

THE FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

December 2022



NOTES FROM REV. DAN

This month, Jews around the world will light menorahs for Chanukah, the feast of dedication. The holiday commemorates the cleaning and rededication of the great Temple of Jerusalem in the second century BCE, after a fierce and brutal civil war.

It was a time of making do with very little — hence the famous miracle in which the lamp oil burned for eight nights, and also a time for rebuilding the Jewish community after years of bitter division. Families who had been apart came together once again, renewing traditions that had been disrupted by the war.

In many ways this year feels like a rededication to me. Thanksgiving, which we typically host at my house, had been disrupted over the past two years, so the return to holiday shopping, menu planning, cleaning guest spaces that hadn't been used for a long, long time, was a kind of return to normality. Like the Maccabees, we swept the dust from our sacred places and celebrated being together again.

But some things had changed. We'd all been through some trauma — more than once — and we were not quite the same people we had been the last time we gathered together. Our relationships with each other

had shifted, too. Maturity and mutual respect had grown, after such a difficult two years. We had found new ways to connect with one another.

This season feels like a rededication for our congregation, too. Like many families, we are returning to old traditions — singing together, sharing food, or favorite events, like our Cookies, Choirs and Cocoa concert on December 2.

Like my family, we've all been through a lot, and are growing in the ways we connect with each other. And like the Jews of so long ago, we are making our space — whether that means our sanctuary or our online space — holy when we come together to reclaim the spirit and joy of our religious community.

May this season be a joy to you, and a rededication. If it is a difficult time for you, I hope you reach out to others and experience the comfort and love of your communities, including this one. If it is a time for over-the-top celebration, I hope you have an amazing time. If it's a time for reflection, I hope you find growth. If it's a time for giving, I hope you find meaningful service.

For all of us, I wish a blessed season, and a rekindling of the flame within and around us.

In faith, Dan

*I wish a
blessed season,
and a rekindling
of the flame
within and
around us.*

Our Mission

Our mission is to:

*GROW in spirit, heart
and mind*

*LOVE through care
and community*

*SERVE beyond
ourselves*



A Welcoming
Congregation

501 South High Street
West Chester PA 19382
610-692-5966
office@ucwc.org
www.ucwc.org



Sunday Services



*We gather,
aspiring to be a
thriving, caring,
and welcoming
community that
supports each
person's spiritual
journey, embraces
diversity,
challenges us to
live responsibly,
and is a catalyst
for a just and
compassionate
world.*

December 4 10 am UNDER THE BODHI TREE Rev. Dan Schatz

While it doesn't receive the attention of the other December holidays, Bodhi Day is sacred to many Buddhists, who celebrate the enlightenment of a great spiritual teacher.

**December 11 10 am MYTHMAKING, tonya thames taylor
AWAKENINGS, AND REVELATION**

How do I make room in spaces not created for me? Intersectionality, identity, and space matter. This conversation explores the human rights of work and education through art/iconography, media, and the influential legacies of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. This context explains the work of and need for the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Tonya thames taylor's work aims to actualize the United Nation's motto: "Peace, dignity, and equality on a healthy planet." For more about Dr. taylor, see page 3.

December 17 BLUE HOLIDAY VESPERS SERVICE

A "Blue Holiday" service is a chance for us to acknowledge that December isn't always "the most wonderful time of the year." This simple service will include a chance for us to share personally with one another.

**December 18 10 am THE SOLSTICE FLAME Rev. Dan Schatz,
ALL-AGES CELEBRATION Cassie Lengel, and
UCWC Musicians**

The Solstice is a celebration of warmth, community, and light. We will honor the day in story, and song as we kindle the winter fires.

December 24

4 pm ALL-AGES CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Join us for a participatory Christmas Eve service as we tell the age-old story of a birth and the holiness of every child. There will be easy roles for all ages (including very young children), and no rehearsal is required. Please plan to come at 3:30 to get a costume (but you can still have a role even if you didn't come early). Very young children who wish to be animals may bring their own costumes as well. This very special service has become a beloved annual tradition in many Unitarian Universalist congregations, and we hope people of all ages will take part.

7 pm CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

We will gather for a traditional Christmas Eve service with readings, carols, music from the Spirit Singers, a Christmas reflection from Rev. Dan Schatz, and the singing of "Silent Night" by candlelight.

**December 25 10 am CAROLS, COFFEE, AND Kathy & Chris Beatty
CONVERSATION and Janet Hutchison**

Christmas falls on a Sunday this year. In lieu of a formal service, Kathy and Chris Beatty and Janet Hutchinson are offering a time to gather in our Sanctuary for Christmas companionship. This will be in-person only, no streaming available. All are welcome to join us to sing, enjoy a few goodies, and share fellowship. Song sheets will be available, but you are welcome to suggest your favorite tunes to sing on the spot. This will be an informal gathering.



DECEMBER HOLIDAYS

Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

501 South High Street in West Chester, Pennsylvania
and Streaming on YouTube

Fri • 5:15 pm
DECEMBER

2

COOKIES, CHOIRS, AND COCOA

Begin West Chester's Old Fashioned Christmas with cookies, cocoa, and a special concert from the Rustin High School choirs!

Sat • 7 pm
DECEMBER

17

BLUE HOLIDAY VESPERS SERVICE

A "Blue Holiday" service is a chance for us to acknowledge that December isn't always "the most wonderful time of the year." This simple service will include a chance for us to share personally with one another.

Sun • 10 am
DECEMBER

18

THE SOLSTICE FLAME • ALL AGES CELEBRATION

The Solstice is a celebration of warmth, community, and light. We will honor the day in song and story as we kindle the winter fires.

Sat • 4 pm
DECEMBER

24

ALL AGES CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

A very special participatory all ages Christmas Eve service as we tell the age old story of a birth and the holiness of every child. There will be easy roles for all ages (including very young children). No rehearsal is required.

Sat • 7 pm
DECEMBER

24

CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

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Sun • 10 am
DECEMBER

25

CAROLS, COFFEE, AND CONVERSATION

All are welcome to an informal Christmas morning open house! (There will be no live streamed service this morning)



From the President

As we UUs grapple with our country's legacy of institutionalized racism, we're encouraged to listen to personal stories of those who experience the fallout. A great resource on that is a new book by an eminent African American ethnographer, Yale



Professor Elijah Anderson. ***Black in White Space: The Enduring Impact of Color in Everyday Life*** summarizes what he's learned from his 50 years of gathering stories of black urban life and analyzing how they have been shaped by the nation's racial history.

Prof. Anderson reports that blacks know that their black skin means they carry the stereotype of being a lesser person, a "ghetto" black, any time they enter a white space, which is defined as any environment overwhelmingly populated by white people — like us on Sunday morning. In almost all white spaces, Anderson says, blacks can fairly assume some whites may be wary or hostile until the black person exhibits some behavior showing they belong or are not a threat.

Constantly alert to signs of potential hostility from whites, they tend to seek out fellow blacks (if there are any), look for potential white allies, or hope they see some signs they will at least be tolerated or accepted. All that imposes a heavy psychic burden on black people, Anderson writes, which leads them to retreat to identifiably black-majority spaces — like black churches — to find psychological relief.

What can we UUs learn from these insights? We can strive to create a version of what Anderson calls a "cosmopolitan canopy" — an environment where no one social class or racial group "owns" the space. A recent event I attended at St. Paul's Baptist Church was one such example. The kickoff session for POWER Metro, a largely black-led, interfaith racial justice project, brought together dozens of white and black people who share a desire to work together on common goals.

I'm not sure exactly how we at UCWC could develop a similarly diverse community, but that group proceeded from a presumption of good faith and shared interest in racial justice, which we do have at UCWC. There were no lectures about how whites are complicit in today's persistent injustices or the need to set aside "white fragility."

Working with others for racial justice puts our UU values into action. And it may help us begin to make meaningful personal connections across our country's race and class divides, which is an essential step if we want UCWC to become a place that truly feels welcome to all.

— Matt Zencey

Working with others for racial justice puts our UU values into action.

Meet Tonya Thames Taylor, December 11 Service Featured Speaker

Dr. Tonya Thames Taylor is the granddaughter of sharecroppers and daughter of parents who came of age in a segregated and violent Mississippi. She is in the first generation of Mississippians who came of age in an integrated Mississippi with opportunities for all.

Tonya is a Head Start graduate, graduate of an integrated, diverse, and inclusive high school, and first-generation college student. She earned her undergraduate degree from Tougaloo College, an Historically Black College and University (HBCU) that was a former slave plantation and hotbed of agitation

during the 1960s. She earned her graduate degrees from the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss).



Tonya is an American History professor at West Chester University and serves on several boards, including the Kennett Underground Railroad Center. She enjoys reading, gardening, photography, walking her rescue pit bull terriers Raisin and Autumn, and spending time with her husband, Anthony.

In spring 2022, Tonya was recognized as one of the 150 Influential Women in the history of West Chester University.

Lifespan Faith Development

This holiday season, I want us to go back to the old system of lights in our celebrations.

Christmas Eve Pageant

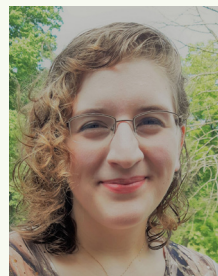


Every year on Christmas Eve we hold a pageant retelling the story of the nativity — the birth of Jesus — as we honor the sacredness of the Christian story while embracing its meaning in myth and wonder as Unitarian Universalists. As we recount the story, we will need a grand cast of friends to join us in acting out this tale — from kings and angels to shepherds and a motley crew of animals.

You come to the service, and we provide costumes, script, and tons of entertainment. While this pageant is an inclusive opportunity for everyone who wants a part to have one, we would love to know if you can play a part or help as one of our guiding elves. Please RSVP to email: **DLFD** for more information or to volunteer.

REflections Religious Education Update

Holiday lights have come a long way. When I was growing up, I recall countless hours of untangling strings of lights, daisy chaining them together to work with our outlets, and then smooshing your face in the tree or porch or wherever you wanted them to hang. The worst part, though, was checking the bulbs. For some reason if one light went out, the entire string went out — and that was true even if the bulb was just loose. So, you had to spend hours touching every bulb to make sure it was well attached.



The holidays are a time for lights — from Chanukah candles to Advent wreaths, Yule logs to Kwanzaa candles, Christmas lights to lawn décor. No matter what you are celebrating, there is something special about seeing the lights shine forth in the dark winter nights.

As we prepare our celebrations to light up the dark, we can all thank goodness that by the beauty of modern technology, we now have strings of lights where the efficacy of one bulb doesn't impact the whole. And yet...what does that say about the state of our society today? Technology has allowed us to make great strides in communication and connecting with websites and social media across the world. But it still takes work for us to feel included and present.

This holiday season, I want us to go back to the old system of lights in our celebrations — the kind where if one bulb goes out...we all do. The kind where we are more whole when we stand together. The kind where we lift one another up — with a gift, a call, a smile, a donation — some small way to show that our connections still thrive. The kind where we are a community of communities of people.

This month we gather for our many events to celebrate together with laughter and cocoa and singing and services and classes and more. And we gather with those who grieve, whose lives feel unbalanced or overwhelmed because of and regardless of the holidays. We gather together because it is our connections that light us up and banish the cold dark of loneliness.

— Cassie Lengel
Email: **DLFD**

Men's Group



The UCWC Men's Group will meet via Zoom on Tuesday, December 6, at 7:00 pm. All men are welcome. The Zoom link will be sent out directly via email.

If you are interested in participating but are not yet on the email distribution list, please reach out to Mark and Dirk at email: **mens-group**.

Pastoral Care

The **Pastoral Care Team** contact for this month is **Cathy Vogt**



Small Group Ministry

Small Group Ministry is a way to gather with other Unitarian Universalists twice a month for community, conversation, and connection.

Each session is organized around a theme and includes a chalice lighting, readings, and questions to spark discussion. Groups are led by trained facilitators who meet regularly with Rev. Dan.

If you are interested in joining a group, please contact Email: **SGM**.

Minister's Office Hours

Rev. Dan is available for appointments on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. He can be reached at email: **minister** or by cell phone.

Blue Holiday Vespers Service December 17 at 7:00 pm

Join us on December 17 for a HYBRID Blue Holiday service. Please RSVP to email: **DLFD** in advance if you are able, to let us know if you will be attending in person or online.

It is the best of times, it is the worst of times, but nonetheless it is holiday time. The holidays can be a challenge for some folks. Facing difficult family members, the stress of perfection and responsibilities, grief over the loss of a loved one, feelings of depression, and so much more can leave us feeling ashamed, embarrassed, lonely, empty. This Blue Holiday service is a time to step out of our busy schedules, an opportunity to breathe. We acknowledge all the feelings we bring to the holidays, make space to meet our grief, and affirm that we are worthy of care, especially during this time.

This vespers service allows us to gather together with readings and prayer, while also giving us a safe space to share more personally with one another. With no shame and no expectation of answers, this is a space just to bear witness and be.

Have Fun with Stewardship And Beat the Winter Blues

Are you interested in helping to plan and/or execute our 2023 Stewardship campaign? We would love to have your participation, your ideas, your energy, and your skills.

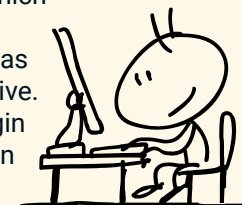
The time commitment for planning is three or four meetings (in person or via Zoom), primarily in January, followed by the work involved with creating communication pieces and a kickoff event, primarily in February. The Stewardship Campaign starts in March. Please contact Pam Sapko at email: **stewardship** if you'd like to participate or have questions.

Access to Cloud Files for UCWC

UCWC uses Google Drives to share files with members of UCWC. Separate drives (similar to folders on your computer) exist for most of the UCWC committees. There is a drive called "Members" which has general information for all members of UCWC.

Initially a generic login (member@ucwc-pa.org) was created which allowed access to the "Member" drive. Changes to Google Drive security policy makes this login unusable as a common shared login, so it has been deleted.

Every member of UCWC can have a unique login that will allow access to the "Members" drive as well as other drives on request. If you do not already know your personal login and would like it, please request it from **administrator@ucwc-pa.org**.



— Wayne Bullaughey

Stones in the Wall: Social Justice

Each event, each action is another stone in the wall of social justice.



Holiday Messages Campaign

The UU Church of the Larger Fellowship is organizing volunteers to send holiday messages to each of their members currently experiencing incarceration. The goal is to send three messages to each of the 1,638 members. That's 4,914 pieces of mail.

If you are interested in helping, contact Debbie Sisco at email: [criminal-justice](mailto:criminal-justice@uucf.org) for details on how to participate. There are restrictions to ensure communications are done in a secure and prison compliant manner.

Building a Culture of Inclusivity Workshop Participants Feedback

UCWC was pleased to host Paula Cole Jones's workshop, "Building a Culture of Inclusivity," in October, which was attended by 35 members. During the training, Paula called on our congregation to make a shift in four areas:

- to go from 7 to 8 Principles
- to go from a dominant culture paradigm to a multicultural paradigm
- to migrate from a family identity metaphor to a community of communities
- to shift from conflict avoidance in decision-making to reconciliation as a leadership competence

Feedback from fourteen of the participants indicated that they are most interested in, and feel that the Congregation is most ready to work in two areas:

- creating a multicultural paradigm
- creating a community of communities

The Racial Justice Working Group will reflect on how best to move forward in these areas. Feel free to join in. We meet regularly via Zoom on the first and third Mondays of the month at 5:00 pm.

Other comments shared reflected an interest in "having more congregation-wide discussion," more understanding of the 8th Principle to dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves," "ongoing focus on the importance of working for Racial Justice and toward becoming an anti-racist congregation," "more focus all year long with larger involvement," "a shared set of goals," "a clear understanding of systemic racism and white fragility," "a hook for more involvement," and "a group to keep us accountable."



Diversity Book Club

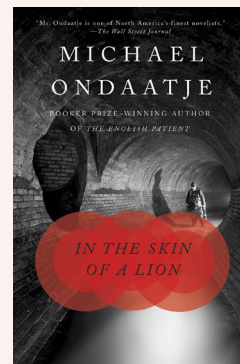
Sun, Dec 11 7:00-8:30 pm on Zoom

Led by Debby Kern

In the Skin of a Lion by Michael Ondaatje (Author of *The English Patient*)

Bristling with intelligence and shimmering with romance, this exquisite and symphonic novel tests the boundary between history and myth. Upon emerging from his Canadian wilderness home, Patrick Lewis arrives in Toronto in the 1920s to earn his living searching for a vanished millionaire and tunneling beneath Lake Ontario.

In the course of his adventures, Patrick's dangerous and complex life intersects for the first time with such characters as Hana the orphan and Caravaggio the thief, all intimately and lovingly portrayed. This is the sparkling predecessor that introduces the characters who reappear in Ondaatje's Booker Prize-winning *The English Patient*.



Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

What is Guest At Your Table, and How Do You Participate?

Guest at Your Table is UUSC's annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness about key human rights issues and UUSC's grass roots partnerships, and to learn about just four of these partners, the "guests" at Guest at Your Table.



[UUSC.ORG/GUEST](https://uusc.org/guest)

Meet This Year's Guests!

During the Guest at Your Table program this year, we look forward to introducing you to the following leaders from UUSC partner organizations!



Ineza Umuhoza Grace is amplifying the voices of youth as they petition governments around the world to take meaningful action for climate justice.



Zsolt Szekeres is providing needed legal assistance and social resources to people fleeing Ukraine who are seeking safety in neighboring Hungary following the Russian invasion.



Ian Zdanowicz is coordinating support, solidarity, and community care for LGBTQIA+ people in U.S. immigration detention and those who have been recently released.



Naw Wah Ku Shee is working with her own Karen community and other ethnic minorities in Burma to share the experiences of those being targeted by the violent military junta.

UUSC has over 50 local partner organizations around the world. Guest At Your Table is a chance to get to know its partners and view issues better through the stories of four people connected to those partners, as if sharing a meal together. They are the guests in Guest at Your Table. This year's theme is Hope, Courage, and Action.

Collection boxes with pictures of your guests and *Stories of Hope* booklets with your guests' stories were distributed at the November 20 Sunday service. You can put a collection box on your table during the holidays and put donations in the box. If you missed this event, you can pick them up in the lobby, or you can **make your own box** and **read the *Stories of Hope*** online.

UU's help raise much needed funds for UUSC's grassroots partners for all sorts of projects that make a difference in their communities.

Here are three ways to donate:

- Guest At Your Table Boxes: Please convert the money in the box to a check written to "UCWC" with "UUSC GAYT" in the memo line and put it in the plate on any Sunday.
- Donate online: uusc.org/givetoguest.
- Donate by mail: Please make checks out to "UUSC" with "GAYT" in the memo line, and send to:

Guest at Your Table
UUSC
PO Box 808
Newark, NJ 07101-0808

Note: If you donate directly to UUSC, please be sure to include that you are from the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester. We are aiming for 100% UUSC membership. Any donation makes you a proud member, and GAYT gifts of \$150 or more are matched dollar for dollar by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock.

Thank you.

— Linda Sander and Charlot Barker

Share-the-Plate Generosity

The Social Justice Committee's Share-the-Plate program raises money to give to local non-profit organizations working to improve life for Chester County residents. We are pleased to announce the share-the-plate recipient for December 18 (third Sunday of the month), **Coatesville Youth Initiative**.

The mission of the Coatesville Youth Initiative is to contribute to a vibrant future for Coatesville by engaging youth in experiences that support their success in school and in life, and by uniting a wide range of partners to make the community better for everyone.

Coatesville Youth Initiative has a number of programs designed to give the children of Coatesville a positive direction in their lives. They concentrate on four main areas: family engagement, youth development, prevention efforts, and community collaboration. The work of CYI inspires youth leadership with the goal of helping Coatesville children thrive and prosper.

Please note the following as you prepare your donation:

- All checks should be payable to "UCWC".
- Checks with memo "All to charity" or similar go to the charity. Clearest is "All to Coatesville Youth Initiative".
- Checks with memo "plate", "donation", "STP", or "share the plate" are split 50/50. Clearest is "STP 50/50".
- All other checks go 100% to UCWC, unless otherwise indicated.

Thank you for your generosity to October recipient, Act in Faith, in the amount of \$375.



Gun Violence Prevention Vigil



UCWC is teaming up with CeaseFirePA to commemorate the Sandy Hook victims as well as those who lost their lives here in Chester County.

Please join us for a solemn and meaningful candlelight vigil here in our building on Saturday, December 10, from 2:30 to 3:00 pm.

Speakers will include survivors, Rev. Schatz, State Representative Christina Sappey, Carol Lastowka of CeaseFirePA, and our own Tom Buglio, who will give the keynote address.



Fun & Fellowship

Folk Singing Returns to UCWC

Finally! Our monthly folk-singing is slated to resume, with our next get-together on Saturday, December 3, at 7:00 p.m. We meet at the home of Linda and Steve Sander, who now live in Crosslands at 433 Crosslands Drive in Kennett Square.

All are welcome. No singing talent or experience is necessary, just a desire to have fun. Capable musicians should bring your instruments. Bring a munchie if you wish. Maps are in the foyer. Contact Steve at email: **folk-singing** with questions or driving instructions.

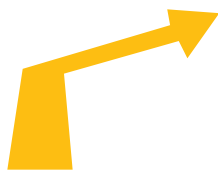
Masks are optional, and — of course — we will be singing.



Calendar

All email addresses
@ucwc.org

Click [HERE](#) to access our
website main calendar,
which includes late
November events.



Blue Holiday Vespers Service

Dec 2	Fri	Cookies, Choir and Cocoa. 5:15 pm. UCWC. See p. 3.
Dec 3	Sat	Folk Singing. 7:30 pm. Home of Linda & Steve Sander. See p. 9.
Dec 4	Sun	First Sunday Food Collection. See p. 10.
Dec 5	Mon	Racial Justice Working Group. 5:00 pm. Zoom. Contact Pam Sapko. Executive Committee. 7:00 pm. Zoom.
Dec 6	Tue	Men's Group. 7:00 pm. Zoom. See p. 5.
Dec 10	Sat	Gun Violence Prevention Vigil. 2:30 pm. UCWC. See p. 9.
Dec 11	Sun	Diversity Book Group. 7:00 pm. Zoom. See p. 7.
Dec 13	Tue	Program Council. 7:00 pm. Zoom.
Dec 15	Thu	Religious Education Committee. 7:00 pm.
Dec 17	Sat	Blue Holidays Vespers Service. 7:00 pm. See p. 6.
Dec 18	Sun	Share-the-Plate. Benefits Coatesville Youth Initiative. See p. 9.
Dec 19	Mon	Racial Justice Working Group. 5:00 pm. Zoom. Contact Pam Sapko.
Dec 20	Tue	Board Meeting. 6:30 pm. Zoom.
Dec 24	Sat	All Ages Christmas Eve Service. 4:00 pm. Costumes at 3:30. See pp. 2 and 5. Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. 7:00 pm.

EVENTS OCCURRING REGULARLY:

Most Thursdays	Spirit Singers Practice. at 7:00 pm. For specific dates, contact Miriam Davidson, email: choir .
Various Dates	Small Group Ministry (Several Active Groups). See web calendar or contact email: SGM . See p. 6.

First Sunday Food Collection

We are not collecting food on the first Sunday of each month. However, as always, you can still make a financial donation. We will buy grocery store gift cards and give them to the West Chester Food Cupboard.

Please make your check out to "UCWC" and write "Food Cupboard" in the memo line. Mail your check to Unitarian Congregation of West Chester, 501 South High Street, West Chester, PA 19382.

You can also donate to the Food Cupboard on the UCWC donation web page — click [here](#) and select "Grocery Cards for Food Cupboard." Contact Cyndy Bullaughey, email: [grocery-program](#), for more information.



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West Chester, PA 19382

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Cassie Lengel, Director of Lifespan Faith Development email: [DLFD](#)
Steve and Linda Sander, *The Fellowtarian* Editors email: [fellowtarian](#)