

CHURCH AND HOME

UNIVERSITY CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



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MERRY CHRISTMAS

Adult Christian Formation Report: Spiritual Development Offerings

Look for the latest *Christian Formation Booklet* that lays out the plan for spiritual development offerings in the winter-spring semester in the next edition of *Church and Home*. Plan ahead to join your community as we gather to encourage each other “in the growth of our minds and spirits.” Responding to your spoken needs, here are two items for your advance planning right now.

First, **most Sundays at 9 a.m.** during the winter-spring months, we will offer a basic course in Christian understanding: the highly acclaimed “*Living the Questions*” video series. We receive frequent inquiries asking for “foundation building” opportunities in our faith, with comments such as “I am so ignorant about the Bible” or “I am really uninformed about the basic convictions we claim to hold” but “I don’t have time for a long course.” Well, this is for you. Watch for details in *Church and Home*, on the church website (www.universityucc.org) and posted on the main hallway “red wall.”

Second, another thing we hear is how little folks know about the United Church of Christ, this very historic and always reforming wider church from which we draw constant enlightenment. Starting on **Jan. 15 on Tuesday evenings**, Greg Turner (who will be teaching United Church of Christ history and theology at Seattle University this winter) begins a ten-week mini-course for those who want to learn “Who We Are Beyond the Local Church: the History, Theology, Polity and Ministry of the United Church of Christ.” This is a serious course with readings required for students taking it for ecclesiastical standing, but it will also work for those who are lay leaders in the congregation with little background in their own tradition who can do less reading and attend fewer times. Let Greg know soon if you are interested at 206-525-8885 or revsturner@aol.com.

—Greg Turner

UCUCC as a Leadership Church

There will be a forum on what it means to be a “Leadership Church” on **Sunday, Jan. 13, 2008**. Together we will explore our role and responsibilities as a large congregation in the University District and in the United Church of Christ, and the characteristics, opportunities, challenges that lie before us to be an effective and faithful congregation. In that context we will also explore the staffing recommendations from the interim advisory committee and long term staffing task force (and affirmed by the personnel board and council) about the staff leadership to carry out our call. This will be an opportunity to learn, ask questions, and better understand the recommended changes and how they will help the congregation live more fully into our call. Food and childcare will be provided. Please plan to attend!

—David Anderson, Business Administrator

Women’s Retreat 2008

Join us the weekend of **Jan. 24-27, 2008** for the Women’s Retreat at Pilgrim Firs. The weekend retreat will begin at **4 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 25** and end before lunch on **Sunday**. The silent retreat will begin at noon on **Thursday, Jan. 24**. All women are welcome. Registration closes **Jan. 4**. The forms are in the church office. For more information, please contact Rebecca Rickabaugh at 206-524-5786 or check the church web site.

Start Thinking of Superfluity

The 2008 Rummage, Collectibles and Plant Sale, also known as Superfluity, will be held **April 10-12, 2008** in Ostrander Hall. We will start accepting items in the first week in Feb. (but not before). If you would like to volunteer or if you have questions, please contact Mary Ellen Smith at 206-525-0494 or makeba1@earthlink.net.

Children and Youth

Elementary News

There will be no elementary Christian education classes held on **Sunday, Dec. 30**. On **Sunday, Jan. 6** please plan to attend an intergenerational Epiphany celebration. Our next elementary Christian education unit will begin on **Jan. 13, 2008**.

Youth News

Dec. 23 9 a.m. Youth Group

Sixth to 12th grade youth are invited to attend youth group at 9 a.m. in the Pilgrim Room. Come to gather with friends and enjoy eating donuts. Hope to see you there!

Dec. 24 5 p.m. Christmas Pageant

Please join us in celebrating Christmas with the annual Christmas pageant. Several youth are participating in this evening's pageant. I hope we will see you there!

Dec. 24 11 p.m. Candlelight Service

Join us at the 11 p.m. Candlelight Service! We will sing carols and light candles in honor of the season. It is a very special service. Hope to see you there!

Dec. 25 Christmas Day

To our youth and families, and our whole church family, *MERRY CHRISTMAS!* May you feel the love of the season. May we all be reminded that Christmas is a time to especially show God's love in the way that we interact with each other. May we give, without expecting to receive. May we give from the heart and not simply with material things. Blessings of peace and joy to you this holiday season and always!

Dec. 30 No Youth Group

No Youth Group! Due to Christmas break, we will not have youth group on the morning of Sunday, Dec. 30.

Jan. 5, 2008 6-9 p.m. Movie Night

The Mentor Program is sponsoring a screening of *Star Wars, Episode IV, A New Hope*, the original Star Wars movie in Ostrander Hall on **Saturday, Jan 5**. A special invitation is extended to all mentors and mentees. Friends, families, youth and adults are invited to join us. (The movie is rated PG). Beverages, pizza and popcorn will be provided. Please bring a healthy snack to share. After the two hour movie, a discussion will follow on the Hero's Journey. Who are the heroes in the movie? What hero's journey do you see in this movie? Other stories? Your own life? For more information or to RSVP, contact Tina Michalak at tinabina5@comcast.net or 206-789-3614.

Jan. 6 9 a.m. Youth Group

Sixth to 12th grade youth are invited to attend youth group at 9 a.m. in the Pilgrim Room. Come to gather with friends and enjoy eating donuts. It'll be great to see you after the Christmas break and hear about how you're doing! Hope to see you there!

A Reminder About Crediting Church Contributions

Here's a reminder from your bookkeeping staff: please help us ensure that your contributions are credited appropriately. You are welcome to combine payments for more than one fund in a single check; we just need to know each time how you would like the donation distributed. Just write the breakdown on the memo line of the check.

As the end of the year approaches, if you would like to check the balance on your pledge, please call the bookkeeping office at the church at 206-524-2322. The Internal Revenue Service requires that for a contribution to be credited in 2007, it must be received in 2007. "Received" means either delivered to the church or postmarked by **Dec. 31**.

There are a variety of ways for you to fulfill your pledge or make a contribution, from online giving to stock donations to periodic autodeuctions on a schedule that works for you. More information is available at <http://universityucc.org/aboutus/stewardship.htm> or, feel free to contact David Anderson, church business administrator at danderson@universityucc.org or 206-524-2322.

Thank you for your contributions, and for your help!
—David Anderson

Come to a Scottish *Ceilidh!*

Save the date of **Saturday, Feb. 9 at 6—9 p.m.** for a traditional Scottish *ceilidh* (the Scottish Celtic word for a party and pronounced "kaylee") celebrating the song, poetry, and life story of Robert Burns. The potluck supper with entertainment will ask for a \$10 donation to benefit Habitat for Humanity. Contact Earl or Carol Hamilton at 206-363-4940 for more information.

A copy of our pastors' weekly schedule is posted in the church office. **For pastoral emergencies**, please call a pastor at **206-541-7984**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. **Please call the church office at 206-524-2322 to report any illness, accident, or other situation of concern in our church family that needs pastoral attention.**

CHURCH AND HOME

Submissions are due before:

Noon, Monday, Dec. 31 (Jan. 13-20 issue)

Noon, Monday, Jan. 14 (Jan. 27-Feb. 3 issue)

Place in *Church and Home* box in the church office, fax to 206-524-0602 or e-mail to:

ChurchandHome@universityucc.org

Our Church Family



Let our Light shine!

My mom pledged every year to the church I grew up in and we got a box of neat little envelopes to put her weekly offering in with the United Church of Christ symbol on it and the correct date of every Sunday **ALREADY WRITTEN ON THE ENVELOPE!!!** So when I joined this church three years ago and first heard calls for pledges, I didn't think twice about saying yes. It was just something UCC churches did. What I wanted to know was: Where are my cool little envelopes?¹

Rather than getting neat envelopes in return for my pledge, I now know that I got something way more valuable: a community. One of the fantastic things about living in a Christian community is enjoying the feeling that, anywhere you go or anything you do, you are being held and supported by the hands of your community, and we are all being held by the hand of God.

In recognition of that, pledging some of what I have to the wider community is one way I try to "pay forward" what God has provided me. The generous support of this community—material and spiritual—flowing out of the love of God, has allowed some wonderful things to happen to me. With the support of this community I was able to do youth ministry for the first time at the Western Regional Youth Event in Colorado Springs. Through the support of this church, I have been held right in the middle of an amazing, enriching, and energizing Young Adults ministry here at UCUC. Your material support to this program was absolutely critical to a successful and very powerful Young Adults retreat last spring.

Most importantly, your support gives me the confidence, strength and affirmation that I need to just be who I am. So, when I am called to pledge to the church, I don't hesitate. I know that my support allows others to find themselves "held" in the wonderful activity of our community. It's my hope and my faith that our shared commitment will give us all the boldness and the strength we need to take love to hard places.

Peace, Brian Gregg

¹*Envelopes are available upon request, Brian! For Brian or anyone else wanting pledge envelopes, just let the office know.*

Please Make Your 2008 Pledge by Jan. 6!

Drop your pledge card in the offering plate any Sunday through Epiphany, mail it to the church office, or pledge online at www.ucucc.org/pledge. YOUR pledge is important to help meet our goal of 100% participation, no matter the size of the gift, and over \$1,000,000 in pledges to bring light and joy to others at home and around the world. **Thank You!**



We Remember

David Benjamin Fleagle

Born: March 23, 1979

Died: November 30, 2007

David Benjamin Fleagle died suddenly of cardiac arrest on Nov. 30, 2007. He is survived by his mother and father, Robert Jr. and Carol, his sister Laura, and his grandfather, Robert. He is also survived by his Uncle John and cousins Anna and Nicholas.

David graduated from Juanita High School in Kirkland, WA. He completed a certificate program in Culinary Arts at Alaska Vocational Technical Institute in Seward, AK. David was nearing completion of the Commercial Baking Program at Lake Washington Technical College.

When not cooking or baking, David enjoyed writing. He had written numerous poems and was working on a fiction mystery novel. He also enjoyed being out in nature, travel adventures of various sorts, cheering on the Mariners, movies, music and hanging out with family, friends, and the family's beloved cat.

David will be deeply missed by his family and good friends. A memorial service was held at University Congregational United Church of Christ on Thursday, Dec. 13, 2007. Condolences may be sent to the family in care of Bob and Carol Fleagle, 10924-159th Ave. NE, Redmond, WA, 98052-2649.

Chris Aagard Won Anderson Scholarship

Chris Aagard has been awarded the 2007 Russell Anderson M.D. Scholarship award. Chris is a sophomore at University of Washington and an accomplished oboe player. He's the third generation of his family to take part in the life of our church.

It is so fitting that Chris won this award because Dr. Anderson was a colleague and good friend of Chris' grandfather, Dr. George Aagaard. Both Dr. Anderson and Dr. Aagaard served University Congregational United Church of Christ in many capacities, including moderator.

—JoAnn Anderson

Join the Intentional Journey Small Group in the New Year

Do you long for an intimate opportunity to deepen and share your spiritual journey with other seekers, believers, and doubters? If so, you are invited to join the Intentional Journey small group (limited to eight) as we gather for prayer, faith-sharing, Bible study, and spiritual reflection. This home-based group will meet **Wednesday evenings from Jan. 30 to March 19**. For more information, contact Susan Fairo at fairos@seattleu.edu or 206-725-3312.

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Visit our web site: www.universityucc.org

Sunday Worship Service

10 a.m.

† December 23

Preacher: Peter Ilgenfritz

Scriptures: Isaiah 7:10-16

Matthew 1:18-25

† December 24

5 p.m.

Christmas Eve Pageant

11 p.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

† December 30

Preachers: Tanya Chartier and

Peter Ilgenfritz

Scriptures: Isaiah 63:7-9

Matthew 2:13-23

† January 6

Preacher: Catherine Foote

Isaiah 60:1-6

Wednesday Service

No Taizé service on Dec. 26



Sunday, December 23

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sermon: Love's Arrival

Text: "Look, the young woman is with child, and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14b

We began this season of Advent by "waiting for love." Now as Christmas is upon us, we prepare ourselves for love's arrival. It is a gift of God, yet like Joseph in our Matthew text, this gift might be one that we do not immediately recognize. Join us on this last Sunday of Advent as we anticipate together the arrival of love in our midst.

Sunday, December 24

Christmas Eve

5 p.m. Christmas Pageant

Celebrate Christmas Eve with our children and youth as they lead us in worship and tell the Christmas story in a new Christmas pageant written by Bob Perkins.

11 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Christmas Eve Meditation is led by Peter Ilgenfritz.

Luke 2:1-20 "Where God Happens"

Celebrate Christmas Eve with a candlelight service of lessons and carols led by our chancel choir.

Church and Home is published biweekly by University Congregational UCC. Editor: Barbara Long

Sunday, December 30

First Sunday After Christmas

Sermon: Singing Out Christmas

We are delighted today that Tanya Chartier will help bring Mary to life in mime as part of this morning's sermon. Tanya and her husband Tim have trained with various schools of mime including master classes with Marcel Marceau. They are delighted to be back at UCUC for their sabbatical year.

Sunday, January 6

Epiphany Sunday

Sermon: Let Our Light Shine

Text: "Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you." Isaiah 60:1

Epiphany is the Sunday in which we are invited to recognize God's light, come into the world. The story from Matthew 2 is the traditional story of sages traveling from the east, following a star. The Isaiah passage is a message of hope. Join us this Sunday as we consider together how God is calling our church to "let our light shine."

The chancel flowers are given by her family in honor of Jean Lawrence, with many thanks to her friends.

As I See It**A Christmas Memory**

By Lee Ferreira

✠ I grew up in a small town in Massachusetts. On the day before Christmas, we gathered at the church to prepare baskets to be distributed to nursing homes and hospitals, and to those who were confined to their homes. Everyone participated: the parents, the grandparents and the children.

In the evening, we met in the village to go caroling. On the years when there was snow on the ground, we went from house to house in a large, straw-filled sleigh that was drawn by two horses. The bells on the harnesses rang rhythmically as the horses' hoofs thumped on the packed snow. And, we sang as we moved through the snow covered streets. The sleigh carried about twelve adults and children. The less adventuresome followed in

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cars. People appeared in doorways and windows when they heard us singing. And, at some of the houses, they offered us cider and cookies.

Afterward, we went to my family's home. Our house stood on a hill that overlooked a pond next to an old grist mill. Most of the adults went inside for hot coffee and cider and muffins and Christmas breads. All of us kids went ice skating on the pond. I have a clear memory of skaters gliding on the moonlit ice; and the warm glow from the windows of our house on the hill. Every year, when Dec. approaches, I remember those Christmas eves in that small town in Massachusetts. And, I realize how fortunate I am to have been a part of the sharing spirit of Christmas.

From the Staff**Waiting Together in Hope**

By Peter Ilgenfritz

✠ "I don't like waiting", the woman told me last week. "I wait anxiously, fretfully. I really don't like to wait. I wish I could do it differently." Her words reminded me of how many of us experience waiting. When it comes right down to it, many of us just don't like it. We don't quite know what to do with ourselves as we are standing in the grocery line, stuck in the traffic jam, waiting for the doctor to call on us. We don't quite know what to do. We fidget. We fuss. We worry. We don't hear where God is in this precious moment and time.

Waiting is a spiritual discipline, an opportunity to practice in our everyday lives the presence of God. Like most disciplines from playing the piano to working out at the gym, we don't always relish what the disciplines in our lives have to teach us in the process of doing them. So it is with waiting. To learn to wait well takes attentiveness to the present, letting go of what we cannot control, and holding to what we are called to trust—the presence and hope of God with us. Yes, all very related to the hope of Christmas.

I have been reminded of the spiritual discipline of learning how to wait as we have been waiting with Don as he recovers from surgery. Last year at this time I was waiting with Dave in the hospital as he recovered from a bike accident. There was not a lot that I or anyone else could actually do. His body needed to rest and heal. The greatest gift he was given was the gift of space and time to do that healing in. So I have been reminded how it is with Don.

And yet there are a few things that Don and Judy really do need. We keep saying it because it is so true—they need our prayers. Last Sunday I told someone that we had been holding them in our prayers. He said, "I know. I have felt them." And you can. I say that from my own experience. You really can feel the presence of a community of prayers with you. It makes all the difference. And we can send cards and notes. That really does help. It makes tangible in another way what we pray for—hope for healing, prayers of remembrance, love and compassion. There is so much that we can't do as we wait with one another in their healing and so much that we can. It is those simple things that feel sometimes so small—prayer and sharing of notes of love and compassion that really make a difference.

This Advent, God, teach us how to wait. To wait patiently and well because we wait in hope, knowing you are at work, your love and peace already present, even as we wait.

Update on Don Mackenzie's Health

Don Mackenzie is through his surgery for an intestinal blockage. Although the surgery was more complex than hoped, and the recovery will likely be a little longer than he—and we—expected, the good news is that he is now healing. He went home from the hospital on Dec 12. Don, Judy, Mary and Alice have continued to feel blessed and upheld by our prayers.

May God's healing presence continue to be felt by Don, and by all who need hope and healing in this season.

The Wider Community

Thank You to the Congregation!

Thank you to all who so generously donated to the Sept. special offering for the Church of Mary Magdalene, Noel House, and Neighbors in Need. Over \$4000 was collected, almost double last year's offering. The three agencies are very appreciative of your gifts.

—Evelyn Crichton
Mission Board

A generous response to the Nov. Special Offering for Hunger Outreach brought in \$3,167. This amount of money will continue UCUC's cash pledges to Emergency Feeding Program and the Beacon Avenue Food Bank through the first half of 2008. The Food Drive brought in many bags and boxes of baby food and formula, canned pineapple, cranberry sauce, evaporated milk, and instant pudding. These items will be added to special holiday bags of food for those in need of emergency food. Although we don't get to see the expressions of gratitude on the faces of recipients, I think that we can all imagine what it feels like to be given food when one is hungry.

Thank you from Hunger Outreach!
—Diane Adam

Hurray for the generosity of this congregation! You gave toiletries and socks in abundance. We were able to share 60 care packages with youth on the streets through Teen Feed, and help replenish the cupboards at the University Churches' Emergency Fund, plus 700 additional pairs of socks have been sent to our church for distribution through Teen Feed and UCEF. Thank you!

—Young Adults, Youth, and Social Action Board

Inspired by Recent UCHA Mission Trip?

Consider joining a Pacific Northwest UCC Conference mission trip to New Orleans. There will be two trips, one in Feb. and one in March. The cost will be approximately \$700. You may register at the N-Sid-Sen website, www.n-sid-sen.org.

Auction to Benefit UCHA

Mark your calendars and save the date for "Festa della Casa" (party celebrating the concept of home), the third annual University Congregational Housing Association (UCHA) dinner and auction on **Saturday, March 29**. Tickets are \$35 per person and will go on sale in Feb. You don't have to be a UCHA member to help with our planning. Contact Roger Morris at rjmseattle@msn.com or 206-595-7700. Meetings are limited but the fun is endless!



Christmas Music Will Delight and Inspire You

With Christmas arriving weeks and even months early via commercials, sales and the ubiquitous strains of "Silver Bells" and "White Christmas," holding a worshipful space for Advent

becomes more and more challenging. I come from the Episcopal tradition which tends to emphasize penitential self-examination, so Advent and Lent hold profoundly meaningful places in my heart. This year, it seemed fitting to approach the season with a sense of motion and action—as well as contemplation.

We welcome back on **Dec. 23** the Pacifica Tuba Quartet, which will play during church service and provide festive holiday music in the narthex afterward. Led by church member Terry Paananen, the tubas will play the prelude, "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" and offertory "On The Day Earth Shall Ring." The service also features the choir in a gorgeous *a cappella* anthem, the Franz Biebl "Ave Maria." What an amazing lead-in to our Christmas celebration!

Don't miss our church youth on **Dec. 24** in an original pageant written and directed by Bob Perkins, with co-director Hannah Tinker. Taking place at our **5 p.m. service**, the pageant service includes contemporary music by James Taylor, Bob Perkins and Paul Swenson (our organist), in addition to traditional carol singing.

The **11 a.m. service** features Paul's arrangement of the Basque carol for tenor, mandolin, violin and harpsichord, with Daniel Johnson, Jennifer Gray and Susan Ovens as musicians. In addition to the small ensemble, the choir will perform John Rutter's "What Sweeter Music" for choir and piano, and an *a cappella* setting of "O Magnum Mysterium." This special evening will also include carol singing and candle lighting. Come let us adore Him!

—Heidi Blythe
Interim Music Director

John Dominic Crossan Lectures

John Dominic Crossan will be at our church from **Feb. 1-3, 2008**. Buy discounted tickets by **Jan. 15** in the narthex after worship, by downloading the registration form from the church web site, or by picking up the registration form in the church office. For more information, contact jsg@universityucc.org or 206-524-6255, ext 3447.

UCC Conference Women's Retreat

Play, pray, laugh and sing at the Pacific Northwest Conference Retreat for Women to be held at Pilgrim Firs on **Feb. 29 to March 2, 2008**. The theme will be "Wade in the Water." Watch for further details or contact the conference office for more information.



THE CHRISTMAS FUND SPECIAL OFFERING

DECEMBER 2007

The Christmas Fund Offering, one of four Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ, is an important way of sharing our joy at God's renewing and life-giving grace. The Offering, which is administered by the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance of the Pension Boards on behalf of the UCC, is an expression of joy and gratitude to, and for, those who serve the church.

Gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retirees, emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees and Christmas Gift checks to hundreds of annuitants.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. This is your opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care.

The generous gifts of UCC congregations and individuals to the Christmas Fund enabled the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance program to provide some form of financial assistance to approximately 1,500 persons during 2007.

- Monthly pension supplementation is provided to 469 persons. These gifts total \$91,853 per month. A significant part of the annual total of \$1,102,236 comes from the Christmas Fund.
- Emergency grants have been provided to 33 individuals and families, which totaled \$38,665.50 in the first nine months of 2007. It is estimated that 50-60 persons will receive an Emergency Grant by year-end.
- Christmas Gift checks will be sent to approximately 810 persons in 2007. Of those who will receive checks, 24 are over 100 years of age. The oldest person is 106. One person has received Christmas checks continuously since 1976. The 810 gifts will total \$222,750.
- Quarterly health premium supplementation is provided to 287 families, totaling \$140,571 per quarter. All of the funding for health premium supplementation is derived from the Christmas Fund.

(These statistics reflect activity through September 30, 2007. Please log on to the Christmas Fund website at www.christmasfund.org for updated information.)

All gifts, large and small, are gratefully received and make a tremendous difference. The Mission Board thanks you for your prayerful support of this special offering!

(information on this flier obtained from www.christmasfund.org)