eastern Religions" Exhibit at IUP*

An exhibit entitled "Eastern Religions Come to Western Pennsylvania" is being shown all semester in the Sutton Hall Museum and in Kipp Art Gallery at Indiana University of PA (IUP).

## *Tour: People and Places of the Civil Rights Movement*

Some of the places of the civil rights movement are readily accessible: the Edmund Pettus bridge in Selma, 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, the church whose burning drew Chaney, Schwerner and Goodman to Philadelphia, Mississippi. But fewer and fewer of the people who gave such places their meaning survive to talk with us. Both places and people are included in a tour being offered in March of 2006 by Meadville Lombard Theological School.

The March 18-26 tour has been planned and will be led by the Rev. Dr. Gordon Gibson, who was involved in the early stages of the 1965 Selma voting rights campaign and was the Unitarian Universalist minister in Mississippi 1969-84. He led similar tours in 2004 and 2005.

The tour, by luxury motor coach, will include all admission charges, overnight accommodations, and most meals in the \$1,000 cost. Visits with 1960s activists and videos on the bus will supplement the site visits. The tour will begin and end in Chicago, Illinois.

For full details and registration information, you can visit the Meadville Lombard website ([www.meadville.edu](http://www.meadville.edu)) or write to the Academic Office, Meadville Lombard Theological School, 5701 S. Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637.

Registration is on a first-come basis with some of the 30 seats reserved for theological students who will be taking this as a credit course.

A participant in the 2004 Tour said, “the stories from the folks who were ‘in the trenches’ make the Movement come alive.” Another participant described it as “seeing the Movement through the real experiences of real people.”

### *Teen (and pre-Teen) Book Club*

The book club for teens (and pre-teens) was successfully launched in November and welcomes new members. Our second meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Friday, December 2nd at 7 pm** in the cafe' part of Borders (may be switched to the Panera's in Murrysville). Please check the website (<http://www.esuuc.org>) and the weekly email updates for confirmation. The book is “The Black Pearl” by Scott O'Dell. Hope to see you there! If you have any questions, contact: [REdirector@esuuc.org](mailto:REdirector@esuuc.org)

### *Contra Dance Field Trip*

Matt Mathis hosts a Contra Dance field trip **Friday, December 2:**

Come and join me at a Friday contra dance. You can come on your own on nearly any Friday (See [www.pittsburghcontra.org](http://www.pittsburghcontra.org) for directions and dance details) or join me for a field trip, car pool and convoy. Meet in the Miracle Mile parking lot across from Panera Bread, **before 7:30 pm** (be early, so we can leave on the dot, in time for the lesson). Unlike other dance forms, Contra dance is about building a community which is an all-inclusive interconnected web. It is traditional to dance with your life partner only a few times during the evening.

### *OWL (Grades 4-5) - Parent Meeting*

(See “OWL” write-up later in this newsletter for more details)

For grades 4-5, the parents should attend an introductory parent meeting **Saturday, December 3, at 8:30 am**, to learn about the curriculum and to understand why sexuality education is critically important at this age. At the parent meeting we will schedule one mandatory orientation for students and parents and 8 weekly classes (tentatively one Saturday AM and 8 Monday evenings, starting in January). Please contact our certified instructors Matt Mathis ([mathis@psc.edu](mailto:mathis@psc.edu), 412-654-7529) or Susan Goodis ([sgoodis@hotmail.com](mailto:sgoodis@hotmail.com), 724-325-8048).

### *Labyrinth Creation and Meditation*

December is a month of many holidays including Bodhi day, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Saint Lucia, the Winter Solstice, Hanukah, and Christmas. Many of these are based around light. In preparation for a series of mediations, celebrations and other ESUUC events celebrating the importance of light in mid winter, we will conduct a labyrinth workshop and create an outdoor light labyrinth, on **Saturday, December 3**. The workshop will be held **12:00 to 4:30**, followed by light refreshments. We will conduct our first lit meditation that evening after dark (**5:30?**). Maureen McHugh is facilitating this event. She has attended workshops on labyrinth and labyrinth construction, and she previously created a labyrinth for ESUUC. We hope to enlist the help of an additional speaker and expert. Please sign up to participate at the church, or email Maureen at [mcmchugh@IUP.edu](mailto:mcmchugh@IUP.edu).

**PLEASE SAVE PLASTIC HALF-GALLON JUGS (from milk or juice) and bring them to church for the labyrinth construction.**

## *Christmas Play Rehearsal*

The next rehearsal for the Christmas play is on **Saturday, December 3, 2 pm** at church. Come, one and all, ages 4-104, even if you were not at the first meeting. We have parts for anyone and everyone.

I'd like to schedule at least one more rehearsal before **December 18, 10:30 am, showtime!** For more information, contact Marylyn Devlin.

## *Adult RE Series: "Unraveling the Gender Knot"*

"Unraveling the Gender Knot", a new course in our adult RE program, wraps up this month. The last session of this adult education series is on **Monday, December 5 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm**. For more course details, see the details in the October newsletter, and/or contact Maureen McHugh ([mcmchugh@IUP.edu](mailto:mcmchugh@IUP.edu)), 724-733-3620, or Gerard Katilius ([KarenLGerard@aol.com](mailto:KarenLGerard@aol.com)), 724-327-6321.

## *Movie Night*

Our next movie night will be on **Friday, December 9**. We will be showing "Jesus Christ Super Star" as a sing-a-long hosted by our Youth Group. Doors open at **7:30 pm** and the movie starts at **8 pm**. Please feel free to bring refreshments to share.

## *OWL (Grades 10-12) - Parent Meeting*

(See "OWL" write-up later in this newsletter for more details)

For grades 10 – 12 there is a mandatory orientation session for parents, scheduled for **Sunday, December 11, from 4-6 pm**. Course materials and accompanying video will be reviewed, and written permission from the participant's parents is required prior to enrollment. At this point we're planning for the 12 sessions to be held basically every other Sunday, starting in January 2006, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Please contact our certified instructors Maureen McHugh ([mcmchugh@IUP.edu](mailto:mcmchugh@IUP.edu), 724-733-3620) or Gerard Katilius ([KarenLGerard@aol.com](mailto:KarenLGerard@aol.com), 724-327-6321) to confirm your child's enrollment, or for any questions about the program.

## *Holiday Party*

It's that time of year again to pass around the gag gifts, laugh, drink, eat and be merry with your Unitarian friends!

**When: Saturday December 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Time: 7:00-?**

**Where: East Suburban UU Church**

Adults Only

**What to bring:** please bring an appetizer, BYOB (sodas and dessert will be provided) and a gag gift for a female, male, or both. Make the gag gifts as funny or outrageous as you like, this is your opportunity to pass along last year's gag gift too. The gift tags are often as funny as the gifts.....be creative! If there are two of you coming to the party, you might bring two gifts so that each of you will receive a gift. Any questions, please call Kate Codd-Palmer (724) 325-3903.

## *Family Drumming Circle*

Both Drumming Circle and Family Drumming Circle will be included in the Yule (Wheel of the Year) Celebration. They will not meet independently in December.

## *Drumming Circle*

Both Drumming Circle and Family Drumming Circle will be included in the Yule (Wheel of the Year) Celebration. They will not meet independently in December.

## *Sunday Refreshments*

A time-honored tradition among Unitarian Churches is to gather for “social hour” immediately following Sunday service. At ESUUC we gather in the community room for coffee, juice, something tasty to eat and spirited conversation. It is a wonderful opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet some new friends at church. Each member is asked to take a turn throughout the year providing, serving and cleaning up refreshments. With everyone taking a turn it is usually once a year that we are called upon. The schedule tends to go alphabetically so you can get a rough idea when your name may come up.

Don't worry if you are not a cook---store-bought treats work quite well. There is a “guide to setting up refreshments” posted in the kitchen and at the end of the September 2005 newsletter. If this is your first time you may want to review it a couple of weeks before you take your turn to get an idea of the flow. If you have any questions or are daunted by the thought of serving refreshments, please call Kate Codd-Palmer at (724) 325-3903. Don't think she will let you off the hook, however, we all seem to like to eat.

The refreshment table is located in the far corner of the community room. This area also serves as a religious education room for the children during service. You may consider preparing the table before service starts, so the children are not interrupted during class time. There is also a cart in the kitchen that can be used to place food items on and be wheeled into the community room after service.

## *Refreshments Roster*

If the week you are assigned doesn't work with your schedule, please switch with someone else for that month.

Dec 4	Susan Goodis/Matt Mathis
Dec 11	Marianne Jew
Dec 18	Kimberly Jumper
Dec 25	Sharing Sunday (bring something to share)

Jan 1	Sharing Sunday (bring something to share)
Jan 8	Karen and Gerard Katilius
Jan 15	To Be Determined (TBD)
Jan 22	TBD
Jan 29	TBD

## *RE Class Schedule*

<b>Nursery:</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
	Dec 4	Maria Luczkow
	11	Natalie Mendik
	18	Cathy Serventi
	25	No Nursery Today
	Jan 1	No Nursery Today

<b>Lower Elementary:</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Class Description</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
	Dec 4	Kids Attend First Part of Service, followed by Children's Chapel	Kate Codd-Palmer
	11	Friends and Enemies (Session 7)	Kate Zingarelli
	18	Friendship with People Different From You (Session 8)	Mary Kukura-Straw
	25	No RE Program Today	
	Jan 1	No RE Program Today	

<b>Upper Elementary:</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Class Description</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
	Dec 4	Kids Attend First Part of Service, followed by Children's Chapel	Kate Codd-Palmer
	11	Stories in Animals (Session 11)	Karen Katilius
	18	Unique and Wonderful You (Session 12)	Kathy Ruffing
	25	No RE Program Today	
	Jan 1	No RE Program Today	

<b>Middle School:</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Class Description</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
	Dec 4	Kids Attend First Part of Service, followed by Children's Chapel	Kate Codd-Palmer
	11	Courage	Marianne Jew
	18	Empathy	Laurie Montgomery
	25	No RE Program Today	
	Jan 1	No RE Program Today	

## *Youth Group*

Youth Group meetings (all are **Sunday evenings**, from **6-8pm**): **December 4, 18**

Dates and times are subject to change, so please check for updates: contact Leona Dunnett, Youth Advisor (secretary@esuuc.org).



## *OWL Sexuality Education –non-Members invited also*

We are pleased to announce that the Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education Series for grades 4 – 5 and grades 10 -- 12 will be conducted here early next year. Using a comprehensive approach, these programs help youth gain the knowledge, life principles and skills they need to make decisions about their sexuality in positive, life enhancing ways. Although this curriculum was developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ, the text is completely secular and free of specific religious doctrine or reference. The underlying values of the programs reflect the justice-oriented traditions of both denominations.

We think our students will have better discussions with slightly larger classes than are currently enrolled in the RE program. For this reason we are recruiting students from outside of our own congregation, from other UU churches and friends of congregation members, etc. If you know of any 10<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> graders or 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders who would benefit from the OWL program, and whose parents' views are likely to be consistent with UU principles and attitudes on sexuality, please let the parents know about these classes and encourage them to contact the instructors for additional information (or pass information on to us).

For grades 4 and 5 the parents should attend an introductory parent meeting at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> to learn about the curriculum and to understand why sexuality education is critically important at this age. At the parent meeting we will schedule one mandatory orientation for students and parents and 8 weekly classes (tentatively one Saturday AM and 8 Monday evenings, starting in January). Please contact our certified instructors Matt Mathis ([mathis@psc.edu](mailto:mathis@psc.edu), 412-654-7529) or Susan Goodis ([sgoodis@hotmail.com](mailto:sgoodis@hotmail.com), 724-325-8048).

For grades 10 – 12 there is a mandatory orientation session for parents, scheduled for Sunday, December 11, 2005, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Course materials and accompanying video will be reviewed, and written permission from the participant's parents is required prior to enrollment. At this point we're planning for the 12 sessions to be held basically every other Sunday, starting in January 2006, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Please contact our certified instructors Maureen McHugh ([mcmchugh@IUP.edu](mailto:mcmchugh@IUP.edu), 724-733-3620) or Gerard Katilius ([KarenLGerard@aol.com](mailto:KarenLGerard@aol.com), 724-327-6321) to confirm your child's enrollment, or for any questions about the program.

All meetings and classes will be at the East Suburban Unitarian Universalist Church on Sardis Road in Murrysville.

Parents, educators, and communities all face the challenge of creating environments that support and nurture positive sexual health. Young people need sexuality education programs that model and teach caring, compassion, respect, and justice. Thank you for supporting this holistic program, that moves beyond the intellect to address attitudes, values, and feelings that youth have about themselves and the world.

## *Barter Board*

If you have items to trade/sell, or have needs, you can post to the Barter Board.

The Board is located in the RE hallway on the Community Bulletin Board. To use, fill out a card (available on the Barter Board itself) describing your item or need, then pin it up in the appropriate column of the Barter Board.

Want your item listed in the weekly newsletter? Fill out an extra copy of the card and give it to Leona Dunnett, put it in the Secretary's mailbox, or e-mail the info to Leona at [secretary@esuuc.org](mailto:secretary@esuuc.org).

## *Congregational Committees*

### **Committee – Chair (email)**

Aesthetics – Jean Robl and Maureen Lilly Building and Facilities – Jim Osborne Caring & Concerns – Maria Luczkow ( <a href="mailto:caring@esuuc.org">caring@esuuc.org</a> ) Committee on Ministry – open Community – Kate Codd-Palmer Finance – Chris Priano Landscaping – Laurie Montgomery Membership – open	Music – Alan Halperin Religious Education – Kate Zingarelli Signs and Symbols – Leona Dunnett Social Enrichment – open Drumming – Jen Trout Osborne ( <a href="mailto:drumming@esuuc.org">drumming@esuuc.org</a> ) Sunday Programs/Celebrations – Brian Ogle Welcoming Congregation – Matt Mathis
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## *Calendar*

Wed. Dec 7	Board Meeting – 7:30 pm at the church
Sat. Dec 3	OWL Parents Meeting (Grades 4-5) – 8:30 am at the church
Sat. Dec 3	Labyrinth workshop – 12 noon at the church Labyrinth meditation – tentatively 5:30pm at the church
Sat. Dec 3	Christmas Play Rehearsal – 2 pm at the church
Sun. Dec 4	Choir Practice – 9:30 am at the church: “Come Together ” (#)
Sun. Dec 4	Youth Group – 6 pm at the church
Fri. Dec 9	Movie Night: “Jesus Christ Superstar” – 8 pm at the church
Sun. Dec 11	Quartet Practice (TBD) – 9:30 am at the church
Sun. Dec 11	OWL Parents Meeting (Grades 10-12) – 4-6 pm am at the church
Tue. Dec 13	Membership Committee Meeting – 7 pm at the church
Sun. Dec 18	Youth Group – 6 pm at the church

## *Newsletter Deadlines*

January 2006 newsletter deadline: **December 16**

**SPECIAL FRIDAY due date**, so newsletter editor can celebrate Christmas :-)

Please email your articles to [newsletter@esuuc.org](mailto:newsletter@esuuc.org) or call Marianne at (724) 325-1548 and leave a message with your news, stories, and other information.

## *Get the Weekly Email News*

If you would like to receive a weekly email that includes items not in the newsletter and reminders of upcoming events for the week, please send an email from the address you would like subscribed to [esuuc\\_news@esuuc.org](mailto:esuuc_news@esuuc.org). You can also send a message to that address if you would like it included in the weekly email announcement to the congregation. If the message can't wait for the weekly announcement, please contact Leona at [secretary@esuuc.org](mailto:secretary@esuuc.org). No attachments please.