

# The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Harford County



**Building Liberal Religious Community — Please Join Us!**

**December 2018**

## Our Sunday Schedule

Childcare 10:00 am - 12:00 am  
Worship and Church School 10:30 am

## December Sermons

### The Festival of Lights

Rev. María McCabe

December 2

The Jewish celebration of Hanukkah commemorates the miraculous rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. The story teaches that spirituality and justice are always intertwined.

### Winter Solstice

Rev. María McCabe

December 9

Our earth based traditions celebrate the return the light, and we will mark the turning of the seasons and the miraculous wonder of the natural world.

*Today's Social Justice Collections supports the Helping Hands Fund.*

### No Room at the Inn

Rev. María McCabe

December 16

The Christmas story at its most basic is the story about hospitality. We will explore how hospitality can become a treasured spiritual practice in our lives.

### A Blue Christmas

Rev. Roberta Finkelstein

December 23

While popular culture urges us to feel nothing but happiness and joy during the Christmas season, the holidays often bring up more difficult emotions. A time to honor the complexity of our holiday feelings.

### A Family Christmas Eve Service

Stephanie Kalka & Rev. María

Dec. 24, 4:30 pm

This family service will be interactive, full of singing and celebration of the timeless Christmas story.

### Lessons and Carols

Rev. María McCabe

Dec. 24, 6:00 pm

A contemplative worship service in the spirit of the season with readings, silent prayer, carols and candlelight.

## StoryCorps Visits UUFHC

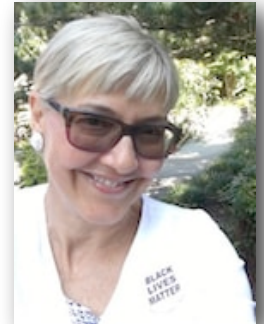
Hazel Hopkins

December 30

The service will be modeled after author David Isay's *StoryCorps*, heard on NPR on Friday mornings. You will hear stories of actual events in the lives of our members which have had an impact.

## From Our Minister

*"What if life is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be lived?" - Professor Emil Homerin, University of Rochester*



## I AM A LIFELONG FAN of

mystery stories and novels. As a little girl I devoured the tales of Edgar Allan Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle's renderings of the exploits of Sherlock Holmes. A good mystery, in my young mind, was simply a lovely puzzle waiting for an answer. Given enough time, brilliance and ingenuity every storybook mystery would surely be solved. I still love mysteries today and often turn to this genre for relaxation before going to sleep. (And FYI – I'm always looking for new suggestions!)

But as we turn to an exploration of "mystery" as our spiritual theme for December, we are talking about something completely different. Perhaps a different word for our theme might be "wonder." My beloved mystery stories require a satisfactory explanation to be successful. But an explanation does not change the kind of mystery that fills us with wonder. Our Transcendentalist religious ancestor, Henry David Thoreau writes about the beauty and wonder he experiences when looking at a cloud. On July 4, 1845 Thoreau moved into a shack he had built himself on the shores of Walden Pond, a small lake in Concord, Massachusetts. He lived there alone for two years and eventually wrote a much-loved book about his experiences. He doesn't mind learning the scientific explanation for the mystery that is a cloud but he adds "If there is not something mystical in your explanation, something unexplainable to the understanding,

some elements of mystery, it is quite insufficient. ...what sort of science is that which enriches the understanding and robs the imagination?"

In the nearly two centuries since Thoreau wrote these words, we have made giant leaps in our scientific understanding of the world. And we have come to recognize that there is no clearly defined boundary between the imagination and the scientific mind. Mystery and rationality travel side by side in the laboratory and the imagination.

December will offer us abundant opportunities for celebration and ritual, including the invitation to "live" some very ancient mysteries without seeking to explain them. How might we experience the wonder of the lamp oil that lasted for eight miraculous days in the Festival of Hannukkah? How might we experience the mysterious star that rose in the East to guide the wise elders to the birthplace of a child often known as the Prince of Peace?

As we share holiday greetings with one another and celebrate together the miraculous return of the light at the winter solstice, may we remember to leave room for the mystery of the hour.

- Warmly, Rev. Maria

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## From Our President

*The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Harford County is a welcoming religious community that nurtures individual spiritual journeys, encourages growth in faith, celebrates diversity, and strives to inspire a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.*

Our mission statement should be a true reflection of every decision that we make at UUFHC. As we start to work on the budget for next year, we are having pointed discussions about whether everything that we do truly supports our mission. Or are there some items that have just become routine that don't truly speak specifically to supporting this mission? Our budget is quite involved and covers many areas—salaries, our building and grounds, music, lay care, office costs, technology, safety, worship, mortgage, dues to UUA, housekeeping and social justice support—just to name some of the bigger ticket items! Trying to balance the needs of UUFHC with the income is an overwhelming task, but we are taking a very close look at matching our decisions with our mission. We will also be talking about this mission-based approach in more depth as we start planning for the Stewardship Drive and beginning the work on our Strategic Plan.

Your input about our budget priorities and plans for our future is always welcome and necessary. Although we don't actually approve the final budget product until April, it has many steps along the way and if we analyze each item next to our mission, it does make for a fuller, more detailed decision process.

A giant thank you to the many people that are involved in developing the budget, organizing the Stewardship Drive and getting started on our Strategic Plan. It is an honor to work beside so many committed members, as we strive to support our mission in all areas of our church life!



- Diana Rudolph, Board President

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## Religious Education

It was Christmas Eve at my Grandmother's house. I think I was 10. There were the usual 30-odd guests, mainly family. My sister, cousins, and I were watching a movie in the family room while the adults were upstairs in the kitchen and dining room. I was sitting by the fireplace when my dad came down to see what we were up to. He sat next to me and we watched the movie together for a few minutes. Then he whispered, "You see those candle holders over there?"

Four ceramic candle holders stood on the ledge by the window. They were clearly a relic from the 1950's. Little, red-suited elves held each candle and were attached to a red letter so when they were next to each other, they spelled "NOEL." They glistened from the string of lights that surrounded them.

"When I was a kid," my father continued, "I would wait until no one was looking and switch 'em around."

I didn't understand. He went over to the figurines and reversed them so they spelled "LEON."

"I did this every chance I got and my mother would yell, "Leon? Why do these letters spell Leon? Who moved my candles?!"

I found this pretty funny. My grandmother was Italian and made stern by a combination of her immense workload and her four sons. Don't get me wrong, she loved to laugh, but she kept her sons in line and had no tolerance for shenanigans. "Did you ever get in trouble?" I asked.

"She never found out who did it. Don't tell, okay?"

The next Christmas, we got a beautiful creche. My mom loved the figurines. My dad made a manger and put a small light in the back so the faces of the figurines would be illuminated. The scene was displayed on the open center shelf of the china cabinet so it could be admired by all who entered our dining room. It was a holy tableau—that was just begging for interference. My sister and I had been inspired by my father’s antics and the creche became our playground. After a day or two, my mother was surprised to find the figurines playing a game of hide-and-seek. A king whose hand was held aloft in a majestic salute to Jesus was now turned toward a corner as if he was “It” and counting so the others could hide. Mary, who was normally kneeling with her hand to her heart and a soft expression for the Baby Jesus, was now crouched behind a camel. Joseph, who was usually leaning to the side, pulling his robe out in a fan to shield Baby Jesus from the wind, was now obscured and peeking around a wine glass on the shelf above. Sheep gathered behind the teapot. The shepherd was doing the army crawl, staff in hand. Baby Jesus hid in the sugar bowl. At first, my mom was a bit angry. She somehow felt we were not giving Jesus the proper respect he deserved. But didn’t Jesus love children? Wouldn’t he want them to be happy? And we sisters weren’t arguing and driving her crazy while we were messing with the creche! Eventually she relented and said, “Just make sure you put everything back before your grandmother gets here.”

### Here’s what’s happening this month in Religious Education:

**December 9: Children’s Worship for PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade:** Children’s Worship provides an opportunity for students in preschool through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to interact through music, stories, games, and crafts. **Young Leaders for 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Young Leaders is an opportunity for makerspace and service activities. **JYG (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade):** Junior Youth Group is a chance for middle school youth to build community through different activities. The **Youth (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade)** will join the adults in the service. Classes end at 11:30 am.

**December 14:** Parent Support Group will meet from 5:45 pm to 8:00 pm. We will share a light dinner of pizza, salad, and dessert. After dinner, the kids will go with caregivers to the RE Wing and the parents will talk. The cost is \$5 per family—unless you’d like to bring a salad or dessert, and then there will be no charge! Please RSVP [dre@uufhc.net](mailto:dre@uufhc.net).

**December 23:** This will be a normal class day.

**December 24:** Christmas Eve will be a family service—children will remain in the service and there will be no

childcare in the Nursery. Come take part in our **Interactive, No-Rehearsal Christmas Pageant** at the family service at **4:30 pm!**

*See you in the RE Wing,  
- Stephanie Kalka, DRE*



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## Corner on Finance

Pledge update, as of November 1:  
Pledges Received - \$81,686  
Pledges Due to Date - \$88,800

Ten new members joined the Fellowship in November and each handed in a pledge to help us become who we want to be. We welcome their presence and their generosity! The Finance committee deals directly with the fiscal aspects of our church, and those pledges along with all the members’ funds, work to achieve what you have elected our leaders to accomplish.

The good news is that we are now in a position to direct fiscal resources toward our mission goals, instead of using them strictly for operating expenses. Social justice concerns have been addressed for some time now using Second Sunday collections. However, with the increasing number of members, we can now make a greater impact in our areas of focus. To facilitate this process, a greater transparency is needed with our fiscal processes. We are working on that with things like: providing more frequent member pledge status information; aggregate pledge information as presented at the top of this article; and improved committee-spending reports.

All these changes are introduced to help steer our fiscal resources to accomplishing mission goals. You can help in this process by keeping yourself informed, which should be easier with these improvements, and by assuring the Fellowship is well supported by keeping your pledge payments current. Note that the pledge income is falling a bit behind. It would be nice if that gap were closed before the end of the year.

Thanks so much for all you do.

*- Rob Lieb,  
Treasurer*



## Happy Birthday!

A belated Happy Birthday to **Inez Buis** who turned 100 years old on October 23. We did make note of this in our October newsletter (and Rob Lieb lit a candle), but we want to give a special shout out to an original UUFHC member who celebrated a milestone birthday.

We celebrated our 60th anniversary a few years back, so it's noteworthy that we still have one of our original members. Inez Buis, still a member though she lives in a retirement community, has served on the UUFHC Board, but her primary contribution was to provide music for our services for several decades. She played our original piano and in the late 1980s purchased our organ and also played that at services for a few years.

We wish Inez good health and many happy returns.

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## Birthdays for December



A warm Happy Birthday to all our members with birthdays in December:

Kim Bourn	December 1
Dyrek Van Dusen	December 1
Dave McMillan	December 3
Bill Faunce	December 4
Carol Bindel	December 5
Judi Walkley	December 9
Richard Townsend	December 10
Mary Jane Price	December 11
Jason Grave	December 12
Stephanie Kalka	December 14
C. Nelson Fritts	December 15
Paula Morrison	December 18
Janet Cunningham	December 21
Kathy Kraft	December 23
Tom Linscott	December 27
Pam Lottero-Perdue	December 31

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## Remember the Holiday Bazaar

Friday November 30, 9:00 am to 8:00 pm

Saturday December 1, 8:00 am to 2:00 pm

We have lots of wonderful things to buy and great fresh baked cookies. Here are some pictures of just some of the items for sale. There is something for everyone!



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## Volunteer of the Month

**Edward H. Roberts** does his very best to make visitors and members feel accepted and happy to be at UUFHC. His cheerful and easy going disposition immediately puts everyone at ease, interested to talk with him and grateful for his sincerity and respect. He is a long standing member that has served on several committees (especially organizing the purchase of the Montessori property), collating the newsletter and sharing his hospitable personality with everyone that walks in our sanctuary door! We are so grateful for you Edward Roberts and happy to honor you with a parking space and our love!



## Challenges to UUFHC in its 62<sup>nd</sup> Year

Our over 400-year-old Unitarian and Universalist histories are filled with people who recognized what would be known centuries later as social justice issues. These small groups of religious free-thinkers evolved into movements and later, the two denominations. Our combined denomination's roots are in Europe and England. Through immigrating to the New World, generations of UUs learned their activism through our humanist and Judeo-Christian heritage: to counter the slavery of other humans, promote women's rights, reform prisons, reform mental hospitals, and reform child labor. All this began soon after the ink on the Constitution was dry. Having said that, these are my thoughts on social justice concerns. My purpose in this essay is to briefly remind us of our UU Principles, especially the First and Second, as they relate to our current social justice issue of immigration whether it is referred to as legal or illegal. "The inherent worth and dignity of every person," and "Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations."

Have you been following the news about the caravan coming toward the U.S. southern border? What about the children separated from parents who legally or illegally cross from Mexico? Does it concern us in Maryland? How much interest do we have or should we have in a social issue like this one?

There are more questions than these. But more to the point, why am I asking you, my fellow UUFHC member? I ask because immigration is a prime social justice issue in our beloved country today. I will try to make my opinions clear. Please ask me to clarify if I don't.

I am advocating that we engage as a congregation for a community-wide conversation about immigration justice. Rev. María McCabe is not pushing us to vote on whether or not we should host an undocumented individual or a family. Rather, she is inviting us to explore, learn and "hear" what our UU values are calling us to do. Rev. María firmly told me personally, "I plan to do nothing that is illegal."

From her remarks to me: "[Rev. María] has clearly invited us to reflect on how our Unitarian and Universalist values impact our engagement with immigration justice as a major issue of our time." Further, several years ago the UUA Board under President Peter Morales' leadership committed our denomination to the issue of immigration and to maintain that commitment. The UUFHC Social Justice Committee voted to recommend to the UUFHC Executive Board to prioritize these two issues: Green Sanctuary and Immigration Justice. Hopefully, I have informed all of us correctly.

Our UU Principles call us to be a part of *any* and/or all issues. Some of us are reading the book *Undocumented—How Immigration Became Illegal* by Aviva Chomsky. Every chapter has Endnotes. It is documented! Please do read this immigration history. It is worth every minute you can spare.

And then ask yourself: How will *I* respond to history in the making?

*Respectfully,*  
- JoAnn Macdonald

## Hooray! Guest At Your Table is Back!



I'm a big believer in the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and hope that you all support this wonderful organization which works on behalf of human rights and social justice in our country and throughout the world. An easy way to support the work of UUSC is to take part in the annual Guest at Your Table campaign.

Just pick up a box and a pamphlet on the table in the back of the foyer. This is a good project for the whole family. The focus of this year's campaign is Honduras and other Central American countries—to improve conditions in the country and to help the migrants seeking a better life. The pamphlet has four stories. You can pretend one of the people featured—Ely Rosales, Clementina Flores, Valentina Mejia and Argelia Barajas is a guest at your table that meal. You put coins or bills in the box to represent the food they eat.

The campaign lasts from Thanksgiving until Christmas Eve. In the past, members and families have returned the boxes with donations to the Christmas Eve service, although if you are out of town boxes can be turned in before Christmas or in early January. I have been the Guest At Your Table coordinator and remember days spent counting and rolling coins. We can still do that but we recommend writing a check for the amount collected in the box.

If you donate \$40 or more, you and your family are considered a member of UUSC. In addition, all individual and family unrestricted contributions of \$125 or more

are eligible to be matched by the UU Congregation of Shelter Rock on Long Island, doubling the impact of your gift.

You can make this a family affair. Download the “Along the Migrant Trail” Activity at <https://www.uusc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/UUSC-Migrant-Justice-Activity.pdf> for elementary and middle school aged children.

Once when I was GAYT coordinator, we had such a large percentage of members participating that we became a UUSC banner society. You can also submit your tax deductible donation directly to: UUSC; P.O. Box 808, Newark, NJ 11685 or go online to [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org). Be sure to note that you are a member of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Harford County.

- Kay Saucier

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## Social Justice News

**Holiday Family** – Please sign up to provide a gift to a family in need from Anna’s House, a local charity similar to SARC that also provides shelter for victims of domestic violence. The list can be found in the hall near the coat rack, and you can find information on deadlines. There may be other Holiday charity opportunities. Watch for information in the NUUsbytes and during announcements.

### Upcoming Social Justice Collections

**December: Helping Hands Fund** – This is a fund for Rev. María to use to help out members and people in the community who are in need. The minister uses discretion in choosing the people to help and the amount. This is an important part of our mission, but right now this special collection is the only source of income.

**January: Immigration** – Watch for upcoming information about the plans for our special collection for immigration.

**February: Homeless Shelter** – This is an important part of UUFHC’s mission. Kim Roberts has been organizing and grocery shopping for our day (13th of the month) at the Welcome One Homeless Shelter in Belcamp, and many Members volunteer to prepare the evening meals and lunch for the next day. Kim has figured that costs are \$165-\$200 per month, or \$2,000-\$2,400 for the year. We have about five special collections per year, and again this is the only source of income for this important program. This fund also provides support for the Sharing Table.

At their meeting in October, the Social Justice Committee decided that the Environmental issue of focus this year is becoming a **Green Sanctuary**. See Tammy Gappen or Mark Petrequin if you are interested in participating in helping make this possible.

**Choose Civility** - The Harford County Library, like many libraries and civic groups, is leading a Choose Civility campaign. The Social Justice Committee has voted to submit to the Board that UUFHC become a Choose Civility Alliance Partner.

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## Upcoming Events



### Quiet Day Retreat

**Saturday, December 8, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at UUFHC**

Join us for a Quiet Day at UUFHC. There will be no special agenda—just time to be together, relax and practice “simply being” for awhile. We will have soothing music and tables and chairs set up in the sanctuary. You can bring a book, a craft project or pick your quiet subject. We’ll also have some coloring books available. Bring your own snacks and beverage—this is a self care retreat! (Note: Quiet days are not silent.) Contact Laura Paligo at [lauramypal@yahoo.com](mailto:lauramypal@yahoo.com) and Jacqueline Cunningham at [jcunni13@gmail.com](mailto:jcunni13@gmail.com).

### Facing Death With Life

**First and Third Thursdays starting January 15; 10:00 am to noon**

Co-facilitators Sara Morton and J. Sue Henry will lead this 8 session workshop. Topics can include talking about death, finding our personal views of death, beliefs and practices: what happens when we die? Bereavement, children and death, suicide and the right to die, preparation for death, and sharing new insights. There will also be a local visit to a funeral home. The class size is limited to 15 adults who are requested to commit to all sessions. The exchange is \$15 for the course. Please contact Sara or J. Sue and register at [office@uufhc.net](mailto:office@uufhc.net).

### Sharing Table

**Next date: Saturday February 2**

UUFHC partners with UU Fallston to provide a lunch for the hungry. Please contact Maureen North to confirm. You can sign up to work or provide food.

## **Bring out your 2019 Calendar and Mark It!**

### **Chili Cook-off - Saturday, February 23**

If you are planning on submitting beer for competition, start brewing now! Please contact Alison Ehrman ([alison@ehrman.com](mailto:alison@ehrman.com)) for more information and to let her know.

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## **Central East Region Offers Youth Care Training**

### **Pastoral Care With Youth?**

Not just the minister's job! As a religious community we provide pastoral care to each other too. Youth advisors, youth RE teachers, Directors of Religious Education, and other adults can provide pastoral care to youth. And youth peers often provide most of the pastoral care youth receive. Because pastoral care is one of the most important ways we care for each other in religious community, this training is one of the most important ones we provide in Youth Ministry.

### **What's a Peer Chaplain?**

Peer Chaplains are peers who are caring, understanding and compassionate trained listeners. Chaplaining isn't about fixing other people's problems, but about keeping them company as they find a way forward. Sometimes peer chaplains volunteer to formally serve as a peer chaplain at Unitarian Universalist (UU) events. These are not certified professionals, but every-day people with a desire to serve their fellow human beings. The chaplain is one of the most important positions at a conference or other UU community event because of the emotionally supportive and spiritually nurturing role that they play in the community as a whole.

### **Who Is This Conference For?**

It is for **Youth** (ages 14-18) who want to learn these concepts and skills, and then may possibly act as a peer chaplain at youth conferences or other UU events.

**Advisors** (at least 25 years old) who want to support youth, improve their pastoral care for youth, and who also want to learn the skills and then possibly act as adult peer chaplains at youth cons. (Advisors must be approved as advisors by their congregation and may have some youth supervision responsibility at this event, but will be able to sleep.)

This training is also being offered to **Young Adults** (18-35) who are active within the young adult community.

Participants will be chosen for leadership ability and peer chaplaincy potential, and should come prepared for a fun, working training. The application form will be reviewed by Regional staff who will determine the applicant's appropriateness to serve as a Peer Chaplain after consulting with your reference. This is a training and not a youth community con.

We recommend you periodically check the website <https://www.uua.org/central-east/youth/districtyouth> to learn more about youth training, cons and other events related to youth. The Central East region covers several states but eventually youth care training will be scheduled in Maryland, Delaware or South Central Pennsylvania.

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## **Trip to Florida - Made Easy**

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Fort Myers in southwest Florida invites you to participate in their bed and breakfast program. The program is open to Unitarian Universalist members and friends. They are a Welcoming Congregation.

Pick any period (up to seven days) during January through April. The congregation will arrange a host home with usually one room for one or two people for a cost of \$75 per room per night. Included is a private room and bath, daily breakfast, maps and a guidebook as well as UU hospitality.

What does Fort Myers have to offer? Beautiful beaches, historical sites including the newly restored Thomas Edison and Henry Ford homes, and Koreshan Early American Village.

Outdoor activities include fishing, boating (sailing, power, canoe and kayak) golfing, tennis biking and hiking in nature areas—near the Florida Everglades. Also available are music, theater, art galleries, tropical boutiques, several fabulous shopping malls and wonderful restaurants. The Minnesota Twins and the Boston Red Sox have their Spring Training in Fort Myers.

The temperature in February and March usually offers a high of 85° and a low of 60°. 99% of the days are sunny. Fort Myers is near Bonita Springs, Naples, Sanibel and Captiva Islands and the Fort Myers beach.

For further information and to get a registration form, visit the website at [www.uucfm.org/about-uucfm/hospitality/bed-a-breakfast](http://www.uucfm.org/about-uucfm/hospitality/bed-a-breakfast). Or email [bedandbreakfast@uucfm.org](mailto:bedandbreakfast@uucfm.org).

The Unitarian Universalist  
Fellowship of Harford County  
2515 Churchville Road  
Churchville, MD 21028

Building Liberal Religious Community  
*Please Join Us!*

Sunday Services: 10:30 am; coffee follows

Please visit us online at [www.uufhc.net](http://www.uufhc.net)



Please note: Next Newsletter Deadline: Sunday, December 9, 2018



Minister:	Reverend Maria McCabe
Director of Religious Education:	Stephanie Kalka
Church Administrator:	Karen Kurrle
Newsletter Editor:	Kay Saucier
Webmaster:	Rick Saucier

Fellowship Office Hours (Karen Kurrle):  
Tues, Wed & Thurs: 9:30 am to 5:30 pm

Minister's Office Hours:  
Reverend Maria McCabe: [minister@uufhc.net](mailto:minister@uufhc.net)  
Appointment hours: Tues & Thurs: 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm  
To schedule and/or for additional times: [office@uufhc.net](mailto:office@uufhc.net)  
For private messages & emergencies: 443-390-6013

Director of Religious Education Office Hours:  
Tues, Wed & Thurs: 9:30 pm to 2:00 pm

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DRE Email:	<a href="mailto:dre@uufhc.net">dre@uufhc.net</a>
Newsletter Email:	<a href="mailto:newsletter@uufhc.net">newsletter@uufhc.net</a>
Webmaster Email:	<a href="mailto:webmaster@uufhc.net">webmaster@uufhc.net</a>
Website:	<a href="http://www.uufhc.net">www.uufhc.net</a>

## Wayside Pulpit

Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed, and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer.

– Henry David Thoreau