

THE COMMUNITARIAN

COMMUNITY UNITARIAN CHURCH AT WHITE PLAINS

Sunday Services 10:15 am Religious Education 10:00 am Accessible to the Handicapped

DECEMBER 2011



Community Unitarian Church
468 Rosedale Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605
Founded 1909

The Rev. Benjamin Maucere
Interim Minister

Lara K-J Campbell
Director of Religious Education

Liliana Keith
Church Administrator

Adam Kent
Music Director

Lisa Meyer
Choir Director

The Rev. Deb Morra
Community Minister
in Association with CUC

For more information
about CUC:

www.cucwp.org
Email: info@cucwp.org
914.946.1660

Communitarian Deadline for
January Edition:
Sunday, December 18

Submit information to
Emily Economou, Editor
emily.economou@gmail.com

In the Interim ...

The days grow shorter and light is less; the winter holidays are upon us. The outdoor decorations come out, the air is scented with pine and baking, and music everywhere invites memories and yearnings.

This is also the time when a million seductive images attest that this time is all about spending and getting and having *things*. May we see beyond them. May the true spirit of this time be awakened in our hearts.

With Solstice, the most ancient of the holidays, may we celebrate this time of darkness and renew our wonder at the turning of the seasons.

Hanukkah, the miracle of lights, reminds us of the struggles of oppressed people for liberation. May we pray that contemporary Jews and Palestinians be liberated from hatred and violence.

With Kwanza, we are reminded of the ongoing American struggle against the oppression of racism. May this holiday affirm for us all the value of the individual in community.

And from Christmas, may we be reminded that the holy breaks through in unexpected ways, in the most ordinary times and places.

May this be a time when we reach out to one another through the cold and the darkness; a time when we are more aware of the needs of the poor; a time for the comforts of home and the pleasure of friends.

Do something special! Do something for yourself. Do something for someone you love. Do something for someone you don't even know!

Let us all do something to awaken within us the spirit of the holy, manifest in love, hope, peace, and joy. Let us keep that spirit alive, and may it carry us safely through the holidays and throughout the New Year.

Happy Holidays.

Yours in faith, Benjamin

December 4 *Angels from Montgomery* The Rev. Benjamin Maucere. A reflection on events that took place in Montgomery, Alabama fifty-six years ago tomorrow.

December 11 *A Thing with Feathers* The Rev. Benjamin Maucere. For many, the holiday season is not all comfort and joy. What are our sources of hope and strength in life's transitions?

December 18 *Multigenerational Service* DRE Lara Campbell. A homily for all ages with the wildly popular "RE-enactment" of the story of the birth of Jesus.

Saturday December 24 *Christmas Eve Services* 5:30 PM. The Rev. Benjamin Maucere. Join us for the warmest service of the year, brightened by candles, readings, carols and special music.

December 25 *Christmas Day* The Rev. Benjamin Maucere. Join us for a circle service by the fireplace. We invite you to bring readings to share.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

"There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about"

- Margaret Wheatly

Have you been into Fellowship Hall to see the time line and personal history thoughtfully, gently and sometimes painfully, built through our two workshops with Benjamin? I have found myself wandering into Fellowship Hall time and again to look at it. Each post-it note represents an individual CUC story, but taken as a whole, it is "our" story of CUC.

As we settle into the church year, things are not quite as frenetic as the open weeks. There is time to center ourselves, just as when Benjamin asks us to put our feet flat on the floor, sit up tall and breathe deeply. I feel a power beginning to move in the congregation – small things... an old-time friend deciding it is finally time to sign the membership book... a devoted member spontaneously increasing his financial support... a long missed face suddenly appearing again... the beginnings of our Coachman Family Shelter outreach program getting some traction... a new visitor and an old friend who both buy auction tickets for the first time... the feeling of wholeness and warmth

on Sunday mornings... people saying "yes" with a smile and a twinkle in their eye.... It feels to me like we are slowly turning the corner, as we work through our shared past in preparation for an exploration of who we are and where we are going.

We are a strong community and as we take care of ourselves, let us also take the time to remember that in these difficult times there are many among us, both within the CUC family and in the larger community, who need someone to extend a helping hand. No matter what we usually do to celebrate the season, we can reach a little further by making a donation to the food pantry, supporting a family temporarily staying at the Coachman by filling a child's wish list to Santa, or picking up an extra gift as we move through holiday displays so an incarcerated mom at Bedford Correctional Facility has something to give her own child at Christmas.

I hope you are experiencing with me this power of discovering what we care about most here at CUC. We, your Board of Trustees, wish you and yours a peaceful holiday season.

*In Community-
Janet Press, Board*

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

I have been asked to lead the worship service on ***Sunday December 18th***, and I am honored to be working with Elissa Schuler-Adair, Randy Marshall, and Pam Cucinell to create this multigenerational service. Although I will be with you for a few more Sundays and the Christmas Eve service, this will be the last time that I lead Sunday service in the sanctuary.

For the past year, I have been engaged in discussions with my colleagues and attended a few workshops about the concept of multigenerational worship. This term is used to recognize that in our congregations there is often a wide spectrum of ages present—from the infant to the elder. We represent different stages and ages in our faith journeys, and multigenerational worship provides a wonderful opportunity to learn from one another.

I am excited to be experimenting with this style of worship. The choir will sing, Adam Kent and Jason Block will play music, and I will offer a homily for all ages. We will round the service out with the wildly popular “RE-enactment” of the story of the birth of Jesus, giving all who wish to do so the chance to participate.

I look forward to being with you and your families as we celebrate the “Simple Gifts” of the season together.

Lara Campbell, DRE

Religious Education Council

The holidays have begun, and there is no shortage of family activities at CUC in the coming month:

Dec 4 – Deck the Halls – Come to this annual party to make holiday decorations for the sanctuary following RE classes.

Dec 4 and 11 – Craft Fair – Help support the RE’s social action project at the Wolf Conservation Center by visiting the RE table at the CUC Craft Fair and purchasing a wolf calendar.

Dec. 18 – Multigenerational morning worship service lead by Lara Campbell, Pam Cucinell, Randy Marshall and Elissa Schuler-Adair.

There will be childcare provided at the services on December 24 and 25 and January 1.

On a separate note, I am pleased to announce that our youth advisor, ***Annie Gonzalez***, has agreed to become a part-time RE Coordinator upon Lara’s departure for the remainder of the church year. For those of you who don’t already know Annie, she is a seminary student and has served at CUC since September 2010. We are fortunate that she is familiar with CUC and has worked with Lara over the past year.

Annie will keep the RE program organized week-to-week, and be involved with certain critical functions of RE such as children’s worship and Coming of Age. Lara, Annie, and the RE Council will work together over the coming month to ensure a smooth transition.

Happy holidays!

- Robin Rocchi, RE Council Chair

The “Endowment”

From time to time, you have heard people talk about the “Endowment”, as in “we are taking money out of the Endowment to pay for furnace repairs.” This is a topic that can be complicated, especially from the investment or financial perspective, but this article will only deal with the basics: What is the Endowment, Where did it come from and What is the current status?

What is the Endowment?

The Endowment is the name used for money that has been given to CUC over the years and has not been used to fund ongoing operating expenses. It is comprised of three funds: the largest portion is in a general fund, the Music Fund and the Building Fund. In an ideal world, CUC would not use more than the investment income from the Endowment to fund operating expenses, and withdrawals of principle would be few and far between and primarily cover unexpected “rainy day” expenses.

Where did it come from?

The source of the Endowment is the generosity of previous CUC members, many of whose names have been lost to time. Still a few major, recent contributors provide great examples. The Music Fund came from Hans Hopf, who left money to CUC with the instruction that the income be used to enhance CUC’s music program. Currently, this money supports the professional singers and other musicians who add so much to our worship services. Harry Moore and Joe Hartog each left money which is held in the Building Fund. Harry Moore was a long time member of CUC who met his second wife, Martha Bennett Moore, here at CUC. He and Martha were married by Reverend Shannon Bernard – one of the last marriages she performed. Harry and Martha were both active congregation members. Harry had chaired the board of trustees at one time and led the Action for Social Concerns Committee for many years. Martha was also active on ASC and ably represented UUs at the United Nations. Joe Hartog was also a devoted, long time CUC member. Joe fled World War II, losing everything he had. He made his way to our area and was ultimately a successful businessman. Joe, among others, generously provided the money needed for CUC to acquire the current church site. Without him among others, we would not have the beautiful property and sanctuary we enjoy today.

What is the current status of the Endowment?

The last fiscal year and this are far different from previous years. Currently, total withdrawals for these two years are expected to be about \$200,000. This is far above the usual \$30,000 or so per year that we generally use to fund CUC operations.

For the last fiscal year and this, we are facing significantly increased expenses related to staff transitions. Under no circumstances is this meant to suggest in any way that money measures, or is equal to, a staff member’s worth to CUC. The example just summarizes a simple fact of CUC life and our daily lives: there are financial consequences of choices, including staff changes. We have faced several transitions over the past two years.

In addition to these transition expenses, we faced other unexpected expenses this fiscal year as we often do, including repairs to the CUC roof and to the parsonage. We are in the process of getting plans and quotes to replace three of the many furnaces. The total staff costs beyond the historical for this fiscal year and last, together with the repairs (other than the furnaces) are expected to total about \$60,000 over both the last fiscal year and this one.

Where does that leave the Endowment?

The Endowment will be down significantly when we start our new fiscal year in July 2012. Below are the Endowment fund totals (excluding the building and music funds) for this year. All numbers are rounded.

As of 7/1/11 [First day of this fiscal year]: \$956,600

As of 10/31/11 [Fiscal Year to Date]: \$800,000

Total withdrawals since 7/1/11: \$101,000

Anticipated additional withdrawals through 6/30/12: \$66,000

Anticipated Endowment Value on 6/30/12: \$755,000

(estimate assumes no gifts, approx. 3% return and additional withdrawals made evenly on 12/31 and 3/31)

In addition to the withdrawals, market volatility can also impact the Endowment, but at this time the far greater impact comes from the large withdrawals. For more information on investments and volatility impacts, or even if you want more precise figures, contact Drew Swiss, CUC’s treasurer or Finance Committee members (Chris Kortlandt, Chair).

What can you do?

Please talk to some of our long time church members. Many have a number on their name tags showing how many years they had been here on our 100th anniversary, two years ago. Thank them for their church building efforts, the Endowment money and ask about how it was done.

Thank you, Catherine Kortlandt

Midnight Run Saturday December 3rd



Our next run is Saturday December 3rd. There is a sign-up sheet at church or send an email to davidbf_schuler@yahoo.com. As always, your help in providing supplies and/or volunteering is much appreciated. And as we head into the colder months, it seems all the more essential to help those living on the streets.

Thanks! - David Schuler

Holiday Arts & Crafts Sale Fundraiser

Dec 4th & 11th
following service

Gifts for Teachers, Friends, Family
& of course Yourself!
Tell your Friends

Contact Barbara Youngman for more information
at bvy1948@yahoo.com.



Deck The Halls

Sunday, December 4
following the service

The holidays are fast approaching! Join us after the service and help decorate our sanctuary for the season. After a light brunch in Fellowship Hall, we'll make decorations and take them to the sanctuary.

Are you new to CUC?
Want to meet some other people?
Sunday December 11th
Meet Rev. Benjamin in his Study
after services to learn more
about UU and CUC membership.

Poinsettias —



Friday,
December 9th

In December the Focal Area of our sanctuary will again be decorated with poinsettias given in gratitude for happy occasions in our lives and in memory of loved ones.

If you would like to contribute toward this beautiful display (plants are \$10 each), send your check to the church by **December 9**. Checks should be made out to the church with the memo "poinsettia". Please add a note indicating the person or occasion you want to honor or remember. For more information, contact Church Administrator Liliana Keith at admin@cucwp.org or 946-1660 ext 2.

PLAYREADING GROUP

All Readings are at CUC at 7:30 PM.
Come read, or just listen.

December 12 "Driving Miss Daisy" by Alfred Uhry,
led by Heidi Anderson.

Think you've heard *The Messiah*?
Listen again!
There's a reason this brilliant composition is
heard across the globe each year.

Handel's Messiah,
Saturday, December 17, 7 pm

CUC Choir &
Chamber Orchestra
at CUC

Suggested donation: \$20, seniors & students \$10



KWANZAA
Wednesday, December 28

5:00 p.m.
Sponsored by CUC
At the
Thomas H. Slater Center
2 Fisher Court
White Plains, New York 10601

Caring & Sharing... If any-
one knows of another among us
who is in need of a caregiver
from our Caring & Sharing Cir-
cle, throughout December con-
tact Bobbi Collins at 761-5280,
or Barbara Mair at 769-7186.

A photograph of a smiling woman with dark hair, wearing a white shirt, holding a white mug with both hands. The mug has a blue stripe. The background is blurred.

Opportunities for Giving

'Tis the season to give thanks for what we have been fortunate to receive and to give generously.

THE FOOD PANTRY

The food pantry provides food to needy families year round and distributes special food for Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. Cash and food donations are accepted on an on-going basis. Checks may be sent to the Ecumenical Food Pantry, P.O. Box 2037, White Plains, NY 10602. We always have a bin in our lobby for donations of non-perishable food items. Or contact Vicky Van Wert at 937-4758.

TOYS FOR CHILDREN OF INMATES :

December 4 Deadline

BEDFORD HILLS CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Please buy an appropriate gift (for children of all ages) and bring it unwrapped on December 4. The children's wish list includes: Dolls (dolls of color appreciated), Infant & Toddler Toys and Clothing (size newborn and up), Board Games, Arts & Crafts kits and supplies, Teenage Items, sports equipment, etc. We may not accept: Clothing in blue, black, orange or gray, toy guns, knives, or any other items that promote violence.

TOILETRIES, SOCKS, MEN'S UNDERWEAR

Items will be collected all through December for deliver to local shelters. Underwear should be L or XL.

GIFTS FOR CHILDREN :

December 18 Deadline

AT THE COACHMAN FAMILY CENTER IN WHITE PLAINS

Information indicating age, gender and choice of gift for each child will be available December 4 and 11. Please sign up for a family group, buy appropriate gifts and bring the wrapped gifts to the church by December 18. Mark gifts clearly with room number and child's name.

THE MITTEN TREE:

Mittens, gloves, hats and scarves for all ages and in all sizes will be collected through December.

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

Each month I have been writing about General Assembly GA 2011, but this month I would like to look forward to GA 2012. The next GA will be called Justice GA and will focus on congregations and their social justice work. Many of the workshops planned will provide the skills we need to do justice work in our communities as well as celebrate and share the justice work we already do.

The UUA has a blog about immigration justice called Cooking Together. All congregations are encouraged to contribute to this blog. "Through the Cooking Together Project, people of all ages who are passionate about immigration justice are invited to share, create and adapt materials to help congregations faithfully consider and respond to one of the major issues of our time, whether or not they will be sending delegates to Phoenix for GA 2012". So check out the blog as often as you can and share what you have read with others in our congregation.

<http://immigrationjustice.blogs.uua.org/>

Feel free to contact me anytime at about UUA matters: Denise Tomlinson ptmom@prodigy.net.

- Denise Tomlinson, Denominational Affairs

CUC and the Coachman Center

Thanks to all who participated in November's Coachman Center event! The overall evening was a success, and we look forward to continuing to grow the program. Of note, we've had a relationship with the Coachman Center for over 12 years through our holiday gift collection (see "*Opportunities for Giving*"). Here's a brief update:

Adult Discussion Group "Stress Less" We had a fantastic session helping to "destress" a small group of women residents with some breathing exercises, light massage and meditation techniques. The team provided delicious and healthy snacks which were a big hit.

Kids' Craft "Hand Turkeys" Our team worked with about ten Coachman kids who had a blast pasting feathers onto their Thanksgiving hand turkeys! Some of the children enjoyed the company so much that they stayed after for some reading, and playing with toys. (See photos below.)

Going Forward

Adult Discussion Group We have sessions planned for Dec. 10th on preparing for the G.E.D. exam, and a session planned for Jan. 10th on Budgeting/Saving. We are hoping to run sessions next year on mending, healthy foods, tips for kids' success in school, communicating/ expressing emotions and spa night.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Dec. 10th 11am & Jan 10th 6:30pm – snack providers for adult sessions, members of kids' craft team.

Dec. 29th 2pm(tent.) – chaperones for kids' trip to Greenburgh Nature Center.

To be included in future updates or to volunteer please contact:

Johanna Bauer 636-1047 johbauer@msn.com

Karen Schmitt 921-3647 schmitt8@verizon.net



December's recipient for 25% of the *Sunday Offertory* is the church **Community Outreach Project** which is working with a family shelter program at the Coachman Family Center in White Plains. Current projects include instructional events for adults and conducting field trips for children. To learn more, contact Johanna Bauer, johbauer@msn.com or Karen Schmitt, schmitt8@verizon.net.

Please Support the RE Children's Social Action Project!

One of the most important things we can do for our children is to teach them how to live our principles. One way we can do that is to support their social action projects! Every year, our children select two social action projects to work on. The first project they are chose to support this year is the...

Dec 4 & 11



The Wolf Conservation Center promotes wolf conservation by teaching about wolves, their relationship to the environment, and the human role in protecting their future. The center is the preeminent facility in the eastern United States for the captive breeding and pre-release of endangered wolf species.

Our children have volunteered to sell beautiful 2012 Wolf Calendars to raise money for the center's important work.

If we sell 50 calendars, an Ambassador Wolf will visit the children here at CUC in February to help us learn more about these beautiful creatures! Please help the children reach this goal and participate in this exciting and educational experience. If every CUC family buys just one calendar, we will meet our goal easily.

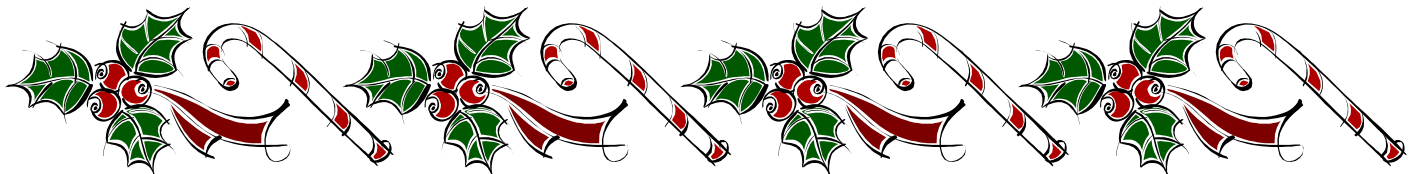
Please keep these calendars in mind as you do your holiday shopping - they are a wonderful "gift with a purpose." You can visit nywolf.org to learn more about the organization.

Do you want to buy a calendar and support the RE Children's Social Action Project?

Where: The CUC Craft Fair

When: Sunday December 4th and Sunday December 11, after services.

Thank you in advance from the children and the Wolves!



Over \$30,000 raised at the Cartoons, Comics, & Capes Auction, Saturday, November 19th. Thank you everyone for your generous support!!!

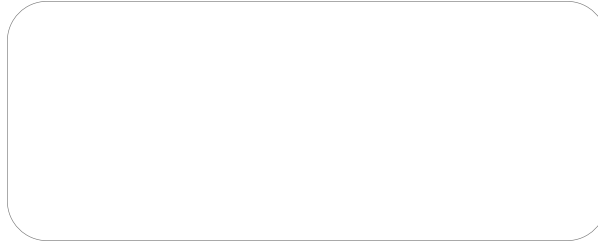
For the website, please send photos to Emily.economou@gmail.com, or leave prints in the newsletter office mailbox.



~ December 2011 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 Midnight Run 8p-2a
4 8:45a-9:45a Choir Rehearsal (SANC) 8:45a-10:15a Child Care (32), 10a-11:30a Rel. Ed 10a-10:25a Children's Service (FH) 10:15a-11:45a Worship/Coffee Hour 11:15a-12:45p Craft Sale (SANC) 11:30a-2p Deck the Halls (FH\,KTCH) 11:45a-1:15p In the Spirit of Truth (41)	5 7p-8p Tai Chi (FH) 7:30p-8:45p Spanish Conversation Circle (44) 7:30p-8:30p Play Reading Group (11)	6 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal (SANC\,24)	7 7:30p-9p Program Council (41)	8 11:30a-1p Science and Spirituality (FA)	9	10
11 8:45a-10:15a Child Care (32) 10a-11a Mentor Orientation (41) 10a-11:30a Rel. Ed 10a-10:25a Children's Service (FH) 10:15a-11:45a Worship/Coffee Hour 11:15a-12:45p Craft Sale (SANC) 11:30a-12p New to CUC (Study)	12 7p-8p Tai Chi (FH) 7:30p-8:45p Spanish Conversation Circle (44) 8p-9p Play Reading Group (41)	13 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal (SANC\,24)	14 7:30p-9:30p Board of Trustees (41)	15	16 6p-9p Dress Rehearsal Winter Concert (SANC\FH\,KTCH)	17 5:30p-8:30p Winter Concert Rehearsal (SANC) 7p-10p Winter Concert , Handel's Messiah 
18 Communitarian Deadline 8:45a-9:45a Choir Rehearsal (SANC) 10:15a-11:45a Multi-Generational Worship/Coffee Hour 11:45a-12:45p Fun Facts (SANC) 2p-3p Mentor/Youth meetings (RE Lobby)	19 7p-8p Tai Chi (FH) 7:30p-8:45p Spanish Conversation Circle (44) 8p-9:30p Finance Committee (41)	20 7:30p-9:15p Choir Rehearsal (SANC\,24) 7:30p-9p Worship Assoc. Committee (41)	21 7:30p-9p RE Council (44)	22 10a-11a COMMUNITARIAN mailing (FA) 11:30a-1p Science and Spirituality (FA)	23	24 4p-5p Choir Rehearsal (SANC) Christmas Eve Service , 5:30 
25 10a-11:30a Child care 10:15a-11:45a Worship/Coffee Hour (SANC)	26 7:30p-8:45p Spanish Conversation Circle (44) 7p-8p Tai Chi (FH)	27	28 5p-6p Kwanzaa Celebration- Thomas H. Salter Center (Petra)	29	30	31

COMMUNITY UNITARIAN CHURCH
468 Rosedale Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605



If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, write 'refused' across your address and return it unopened. No postage is required.

LOOKING FORWARD...

Happy New Year!

Please join us for **Sunday Service** on New Years Day. "New Beginnings" led by Jennifer Lewis and Jeff Tomlinson.

Annual Coat Drive

The coat drive will take place early in the new year. Please save used coats and sweaters, especially men's and unisex ones, for the coat drive. It will be timed to take place before the first Midnight Run of 2012.



For latest news and updates go to our website at www.cucwp.org.
To stop receiving a hardcopy of this newsletter and to start receiving email announcements instead, please send an email to admin@cucwp.org.