

The Chalice

**HERE'S JUST SOME OF
WHAT'S INSIDE....**

DECEMBER WORSHIP SERVICES
SUNDAYS 10:15AM AND 7:00PM
CHILD CARE AVAILABLE

Minister's Column
DRE's Column
Page 2

Revels
Revels Bazaar
Ferry Beach RE week
Page 3

Fundraiser for Nicaragua
Elf Appreciation
Holiday Open House
Neponset Choral Society
Page 4

Adult Programs
Conversations at the
MeetingHouse
MeetingHouse News
Page 5

CoffeeHouse
LTC Insur. Discussion
Gifts for Kids
Page 6

UUTube
Kitchen Suggestions
Tax Deductions
Shopping for Justice
Page 7

Social Justice
Page 8

Calendar
Page 9

Dec. 4 at 10:15am: **Celebrating New Life**

The Unitarian Church of Sharon is partnered with the New Life School in the country of Uganda. We will celebrate this partnership with live African drumming, photos of the students, a personal account of visiting the school, and affirming our UU to UU connection from Sharon to Masaka.

Dec. 4 at 7pm: **Making the Holidays Spiritual or Unplugging the Christmas Machine**

The evening service will explore how we can make the December holidays a time for what really matters (love, charity, spirituality) and avoid the frenzy of materialism and social pressure. We will also consider how to honor our grief about people we love who are not physically with us this season.

Dec. 11 at 10:15am **Revels**

Revels is our annual worship service celebrating the dark time of the year. The children of our RE program will present to us story, art, and theatre. This is a truly joyful and moving service each year.

Dec. 11 at 7pm: **A Jungian View of the Christmas Story**

The Christmas story in a fresh manner! Drawing from Jungian depth psychology, we will consider how each character in the story represents a different part of our own psyche. Thus the story become about our own spiritual journey and our potential for growth.

Dec. 18 at 10:15am: **A Ceremony of Carols**

Drawing from an English holiday tradition, we will alternate traditional Carols with stories which highlight holiday themes. This is an intergenerational service with lots of singing and storytelling.

Dec. 18 at 7pm: **Winter Solstice Service**

Our Choir will lead us in a celebration of the winter solstice. This is an annual service and one of our finest. The sanctuary is darkened and relit and the music is stunning.

Dec. 24 at 5pm and 7pm **Christmas Eve Candlelight Services**

This is one of the loveliest services in our church year. Both services (5pm and 7pm) include the traditional candle lighting ceremony (candles will be provided). There is nothing finer than a Christmas Eve candle service in a New England Meetinghouse in the center of town.

Dec. 25 at 10:15am (no evening service) **Christmas Day Service**

Jan. 1 at 10:15am and 7pm: **New Year's Day Service**

Published by the
Unitarian Church of Sharon
*A Welcoming Congregation of
the Unitarian Universalist*

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**NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE
FRIDAY
DECEMBER 23RD
5PM**

Submit article to
newsletter@uusharon.org

From the Minister

At the darkest time of the year we put up lights.
As the cold months descend we decorate our homes.
We gather with loved ones and enjoy. We cry about loved ones we have lost.
We remember a peasant baby who grew up to teach universal compassion.
We have beautiful services in our Meetinghouse (Revels, Solstice, Christmas Eve).
We remember to be generous.
It is about love – not materialism.
It is about centering – not rushing around in a frenzy.
December: soften, open your heart, and let it be the special time it is meant to be.

-Jim Robinson



From the Director of Religious Education

Last Call

My sabbatical is fast approaching. I am trying to get used to the idea that I will not be in touch with members of the congregation (other than my husband and daughter) for two whole months!

If you have questions about the RE program, there is no time like the present to check in with me. I will be in the office through December 22 and available by email through December 29.

I especially encourage teachers who have any questions about lesson plans or curriculum in general to be in touch. I am still in the midst of dividing up the Tapes-try of Faith curricula into lesson plans of manageable size. Rest assured that all teaching teams will have their full 9 weeks of lesson plans in hand by December 22.

As I wonder about this sabbatical, the wise words of Julian of Norwich come to mind: *“All will be well; all manner of things will be well.”*

Peace to you,

Louise

Religious Education News

Revels Bazaar for the New Life School

As you prepare for the holidays, please plan to buy some of your gift bags, gift tags, and ornaments at the Revels Bazaar on December 10 (during the Holiday Party) and December 11 (immediately following worship). Everyone's invited to this first-time-ever fundraiser for the New Life School in Uganda. The Bazaar features the handiwork of our Grades 1-2-3 class: printed gift bags (4 sizes), votives, and many ornaments, all crafted with love. You can even meet the artists at the sale! For details about our offerings, please check out the poster at church.



Summer is only 6 months away! Keep reading...

Are you looking for...

a fun summer vacation for yourself and/or your family?

the experience of beloved and multigenerational community?

Do you hope to...

Become a more effective worker for social justice?

Explore your spiritual side through art and yoga?

Figure out (finally) how to use social media?

Please consider spending a week next summer at Ferry Beach, the Unitarian Universalist Conference Center in Saco, Maine. RE Week, July 7-13, will explore the theme, *The Web: Interdependent/World Wide*.

For more information about Ferry Beach and RE Week, please contact Louise Marcoux (one of the coordinators of this program) or Alison Reid.

Sr. Youth Fundraiser for Nicaragua Trip

The youth of our church, along with others, are currently planning a service trip with ATRAVES to Nicaragua in June of 2012. They will once again teach English to students in grades 4-6 in a school in Managua, and visit several other communities.

In order to help finance this trip, the youth are currently staffing the Social Justice Fair Trade Table at Coffee Hour, with all profits earmarked for Nicaragua.

They are also distributing Equal Exchange Catalogues to those who want to help them by buying Fair Trade products during the holiday season. Catalogue orders will be collected by December 8th, with products being delivered the following week.

Talk with Gare Reid Jr., Yvonne Marcoux, Madison Rivard, Nick Dumont or Caroline Dixon for details.

Other fundraising ideas are being developed, so stay tuned for more opportunities to support our youths' efforts to make the world a better place. Thanks!



Hear Ye, Hear Ye

The Membership Committee of the Unitarian Church of Sharon wishes to extend an invitation to one and all to attend the **Annual Holiday Open House Pot Luck Supper!**

Saturday, December 10th from 5-7 p.m. in the Church Vestry

There will be no sign-up sheets for food; bring what strikes your fancy and it will be consumed without a doubt! Assistance is needed for set up at 4 p.m. as well as for clean up at the end.

Child care will be provided.

This is a nice opportunity to spend some time with your fellow UCS friends in a relaxed atmosphere before the hustle and bustle of the season sets in.

Donations this year will be collected for our partner school in Uganda.

HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL!

Questions? Call: Jean Zaniewski, Cindy Wilson or Lisa Yeransian

Make and Take Elf Appreciation

On a recent Saturday in November, 15 children gathered for our annual Make and Take Holiday Craft Day.

Thanks to the following elves, everyone (including the elves!) had a wonderful time! Bouquets to Kate Parker-O'Toole, Pam Baker-Webber and Dia Cheney, the Head Elves. They were ably assisted by Philip Conover, Ken Zaniewski, 'Schnig' Schleinig, Gare Reid (Jr), Louise Marcoux, Patricia Hatch, Karen Zelvinsky, Joyce Bramhall, and many other parents. With a special thanks to Georgia Salvatore who helped make decorated bags even though she could not attend the event.

Music That You Will Put You in the Holiday Spirit

Consider coming to the church holiday party followed by an inspiring choral concert with people you know among the performers. Saturday Dec 10th at 8pm is the opening performance by Neponset Choral Society for Handel's "Dixit Dominus", a rousing energetic composition created when he was only 17 years old. The program concludes with Vivaldi's famous "Gloria" which is heavenly and joyful. Should you miss Saturday night, there is the chance for redemption by coming on Sunday afternoon at 2:30pm. Location is St Marks Episcopal Church in Foxboro, right next to the high school. See Beth and Rory McGregor or Dan Huse for tickets. There's a \$2 discount to buy in advance. We'd love to see you in the audience!

ADULT PROGRAMS IN DECEMBER

CONVERSATIONS AT THE MEETINGHOUSE: December 2nd. **Marjorie Clapprod**, former State Representative, candidate for Lieutenant Governor, radio talk show host and media consultant, will talk about "**Women in Politics and the Media.**" Marjorie will take a serious but fun look at Women in Politics, and sprinkle in personal experiences from her political, medical and media careers, tying observations on the advantages and disadvantages women have in the public arena. Program begins at 7 pm. Free and open to the public.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE POT LUCK SUPPER: Saturday, December 10th from 5-7 p.m. in the Church Vestry (See article on Page 4.)

NOT JUST ANOTHER COFFEE HOUSE: Saturday December 17 at 7pm in the vestry. (See article on Page 6.)

SUNDAY BOOK GROUP: Dec. 4, 12pm, library discussing "Infidel" by Ayaan Ali.

MEDITATION GROUP: Meets each Tuesday 7:30pm in program space A/B.

WEDNESDAY BOOK GROUP: Dec. 7, 7:30pm, library discussing "Grapes of Wrath" by Steinbeck.

MOVIE NIGHT: Friday Dec. 9, 7pm, in program space A/B to view and discuss "The Crying Game".

WRITER'S GROUP will meet Dec. 18th, 12pm, in the library. Bring something you have written or someone else has written. Our theme this time will be "animals".

MEN'S GROUP: If interested in joining a men's support group contact Jim Robinson at revrobinson@uusharon.org.

WOMEN'S GROUP: If interested in joining a women's support group contact Louise Chereski at louisechereski@comcast.net.

CONTEMPLATIVE RETREAT MORNING: Our monthly Saturday contemplative retreat will be held on December 31st at 9:30am. It will be a ritual experience of sifting through the past year (what to let go of, what to hang onto, what to affirm, what to compost!) and then opening our hearts to the new year (what to hope for, what to ask for, what mystery to open to).



MEETINGHOUSE NEWS

- Congratulations to Ellie and Kelsey Leonardsmith as their Mob Squad team advanced to the finals of the Roller Derby League with Kelsey being named the MVP. Some twenty members of UCS attended the semi-final game.
- Welcome to four new members who joined this past fall: Daniel Tarter (a student at Brown), Jodi Armstrong (who grew up in our church), Tom and Bev Kinraide (who recently moved here from West Virginia). Our hearts and helping hands reach out to Bev as she goes through another course of chemotherapy.

NotJustAnotherCoffeeHouse



The first Holiday Not Just Another Coffee House will take place on Saturday, December 17 from 7:00-9:00 PM. Our very own Mel Springer will delight us with a variety of winter and holiday songs.

There is no better way to get in a holiday spirit than with holiday music, conversation, delicious desserts and a cup of hot coffee.

Child care is available for children four and up with pre-registration. Call Jim at 781-784-3652. A \$5 donation per child is appreciated to cover costs.

Tickets for the entertainment are \$10. Visit www.NotJustAnotherCoffeeHouse.org for additional information.

Upcoming: Don Bailey, January 21.

Long Term Care Insurance Discussion

We are blessed to be living in a part of the world with the means and the access to exceptional health care. There is good news and bad news: the good news is that we may live a long time after retirement. The bad news is that a long life expectancy increases the probability that we might need some sort of assistance or custodial care during our later years. Family may or may not be available. Unfortunately, long term custodial care is not covered by insurance and can be extraordinarily expensive. These costs can negatively affect your retirement and family goals.

One solution to the above problem is Long Term Care Insurance. Many people are curious about the product and ask questions like the following:

- What is Long Term Care Insurance?
- Who needs it?
- What does it cost?
- How will I choose the best policy for me?
- Won't Medicare or Medicaid pay for my long term care needs?
- When is the best time to buy a policy?
- How do I get one?
- Are there other options?

Peter Raskin, Financial Planner and Amy Taylor, Registered Nurse/Certified Long Term Care Insurance Specialist, two members of our congregation, will present a 90 minute discussion on Sunday, January 8th at Noon, addressing these questions and others. Please mark the date and time on your calendar for this important and timely discussion.

GIFTS FOR KIDS

Would you like to be Santa's helper or a Hanukkah elf for a child in need? The **Gifts for Kid's** Program helps ease the financial burden for less fortunate families in twelve surrounding communities, including Sharon, Canton, and Stoughton. The **Gifts for Kids** Program is a 501(c) nonprofit organization founded by Pat McDougal, a member of our church. If you would like to sponsor a child for the holidays, please speak with **Alison Reid**, 781-784-4472, ag Reid2@verizon.net, or after church near the Equal Exchange table. You will receive an email with the first name, identification number, age, clothing size, gift preferences or needs of the child assigned to you. Then you can shop for that child (average spending is \$70, but use your own judgment). Gifts may then be dropped off at our church on Sunday, **December 11** (in the Pantry across from the Kitchen in the Vestry), or on Thursday, **December 15** from 4-6 at O'Connell Hall next to Our Lady of Sorrows Church, 59 Cottage Street.



Assemble your gifts, unwrapped, inside a large plastic bag, with your child's ID number and first name both inside on a card and taped to the outside. Donations of wrapping paper and tape are appreciated by the GFK organizers, who will give it to the families for final wrapping.

Or, if you would simply like to make a cash donation in any amount, checks may be made out to **Gifts for Kids** and given to Alison Reid. Please help us spread the word. Thanks in advance for your support!

UUTube

If you get a chance sometime go to YouTube (www.youtube.com) and search for "Unitarian." There are over 14,000 clips! I had gone to try to find a clip I had seen once and thought was particularly funny about Unitarians. I eventually did find it but you know how it is, they are never as funny as you remember them being. I had a very clear memory of a line, "half of them are witches, half are atheists, and half of them don't know what they believe" which I thought was a riot. I never said I had the best sense of humor. If you're interested, here is the address of the clip:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97n6TiQmbQg> and you'll see that what I remember wasn't exactly what she said. Still, it's always good to be able to laugh at one's self even though for the most part the series of Betty Butterfield clips is rather crude in both content and production.

I mostly wanted to mention the 14,000 clips even though I went off on a tangent. Somewhere along the way YouTube became more than a series of clips that weren't good enough to make *America's Funniest Home Videos*. It 's a great resource in a lot of areas including news, history, and opinion in our tradition. Some aren't particularly good but others are. If you get a chance some evening check it out. Here are some UU examples that looked interesting:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCNzfEF8di8&feature=fvsvr>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1NPVPLuM70>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mV_JyjacCY8

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGoY0fyBy6M>

Jim Mullin

'Tis the Season for Shopping for Justice

As you make your holiday shopping plans, remember that you can add a twist and help fight hunger and homelessness along the way: When you buy Shopping for Justice cards for local grocery stores, take a minute to use them and stock up on a whole host of gift cards for restaurants, retailers and even online vendors - each grocery store has a wall of possibilities to choose from. Then use them for stocking stuffers, your Gifts for Kids shopping, employee appreciation gifts, or simply to do your own shopping this month (and all year long). The nickels will add up here in our collective work to make the world a better place. Thanks for taking the extra step - it makes a difference!

Kitchen Questions or Suggestions?

Last year the Board of Trustees asked Elaine Price and Pat Daner to undertake an assessment of our revitalized kitchen space in order to determine how the kitchen can best be organized and managed going forward. The Board would like to thank Pat and Elaine for the outstanding job that they have done so far to identify issues associated with increased use of the kitchen space, and for their thoughtful recommendations. Please contact Pat or Elaine if you have questions about the kitchen facilities, or if you have a suggestion that would help with the ongoing development of the kitchen space.

Tis the Season to be Jolly

It's also the season to establish tax deductions for 2011. Get your Operating and AIM contributions into the church by December 31, 2011 in order to qualify. *Please write the purpose of each check on the memo line and use a separate check for the AIM project from a contribution to the Operating budget.*

Tax Benefits of Gifting Stock

You may be able to receive a tax deduction on the full market value of the stock that is given to the church. This is especially helpful with stocks that have appreciated since purchase, as you can avoid paying capital gains tax on the appreciation. These stocks need to be delivered to the church's brokerage account by December 31, 2011 in order to qualify for this year's deductions. Ask for the Stock Gift Procedure at w_fox123@msn.com, or admin@uusharon.org or when you see me.

- Bill Fox

Social Justice Update - December 2011

During the month of December, UCS will celebrate our new partnership with the **New Life School** in Uganda. The New Life School is a primary school located in rural Uganda near the village of Kkindu. It was founded by the Reverend Mark Kiyimba, a Unitarian Universalist minister who serves a congregation in Kampala and a fellowship in Masaka. The school serves approximately 550 students with two kindergarten classes and one class per primary grades one through seven.

The New Life School does not receive any government funding and there are no public schools in the area. Every parent receives an invoice for tuition, but only about one-third of the parents are able to pay. Regardless, all children are welcomed, fed and taught year-round.

In order to help provide a long-term source of reliable support for the school, the UU Partner Church Council launched a new partnership model between the school and American UU congregations. The Unitarian Church of Sharon is one of nine churches to partner with the school. This year we will be sponsoring the students in the first grade. Therefore, the “**brown envelope**” offerings for the month of December will support the New Life School. To learn more about the school, please attend the special worship service on December 4th.

Thank you for your generosity! The “brown envelope” offerings in October allowed UCS to donate \$245.35 towards UUA’s Association Sunday and \$486.57 to the Vermont Disaster Relief Fund, a collaborative fund established by the United Way chapters in Vermont.

MainSpring House – The next lunch making for MainSpring House will be on Sunday, December 18th, during coffee hour. The next dinner to be served at MainSpring House will be on Monday, January 30th. If you would like to volunteer to help serve the dinner and/or make desserts, please send an email to lizandmia@aol.com.

Stoughton-Sharon Food Pantry – When you are purchasing groceries, please pick up extra can foods to donate to the local food pantry. Donated items may be placed in the collection box in the entryway. Members of the Social Justice Committee will deliver them to the food pantry. Thank you!

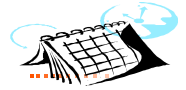
Shopping for Justice – Will you be purchasing gift cards to give for the holidays? Did you know that the following stores sell gift cards to most retail stores and restaurants? **Big Y, Roche Bros., Hannafords, Stop & Shop and Shaws.** By purchasing grocery gift cards for these stores from the church and using them to buy your holiday gift cards, we raise important money for our collective efforts to end hunger and homelessness locally and around the world. We buy in bulk, get savings ranging from 2 to 6%, and sell to the congregation at full price. You get dollar-for-dollar value at the store, and the church is then able to fund a range of programs, like our monthly lunchmaking and dinners for MainSpring House in Brockton. Stop by the Social Justice Corner in the Vestry during Coffee Hour and purchase cards or learn more about how this works. Together, we can change the world, one gift card at a time. Thank you!

Join the Social Justice Steering Committee! If you would like more information, please contact the co-chairs, Gare Reid at (781) 492-4567 or Mia Joiner-Moore at (781) 784-0426. And, comments and suggestions to the committee can be sent to justicecommittee@uusharon.org

*Happy Holidays from the
Social Justice Committee!*



December 2011 Calendar



Thursday, December 1, 2011
Worship committee 5:30pm (Vestry)
Endowment Fund Board Mtg 7:30(Library)

Friday December 2, 2011
Conversations at the Meetinghouse 7:00pm

Saturday, December 3, 2011
Committee Chairs Mtg. 9:00am (Vestry)
English Conv. Class 10:30am (Library)

Sunday, December 4, 2011
Choir Rehearsal 9:15am (sanctuary)
1-2-3 craft workshop 11:30am (B)
Revels Rehearsal 11:45am (Sanctuary)
Book group 12:00pm (Library)
Sharon Interfaith Adult Group 5:00(Vestry)
Youth Group 5:00pm (Library)
Evening service 7:00pm (Vestry)

Monday, December 5, 2011
Women's Grp I (Closed Mtg.) 7:30 (Library)

Tuesday, December 6, 2011
Children's Choir 5:30pm (B)
Caring Committee 6:30pm (Minister's Study)
Meditation group 7:30pm (A/B)

Wednesday, December 7, 2011
Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm (Sanctuary)
Coming of Age 7:30pm
Book group 7:30pm (Library)

Thursday, December 8, 2011
Men's Group 8:00pm (Library)

Friday, December 9, 2011
Movie night 7:00pm (A/B)

Saturday, December 10, 2011
English Conv. Class 10:30am (Library)
Annual Holiday Party & Potluck 5:30 (Vestry)

Sunday, December 11, 2011
Choir Rehearsal 9:15am (sanctuary)
Revels Bazaar 11:30am
Youth Group 5:00pm (Library)
Evening service 7:00pm (Vestry)

Monday, December 12, 2011
2nd Women's Support Grp. (Open Mtg.)
7:00pm (Library)
Finance Committee 7pm (Treasurer's office)
Building and Grounds 7:30pm (A)

Tuesday, December 13, 2011
Children's Choir 5:30pm (B)
Meditation group 7:30pm (A/B)

Wednesday, December 14, 2011
Board of Trustees 7:15pm (A)
Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm (Sanctuary)

Thursday, December 15, 2011
Membership Comm. 7:30pm (Library)

Friday, December 16, 2011
John Rutter "Requiem" Concert 5:00pm
(Sanctuary)

Saturday, December 17, 2011
English Conv. Class 10:30am (Library)
Solstice rehearsal 7:00pm (Sanctuary)
Coffee house 7:00pm

Sunday, December 18, 2011
Choir Rehearsal 9:15am (sanctuary)
Youth Group 5:00pm (Library)
Solstice Service 7:00pm (Sanctuary)

Monday, December 19, 2011
Woman's Grp. I (Closed Mtg.) 7:30 (Library)

Tuesday, December 20, 2011
Meditation group 7:30pm (A/B)
Children's Choir 5:30pm (B)

Wednesday, December 21, 2011
Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm (Sanctuary)

Thursday, December 22, 2011
Flute concert 7:00pm (Sanctuary)
Men's Group 8:00pm (Library)

Friday, December 23, 2011
Newsletter Deadline 5:00pm

Saturday, December 24, 2011
Christmas Eve Services 5:00pm (Sanctuary)
Christmas Eve Service 7:00pm (Sanctuary)

Sunday, December 25, 2011
Choir Rehearsal 9:15am (sanctuary)

Monday, December 26, 2011
2nd Women's Support Grp. (Open Mtg.)
7:00pm (Library)

Tuesday, December 27, 2011
Meditation group 7:30pm (A/B)
Children's Choir 5:30pm (B)

Wednesday, December 28, 2011
Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm (Sanctuary)

Saturday, December 31, 2011
Monthly Contemplative Retreat 9:30am(A/B)



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

UNITARIAN CHURCH
OF SHARON
4 NORTH MAIN STREET
SHARON, MA 02067



*A Welcoming
Congregation of
the UUA*

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT
WORSHIP AND ACTIVITIES
CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE AT
781/784-3652

SEND AN EMAIL TO
ADMIN@UUSHARON.ORG
OR VISIT US ON THE WEB AT
www.uusharon.org

JUST SOME OF WHAT'S INSIDE!

**REVELS
REVELS BAZAAR
NOTJUSTANOTHERCOFFEEHOUSE**

**HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE
CONVERSATIONS AT THE
MEETINGHOUSE**