

Searching Learning Connecting Serving
The Edmonton Unitarian

December 2017, Vol 58 No. 11



“The Gifts of Presence”

December 3

“Chalica”

UCE Children and Youth

The RE & Youth will be hosting a service and giving you a crash course into this unique UU holiday! We will be singing Chalica songs and exploring our UU faith. Chalica information books will be available by donation. *Chalica is a uniquely UU holiday dreamed up by Darlene Marshall in 2005. So, what is Chalica and when it is celebrated? Chalica is a week long holiday, during which we honor and celebrate our seven Unitarian Universalist principles. Those who celebrate Chalica spend each day reflecting on one principle—putting it into practice through their words and deeds.* <https://www.facebook.com/events/146566299402163/>

December 10

“Wisdom of the Moon”

Chorealis

Amidst the glitter, glam and bright lights of the holiday season, what lessons might the dark tranquility of the moon hold for us? Join us for a luminous mixture of carols and lessons with a lunar theme. Congregational Conversation after the service. (See inside). <https://www.facebook.com/events/296510987530284/>

December 17

“Mitten Tree Service”

Rev. Brian J. Kiely, Lauren Kay, DRE

Join us for our annual family Christmas celebration of stories and readings and Carols. If there has been a new baby in your family or extended family we will light special candles to welcome them to the world. The highpoint, as always, will be decorating the Mitten Tree with scarves, socks, hats and mittens. These will be given to the Boyle Street Community Services for distribution to those who really need them. **Soup Sunday will follow the service.** <https://www.facebook.com/events/354569418326128/>

Saturday, December 23, 6:30 p.m.

“Blue Christmas”

Rev. Brian J. Kiely

This annual service is offered for those who have tough times with the Holidays. Not everyone has joyful memories from childhood, while others are mourning losses this year. This is a quiet service of readings, reflection and candle lighting. We make room to touch and honour the pain so many feel in hopes of finding solace if not outright joy. The service is followed by a free supper of homemade soups, pies and bread served up by willing volunteers. Everyone is most welcome. <https://www.facebook.com/events/384637545313047/>

December 24, 10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

“Christmas Eve Celebration”

Rev. Brian J. Kiely

It is important to have the church open every Sunday morning for those who need it, so we will offer two similar, simple Christmas Eve services, joyful reflections on the theme of “Gifts of Presence”. <https://www.facebook.com/events/729175273958817/>

December 31

"Reflections on 2017"

John Pater

Join me in a reflective service where we'll look back at the top stories of our lives in 2017. We'll share the personal, the cultural (books, movies, music) and the news stories that impacted our lives in the year past. <https://www.facebook.com/events/503944079982741/>

Ministerial Musings



"Ms. Irreverence" performed at the October Dragging Youth Series.

It's been quite an autumn around the Church, hasn't it? Our child and youth programs have been growing. There have been lots of new faces and an uptick in Sunday attendance. Our building is hopping with four choirs and an orchestra using it as well as several chefs making use of our kitchen. There is a concert soon with our own Erin Van Der Molen-Pater and friends. We had a successful adult program series on Living and Dying. Adult OWL has started again. There have been pot-lucks and parties and a Youth sleepover. *Dragging Youth*, a co-sponsored event, grows stronger each month. Religion on Tap gets a steady turn out each month. There have been clothing drives and the Child Haven dinner. We are looking forward to a Seniors' Christmas Lunch in early December, always a popular event. Chalice Circles are forming for new participants again, Social Justice has been active and we have our Soup Sundays. Our media presence is being extended by a revitalized Communications Committee helping support all of these events.

In October, several of us attended the CUC Regional Fall Gathering in Calgary. The keynote speaker, Rev. John Pentland spoke on what change happened in the United Church he serves that grew from 60 to 600 members. The Board has been reviewing his book "Fishing Tips" and are starting to implement some of his ideas like the three minute "Community Conversations" with one another in the service. More will come, though I take comfort in noting we are already doing some of the things he suggests. We are not a congregation afraid of change, though we often like to do it slowly.

All of which is a long and drawn way to say things have been going well around here. There is new energy and new people becoming involved in leadership. Are we thriving yet? Matter of opinion, I guess, but we certainly are not dwindling. I think we are on the right track.

Here's hoping that you have a lovely and relaxing holiday season and that we all regather willing to keep the energy and the light growing.

See you in Church,
Brian

Join us for a Congregational Conversation on December 10th

In November we experimented with having the children in for the majority of the service. Now it's time to evaluate. The goal was to have the children feel more part of the Sunday morning community, to give RE leaders a chance to attend more of the service, and a chance for families to share Unitarian experience.

What did you think? We would like to hear what worked, what didn't and we want to hear from everyone with a viewpoint. We will meet in the Sanctuary right after service. Grab a coffee and come back in to chat.



Religion on Tap



December is a month that starts busy and gets busier. So Brian has decided to make our monthly pub night program “Religion on Tap” earlier, on Tuesday, December 12th. Stop by if you are not too overwhelmed for an early holiday cup of cheer. Metro Billiards, 10250 106 St starting at 7 p.m. <https://www.facebook.com/events/329972630813902/>

Board Update

Your UCE Board met on November 8, 2017. Our Rental Committee has formulated a new Rental Schedule for consistency of rental rates. The board is discussing Rev. Dr. John Pentland’s book “Fishing Tips” for ideas to keep our congregation vibrant. If you would like to speak on a particular topic, kindly contact President Karen Mills one week prior to the meeting. The next board meeting will take place on December 13, 2017 a 7:15 p.m.

Treasurer’s Report

I want everybody to know how important our next casino is to the finances of this church. With the casino money we will get next fall, we can pay off our debt. And we really have no other way to do that.

We paid \$1.4 million to buy and renovate our building back in 2004. We have been steadily whittling down that debt ever since, mainly by working casinos. We have \$38,000 of the debt left to pay. The casino of June 12 and 13, 2018 will do that.

We will also have money left over to help pay for the operation of UCE – minister, RE, choir, the heating bill, etc. It costs about \$315,000 to run UCE every year. Donations from members cover slightly more than half that cost; rental income covers much of the rest. But casino money is also very important.

I urge church members to mark the casino dates on their calendar and plan to volunteer, particularly if you haven’t done it before. It’s a very important way you can contribute to the future of UCE. The work is simple; the volunteers are fun; and you get free food. I will be there, as usual.

Susan Ruttan, Treasurer ruttans@shaw.ca

Introducing: The Travelling Chalice Kit!



Each week we light a chalice in church, but few of us do it at home, even for special events. The Travelling Chalice is a new idea for us where families (of one or more) can borrow our kit for a week and explore what the chalice means to them. We will have a sign-up sheet on the credenza so you can book it ahead, or if no one has taken it, note that you have it and it's your for a week.

What's involved? Inside the box you will find a chalice and wax or electric candle (your choice), a lovely traditional Transylvanian Unitarian cloth, a book of meditations, a book with some longer essays on our Principles and a blank journal. You may want to use the chalice during meals or at bedtime or in the morning. You can choose a

reading in the kit or devise something of your own. There are no rules.

In the journal we would encourage you to record how you used the chalice, perhaps write down a reading you found or simply add it to the box. You can sign your entry or not. And if you are one of the first users, you will find a couple of entries as the staff has been taking it out for a test drive. Enjoy!

Brian, Lauren, Janet

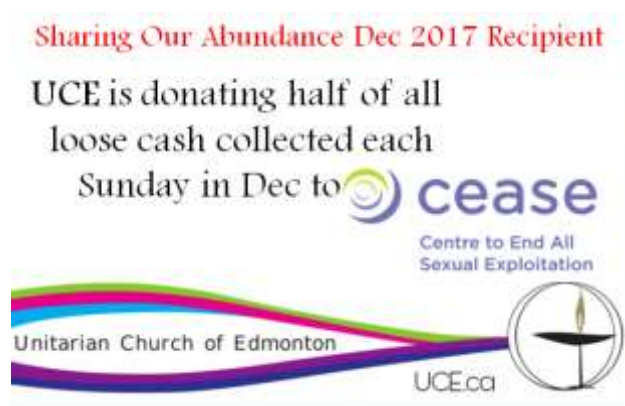
INVITATION TO NEWCOMERS

If you are receiving our monthly *Newsletter* and are not yet a member of the church, but would like to be, please contact [Church Administrator, Janet Polkovsky, Phone: (780) 454-8073 -- chadmin@uce.ca to start the process of becoming a fully-fledged member of our very vibrant community. We look forward to welcoming you.

Amnesty International's Write for Rights Campaign



On December 3rd, before and after the church service: The Social Justice Committee is again sponsoring Amnesty International's Write for Rights Campaign. All materials will be provided to write letters to world leaders and institutions in behalf of prisoners of conscience or human rights crises. Once you have read the brief profile, your letter is quickly written. Experience shows that these letter campaigns are effective and have saved lives.



Sharing Our Abundance

During the month of December, we share our abundance with The Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation (CEASE). CEASE works with community partners to heal the harm of sexual exploitation. Work includes public education, support, bursaries, trauma recovery and emergency poverty relief. Your donation makes a difference in this important area.

History Project Update-Keep your eyes out

Over the next weeks we will be featuring profiles on Sylvia Krogh and Barbara Forbes. Learn more about these long standing members of our congregation on the web site and on the bulletin board by the credenza.

Religious Exploration and Youth

Wow! The youth had a wonderful sleepover on the 18th. Our thanks to Karen Stevenson for hosting an expressive arts workshop. The youth explore their inherent worth and dignity via art and movement. It was a great time. We spent the rest of the evening making dinner together; playing games such as stand up, Ouija, Dungeons & Dragons, and theater improv freeze tag. UU youth bonding and growth was fun for all, even Maria and Lauren.





Unitarian Universalist minister John Morgan said:


People come into our communities looking for a place to belong (intimacy) and a place to seek meaning (ultimacy) about living and dying and the spaces between.


Chalice groups provide a unique opportunity for community members to explore deeper meaning and belonging by:


- Exploration and experimentation with deep personal reflection and listening
- Build a sense of community among the participants
- Create a climate of mutual respect and understanding
- Strengthen the shared experience of being a Unitarian Universalist.
- Fun!


If you would like to join a chalice group for the New Year, sign up in the foyer. There will be a post-church potluck lunch on Sunday January 14th for all interested. We will help form the small groups of 6-10 that will then meet regularly until June. Please sign up by Dec 17. Please contact Scott Harrison at talktoscott@live.ca for more information.

HEART TO HEART


 The indefatigable Lilas Lysne, who is recovering from another surgery, was all dressed up and ready to entertain at bridge when visited at the Grandview Care Centre. How does this elder mentor do that?


 Liz Cloutier fell and broke her collarbone, and is therefore limited from her many activities, which knowing Liz, must be frustrating - Sending hugs from all your friends at UCE, Liz!


 The Ante Meridiem Choir will be singing at Canterbury Court Senior's Residence, where Maurice Bourgoïn's wife Annabelle resides, as do Gordon Ritchie's Aunt Wilma and Uncle Fred. Maurice is a member of the choir, as are 4 other UCE members.

 Our Minister, Brian Kiely, had his debut as Ms. Irreverence at the Dragging Youth event in October. His three daughters performed as well to a good crowd including many UCE folks. The next event will be December 16th:

Dragging Christmas: Santa Claus Is Coming to Town

 Sending greetings to all those who are experiencing the limitations of winter; it takes some time to adjust to the changes in weather. Go slowly, dress warm, walk with a friend, ask for help when you need it, we are all family here!

 If you notice that someone is not at church for a while, you might find time to give them a call and have a phone visit, and maybe even a virtual hug!

 "Our mission is love, our race is human, our faith is in each other" Audrey

National CUC News

- **Motions for 2018 Annual General Meeting:** If your congregation or community is considering submitting a motion to the AGM, all the information you need, including process, timelines and whether a new motion on your topic is necessary, can be found in the article here: [cuc-enewsletter](#)
- **CUC Vision Contests:** Sermon-writing and art contests on our national vision, "As Canadian Unitarian Universalists, we envision a world where our interdependence calls us to love and justice," are opportunities to express your thoughts and creativity on any aspect of the vision. Details here <http://cuc.ca/vision-and-mission/>
- **Tips for Intentionally Inclusive Congregations Link:** suggestions for how to approach that person you haven't met, conversation-generating questions for young adults, helpful signage, and more on how to help newcomers feel welcome and included: [tips-for-intentionally-inclusive-congregations](#)
- **'Love Will Guide Us:'** A statement from the CUC National Voice Team on racial intolerance and hate: [love will guide us.](#)

Security Concerns

The security camera system is now operational and the feed is being displayed on a monitor in the Administrator's Office. **The cameras are only positioned in and displaying public areas in and outside of the church.** A privacy flap has been added to the Keeler Hall camera to cover it for event privacy concerns. Additional cameras will be added to cover the front areas where the tenants are.



I am happy to report that the keys have been found and returned to the Office. The alarm code for the building has been updated and the old code has been removed. If you are a key holder, please contact the office by telephone for the new code (780) 454-8073. If you would like more information, please contact Mike Keast, Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee at 780-471-0872.

Winter UCE Directory Update



There are a lot of new faces in the church and it's been a good while since the Spring Directory. It's time to update the current directory with our members' and friends' latest information. This new directory will be available to the Church membership and will be sent out by email attachment at a later date. Those that receive their newsletter by mail will have a copy mailed to them. A limited amount of paper copies will be made available from the office.

To update your contact information, you have three choices:

- You can fill out the web form on our website at <http://www.uce.ca/wordpress/membership-update-2017/> the information will be sent to the Administrators' email; it will not be stored on the website.
- You will find a form attached to this month's newsletter. You may fill it out and return it to the Administrators' Office by email or paper copy (I will have enveloped outside my door).
- You can also request a form at the Welcome/Membership Desk on Sundays.



Come – enjoy ritual & refreshments, story & song! The winter solstice is the shortest day and longest night of the year, & marks the return of light; from the deepest darkness, we rejoice to see the days begin to lengthen.

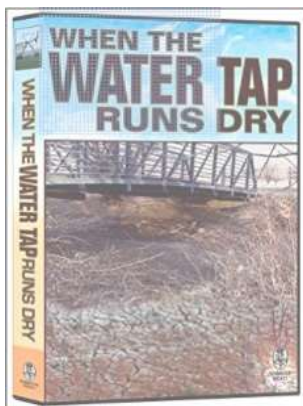
Westwood Unitarian has held a winter solstice celebration every year for 30 years. This is the 10th consecutive year we have held Winter Solstice in the beautiful ground floor atrium at City Hall. It's also the 10th consecutive year the celebration has been led by Reverend Anne.

Come early to be sure of a good seat. This event is very popular. The service lasts from 7:00 until 8:00, & the celebration continues until 9:00 pm. (We are very pleased to have Bliss Baked Goods again this year!)

Westwood fully sponsors this event; each year, all money collected in a free will offering goes to a designated charity. This year, Suit Yourself is the recipient. Suit Yourself is a volunteer driven charity which distributes donated clothing to women in need who are entering or returning to a professional workplace.

Edmonton City Hall fronts onto Sir Winston Churchill Square; if you're using GPS, the post code to enter is T5J 2R7 for more information: [Winter Solstice at City Hall](#)

Social Justice Film Night at Westwood Unitarian.



The regular Monthly film viewing and discussion resumes this month at 7:00 PM on Friday Dec. 1st. This month we feature a documentary focused on water shortages and what can be done to protect and conserve our most valuable natural resource. All are welcomed! Westwood Unitarian Church is located at 11135-65 Avenue NW. <http://www.westwoodunitarian.ca/social-justice-film-night-2/>

Famous UU's



December feels like the perfect time to explore the author of “*A Christmas Carol*”, Charles Dickens (7 February 1812 – 9 June 1870).

“No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.”

“Have a heart that never hardens, and a temper that never tires, and a touch that never hurts.”

“I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.”

There are many fascinating articles written about Charles Dickens and his associations with Unitarianism. Here are excerpts from a few:

“*Charles Dickens and the notion of evil*” By [Susan Jhirad in UU World](#)

“As Unitarian Universalists, we have long debated the religious beliefs of Charles Dickens and how they align with our own. We know that he was born and raised an Anglican, and in 1843, after a visit to America, became a Unitarian. In a letter to his American Unitarian friend Cornelius Felton, he wrote: “I have carried into an effect an old idea of mine and joined the Unitarians, who would do something for human improvement if they could, and practice charity and toleration.”

“*Ebenezer Scrooge’s conversion - Charles Dickens’s novels reflect the central ideas of nineteenth-century Unitarianism*” in [UU World](#) by [Micheal Timko](#)

“Charles Dickens’s famous novel about Ebenezer Scrooge changed the celebration of Christmas into what we think of as traditional today: an occasion to give to those less fortunate and to gather family and friends around laden dinner tables and Christmas trees filled with lights, decorations, and toys. Written shortly after Dickens joined a Unitarian church, *A Christmas Carol* became his most famous novel—and the one most representative of his Unitarian beliefs. “

From [The Canadian Unitarian Council’s website](#):

“He was an admirer of [William Ellery Channing](#) and [Ralph Waldo Emerson](#), and his views on liberal, tolerant, non-sectarian religion, the basic goodness in people, the ‘gospel of the second chance,’ and the desperate need for radical social reform were those of leading British Unitarians of his time.

“The truth of life is love,” he wrote, “and all which negatives love is false.”

I encourage you to read more by clicking on the links, which can be found by clicking on the underlined words in the newsletter.

Spring Is a Long Way Off...



Please mark your calendars! Blue Hawaii is our theme for this congregational dinner on April 14th! Come in your hula skirt, wear your board shorts and come dance the night away in Hawaii!



Thank you to the Communications Committee and their hard work on **Facebook**, **You Tube**, and our new **Twitter** Account. Please also look for links throughout this newsletter. Social Media cannot be successful alone. Every comment, like, share, invite helps us. Please share with your friends and family.

Maintenance Volunteers Needed

The property management volunteers would like to invite anyone to come on in and help out around the church on Wednesdays from about 10 am till 2 pm. Any skill level is welcome and coffee and tea is supplied. Occasionally we even have a lunch supplied.

We also need someone to volunteer to show up before Sunday service and make sure all the entry ways and emergency exits are cleared. If you are able to do one Sunday a month or even one Sunday over the winter please let us know, mikekeast@shaw.ca.



Around Our Church

- **Scented** products such as hair spray, **perfume**, and deodorant can trigger reactions such as respiratory distress and headaches. We thank you for keeping your scents at home.
- **Sermons:** On the YouTube website, <http://www.youtube.com/EdmUnitarian> Need help: Contact Bill Lee billlee@ualberta.net or 780-435-7477
- **Brunch:** Going for brunch after church is a UCE tradition. Want to join? Contact Marge Roche or Jennifer Hinchcliffe at church.
- **Recycling:** We don't have recycling pickup at the church, so we need help with taking blue bags home for home collection or to the Recycle Centre. The bags are in the kitchen and/or social hall
- **Bissell Centre:** All items donated to our church green box in the foyer go to the Bissell Centre Thrift Shoppe on 88st & 118 Ave. There they are sorted, some going to the store, some to various other programs including the Community Closet at 105 Ave & 96 St where they are dispensed for free. Earnings from the Thrift Shoppe support the Community Closet. Also accepted is all bedding and linen with the exception of cushions and pillows, small household items, CD's and videos but no books or tapes.
For further information contact Barbara Forbes 780 439 4553 or Rosemary Falconer 780 472 9287.
- **Pop Cans:** We raise money from returnable bottles, tetra packs etc. donated by members. Drop your contribution in the second storage room (the single door) in Keeler Hall.
- **Food:** If you use our kitchen, clean it up afterward and don't leave any food behind. Public Health Regulations prohibit the storing of perishable food for more than one day
- **Security:** If your committee or groups are meeting after Church hours, please make sure all the exit doors are locked before setting the alarm and leaving. The exits that need to be checked are Keeler Hall and the side door (on the same as the main doors, by the picnic table).

Sunday Volunteer Schedule

Date	Greeter	Usher	Sound Technician	Piano	Coffee
December 3 rd	Marnie Sproule		Marg Booker	Karen Mills	John Turvey
December 10 th	Shirley Edgar	Jeff Bisanz	Shiraz Kay	Chorealis	Clair Horne
December 17 th	Michelle VanDerMolen	Maurice Bourgoïn	Marg Booker	Gordon Ritchie	Clair Horne
December 23 rd			Bill Lee		
December 24 th		Maurice Bourgoïn	Kat Hartshorne		Clair Horne
December 31 st			Bill Lee		Clair Horne

UCE Walking Group Schedule

Walkers carpool from church, leaving at 10 am, or meet at the walk site at 10.20 am. There are often changes to the schedule so if you are not on the email list please call Sheila, 780-454-7581 the day before to confirm the walk.

December 1st	Greenland Garden Centre
December 8th	No walk – UCE Seniors' Lunch
December 15th	Walkers' Christmas Pot-luck in the Social Room at Victoria Plaza (11710-100 avenue- buzz Donna). As there is limited cleaning space, perhaps we should bring out own dishes and utensils, as we have in the past.

Minister's Office Hours

Brian is usually in the office Tuesdays through Fridays from 10 until 2:30. Sometimes community meetings and visits cause him to be away. People dropping by are most welcome, but it's always best to call ahead and check to make sure he is there.

The Administrator's Office will be closed from December 25th to January 1st.

**THE EDMONTON UNITARIAN PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE
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Vol 58 No. 11

Newsletter Submission Deadline is the 20th of every month. Please send your article to chadmin@uce.ca

People Finder

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Religious Exploration Leader: Lauren Kay ucekids@uce.ca	780-454-5816
Church Office: Janet Polkovsky chadmin@uce.ca	780-454-8073
Campus Minister Rev. Anne Barker aebarker@ualberta.ca	780-489-8842
Head Teller: Edwina Madill	780-462-2089
Canvas: Andrew Mills andrew@misc.ca	780-432-0826
Communications Committee: Karen Bilida Unitarian.edmonton@yahoo.ca	
Chaplain Services: Audrey Brooks audbrook@telusplanet.net	780-489-8842
Property Management: Mike Keast	780-497-1303

Membership Update Form

The following information will be used for our church database and directory. Please fill out the entire form so we can update our confidential database. If there is information you do not want published in the directory which is available to members and friends of the church, please tick the don't publish box to the left of that item. Please return this form to the church office. Children's names will not be included.

Adult 1: _____
First name Last name

Adult 2: _____
First name Last name

Phone 1: _____ Phone 2: _____

E-mail 1: _____ E-mail 2: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Province _____ Postal code _____

Child 1: _____
First name Last name

Child 2: _____
First name Last name

Child 3: _____
First name Last name

Child 4: _____
First name Last name

I would like to receive the newsletter (please tick only one):

Electronically Only by post