



# UUFC WORLD

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson

230 Pendleton Road, Clemson, SC 29631

December 2009

Volume 31 Issue 12



## DECEMBER SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning Reflection - 10 a.m.    Social Time-10:30 a.m.    Services - 11:00 a.m.

### Worship Notes

By Holley Ulbrich

December is always a special month for worship services with Advent vespers, a solstice bonfire, the Christmas Eve service, and the intergenerational musical Christmas service. This year is no exception.

We begin the last month of 2009 with Rev. Cynthia Prescott on December 6th, *Theology in a Secular Age*. December 13th is an intergenerational service, *Three Miraculous Births*, with lots of music and theatre to celebrate the season. December 20th Cynthia will lead a seasonal worship service on the theme *Dark of Winter*. Holley Ulbrich and Kathryn Smith will end the year with a somewhat light-hearted service called *The Twelve Days of Christmas*.

Ralph Stutzman will lead the morning reflection on December 6th. His topic is *At Home in the Universe*. Heidi Campbell will lead morning reflection on December 13th. In honor of the Hannukah season, she will discuss Rabbi Hillel. On December 20th Christine Grewcock will celebrate solstice with us. There is no morning reflection on December 27th.

And then there are the special services...Advent vespers from 6 to 6:30 on Fridays, December 4, 11 and 18. The first will be young adult oriented, led by Revs. Susie Smith and Cynthia Prescott. Cynthia will also lead the middle vespers. The final vespers will be a Christmas communion. Solstice bonfire is Monday, December 21st at 6 p.m. (assembly inside). Christmas Eve service will be at 7 p.m.

*December 6 -*

*Theology in a Secular Age*

Reverend Cynthia Prescott

*December 13 -*

*Intergenerational Service -*

*Three Miraculous Births*

Choir & Co.

*December 20 -*

*Dark of Winter*

Reverend Cynthia Prescott

*December 27 -*

*The Twelve Days of Christmas*

Holley Ulbrich & Kathryn Smith

*(Note that there will be no Morning Reflection on December 27th.)*

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## Special Advent Vespers Services

6 - 6:30 pm Fridays

December 4 - Young Adult Oriented

Rev. Susie Smith & Cynthia Prescott

December 11 - Middle Vespers

Rev. Cynthia Prescott

December 18 - Final Vespers

Christmas Communion

Rev. Cynthia Prescott

Solstice Bonfire

December 21 - 6 p.m.

**Christmas Eve Service**

**December 24 - 7 p.m.**

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(HIGHLIGHTS in this issue: Please see every page in this important end-of-2009 edition!)

## FOR THINKING OUT LOUD:

*'Tis the Season*

Reverend Cynthia Prescott

My childhood Christmases were idyllic: lots of presents, much excitement, too much pie. Enough about that. Once I hit adulthood, everything changed. For many Christmases I was married to a man who had not had an idyllic childhood time of it. He liked my family's Christmases better than his own. No problem. Since everybody lived in the same town, we were expected to show up on both family doorsteps anyway.

Time wasn't an issue. Marc's family is French Canadian. In their tradition, after midnight mass on Christmas Eve comes the "reveillon", the dawn of Christmas Day, celebrated with the opening of presents and the consumption of foods one generally is advised under threat of heartburn not to eat before bedtime. No matter. Not until around 3:00 a.m., would Marc and I stumble homeward, only to arise like holiday zombies at 8:00 a.m., when my family's celebration got underway with more presents and a special breakfast, the intro to special food all day long.

Did I mention both Marc and I commuted sixty round trip miles to work – in opposite directions? And that I was employed by a chain of department stores? Ho-ho-ho notwithstanding, a department store is the least idyllic place to work during the Christmas season. As a gesture of solidarity (with the profit margin, not The People), for several weeks before Day 25, we "executives" were expected to stand all day and evening alongside the sales staff, except they came and went in two shifts, whereas we had to report for the long haul. Only Santa's elves keep longer hours, and they aren't required to deal with a stress-crazed consumer public.

No wonder one of my favorite holiday books is titled The Worst Noel. It's a collection of true confessions by eighteen well-known writers, each of whom has had at least one hellish Hannukah or Christmas.

I don't like being this way. I've spent years trying to get my Christmas mojo back. Not to the mythic childhood level; I realize those days are gone forever. Not even to the pre-family-marathon level. Lots of families go through holiday contortions; I've never claimed my "worst Noels" were anything special. Furthermore, I'm aware there are soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan who'd give a million to be

home hearing Aunt Rose complain about her knees as she hoists a roast turkey onto the dining table.

I'm a Unitarian Universalist. I need an explanation. *What slap to the neurons transformed Scrooge from...well, Scrooge...into a paragon of holiday cheer?* Charles Dickens was a Unitarian, so the question is not amiss.

For insight I turned to another favorite seasonal book, Roger Highfield's The Physics of Christmas. Speculation as to why we crave holiday happiness abounds, but the key reasons can be summed up as follows: *Freud, pheromones and faith*. Early Freudians (and later Jungians, but they don't begin with an "f" sound) have reasoned that via the excitement, anticipation and intimacy of Yuletide, we get in touch subconsciously with the mystery of birth, specifically our own. (Freud put a sexual spin on that which I won't go into here.) Pheromones are chemistry. They're what attract us to one another, not just sexually, but socially. What better way to give our pheromones free rein than through holiday rituals ranging from family celebrations to the office party?

The faith factor is neither self-explanatory, nor as narrowly interpreted as you might think. While those who believe firmly in God and the "reason for the season" do enjoy an improved shot at holiday mental and physical health, so do those who simply enjoy the enjoyment. While every year plenty of people have good reason to dread the season, there's no solid evidence suggesting that the winter holidays are capable of causing gloom, including an increased risk of suicide.

Freud, pheromones, and faith offer fascinating insight into the festive holiday mind. I do feel my mojo returning a bit, especially at the last one. Like most ministers, I brace myself for an increase in pastoral crises during the holidays. Even though crises can happen, it's good to know they don't necessarily happen more often just because of the season.

To my mind there's only one "Christmas message." The gift of it is yours no matter how or with whom you celebrate: *The gift is light*. Light of candle, light of solstice bonfire, lighted windows reflecting sequins on a party dress. Light of solitary prayer, menorah lights, luminary lights. If you don't see your favorite light listed here, take that as a reminder from me to make sure you seek it out.

Blessed season. Blessed be.

Cynthia

## THE VIEW FROM HERE

### *What a Year it Has Been!*

Martha Alexander, UUFC Board President

As I think about this year, the main thing that comes to mind are the people who gave so willingly of their time and talents. First is the Board. Carolyn Turner has shown that she is truly a tower of strength as she tries to document all that is said and put up with corrections and additions and lets us know when she's had enough corrections. Christine Grewcock and Sandra Sanderson can do things with numbers that boggle my mind. Christine's spreadsheets are amazing and Sandra has fought the good fight to keep us afloat financially. Eleanore Richardson gave up her seat on COSMOS to be our At-Large representative. Cindy Lee has been amazing as she serves on the Board, and as council chair has a job much more involved than being president of the Fellowship. Then there's the council. Anita Stutzman is a miracle worker. Sometimes I think of the loaves and fishes story as she begs for help and always makes it happen, not the least of which was buying a new stove to replace the broken one and getting a really fantastic gently used one for Founders' House just before Thanksgiving. Some time ask Anita and Julie how they got the used one for \$500. Meg Williamson works tirelessly to keep our grounds looking spiffy and Allen Guest was responsible for getting someone to fix the leak in the clerestory, in addition to the ever present maintenance including the ladies' room toilets. Karen Hiebel has been involved in everything from her regular position as Membership Chair to Finance to By-Laws revisions. Holley Ulbrich is also involved in many endeavors besides being Worship Chair. You may find her pricing yard sale items in the early morning hours. John Kennelly who is not all that much into yard sales, has however, stayed with it this year as Ways and Means Chair. Kathryn Smith is a whirlwind of activity at Outreach. I know because I get all the emails. Jan Lay has all kinds of ideas as to how we can communicate better. Jeannine Varenhorst is our permanent, I guess, Receiving Treasurer. She is always there and ready to serve. Bonnie Worthen helped many get meals, rides, and care during her tenure as Caring Chair. I think of Steve Bynum as a magician as he maintains our website and gets our newsletter up every month. How lucky we were to get Mark Mellott as RE Chair. Don't you just love it when he reads to the children? And then there's Bob Snelsire. It's hard to know what to say about Bob, however, I have signed on as president of his fan club. You may not know he takes it personally when he cannot secure enough pledges for all our wishes and declares he's a failure. Not!

Our employees have all worked so hard for us this year. Not only does Rev. Cynthia speak to us on Sundays, but visits the sick, helps the needy, and so much more than there is room on this page. Meg MacArthur is another miracle worker getting teachers for our children, reading to children at Together Time, and generally keeping RE all together. Our music staff, Elaine Fredendall, and Shayna Hollander touch my heart with beautiful music. Meg Williamson, Katie Loy and Kyle Rusnak have given our little ones love and care.

Now I want to mention four who have been so very special to me this year. Karel Keel, (Past President, COSMOS Chair) and Julie Craig (Administrator) have been my go to persons for everything imaginable. Without them to listen to my mutterings and help me along the way, I think it would have been impossible to continue. Heidi Campbell has been so very patient and helpful to me and puts together the best newsletter ever. Robin Kimbrough-Melton is not only President-Elect and Chair of the Nominating Committee, but just when we thought President-Elect would not have to be Personnel Chair, she took that on too. I want to offer her my best wishes as Board President 2010.

It is impossible to mention everyone because there are many others of you who have volunteered so much and I am so very grateful for all each one of you does for us.

*(Continued on next page)*

(The View From Here - Continued from Page 3)

*In the Beginnings...*

Every board meeting begins with opening words. In the past, inspirational opening words have been from wise and profound sources. You may think I went from the sublime to the ridiculous, but I choose to call them from wise to witty and thought you might enjoy some of my favorites.

“America is a nation of many faiths and common values, and bigotry toward anyone because of their beliefs is unacceptable.” Rev. Al Sharpton

Parish Priest Vistorini (Venice 1609) watched Rabbi Judah Aryeh walking with stooped, head down posture. As he watched he considered him. “How many small humiliations had it taken to bow him over into a cringing stoop?” The Rabbi “straightened as he spoke to Vistorini, and now, protected by his eminent companion he walked upright, his shoulders thrown back and his head erect.” (Brooks, Geraldine, *People of the Book*, pp. 151-153)

“Some things don’t matter but lifting someone’s heart-Now that’s what matters.” (Kidd, Sue Monk, *The Secret Lives of Bees*, as spoken by the character portrayed by Queen Latifah.)

A man or woman never stands so tall as when he or she stoops to help a child. (Bumper sticker in Wal-Mart parking lot)

“We don’t stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing.” (Shaw, George Bernard)

Educated people who feel good about themselves do not have to show others how smart they are. In fact, they are so adept at sharing their knowledge that they can converse with anyone on any level without the person feeling talked down to. (Unknown)

On committees: A group that takes a week to accomplish what one good person could accomplish in a day. (Bureau of Business Practice, Inc.)

Committee rules: Never arrive on time; this stamps you as a beginner. Don’t say anything until the meeting is half over; this stamps you as being wise. Be vague as possible; this avoids irritating others. When in doubt suggest a subcommittee be appointed. Be the first to move for adjournment; this will make you popular; it’s what everyone is waiting for. (Harry Chapman)

The last two are from *Tea Time for the Traditionally Built* by Alexander McCall Smith.

“If you do not stretch your legs, the blood sinks down to the feet and there is not enough for the brain. That is why some people are so stupid. They are the ones who have too much blood in their feet.” (Spoken by the character Grace Makutsi, p. 57)

Character Precious Ramotswe asked character Bishop Trevor Mwamba of the Anglican Church, “Is it true that the sun will swallow up the earth and that will be that?” Bishop Mwamba answered, “Our concern should be what is happening right now. There is plenty of work for love to do.” (pp.55-56)



**Announcement from UUFC Board President  
Martha Alexander:**

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
Sunday, December 13, 2009  
12:20 pm, Sanctuary

AGENDA:  
Slate of Officers for 2010  
By-Laws Revisions  
2010 Budget



**SHARED MINISTRY  
SURVEY RESULTS**

**Submitted by Karel Keel**

Many thanks to the 95 members and friends who participated in the Shared Ministry Evaluation conducted last month by COSMOS (Committee on Shared Ministry). While there was general agreement in some areas, an amazingly wide variety of opinions were expressed, not atypical of most UU  
(continued on next page)

Congregations.

The survey revealed that more than 90% of you agree or agree strongly that our sanctuary is inviting and physically accessible and that our buildings and grounds are attractive (although many of you indicated that our buildings could be better maintained). More than 80% agree or agree strongly that we value the diversity of our members, friends, and visitors and that we raise awareness regarding social justice issues and provide opportunities for addressing them.

However, less than 60% agree or agree strongly that we have sufficient opportunities to express diverse views in the decision-making process, and only 40% or fewer agree or agree strongly that our Sunday services inspire their soul, that we deal openly and honestly with conflict, and that we offer constructive feedback in our congregational life.

The Board is currently reviewing all the responses, including the comments, and referring them to the appropriate committees. In the next few months we will be addressing the challenges identified in the survey, yet keeping in mind our covenant of right relationship and respecting the worth and dignity of all our members and friends. Your responses are a vital part of the democratic process and will be taken into account as we seek to make UUFC even stronger while preserving those characteristics that make us uniquely important to our community.

A detailed, complete summary of all the numerical responses has been emailed to all members and friends. If you did not receive it or if you have any questions, please contact Karel Keel ([karel@bellsouth.net](mailto:karel@bellsouth.net)).

## Ideas for Fixing Healthier Foods Submitted by Ellie Taylor

UUFC is no different from other groups: WE LOVE TO EAT. However, we also acknowledge that growing children and adults with health problems often eat the food we serve. Our commitment is to offer foods that are both delicious and contribute to the well-being of others.

When possible, our H&H Committee recommends that we offer whole or lightly processed foods like fruits, vegetables and nuts. When we buy, cook or bake foods that children will eat, we strive to serve foods that follow current healthy guidelines.

Here are some ideas for preparing healthier foods:

When baking, replace at least half of the refined white flour with whole wheat or another whole grain flour. Add oats, nuts, dried fruit, chopped fruit, powdered milk or seeds for added nutrition. Substitute unsweetened applesauce for half the oil or butter. Alternatively, instead of using butter, replace with healthier oil like olive or canola, or a butter-healthy oil blend offered in your grocery store. Cut the sugar in half – the difference is usually not noticeable. Do not use artificial sweeteners in foods that children might eat.

Never buy or serve anything with “partially hydrogenated fat” in the Ingredients list even if the package says “0 trans fat”.

Make dips or salads with nonfat plain yogurt, nonfat sour cream or nonfat mayonnaise. Cut the amount of oil, meat or cheese in recipes in half. Choose extra-lean meat or 2% cheese. In all recipes, double beans or vegetables for greater nutrition.

Happy holiday eating from the Hospitality and Holidays Committee! We will be adding healthy recipes to our UUFC website in 2010. For other ideas or questions, feel free to call our resident nutrition expert and author, Ellie Taylor at 654-1331.



A few movie-&-entertainment-loving-UUFC Women recently got together for a Friday matinee at the movie theater in Seneca, to see the documentary "This Is It."

NOVEL CIRCLE: Meets first Wednesday of every month in Founders' House.

December 2, 2009. *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. With effortless grace, the author illuminates a seminal moment in modern African history: Biafra's impassioned struggle to establish an independent republic in southeastern Nigeria during the late 1960s. We experience this tumultuous decade alongside five unforgettable characters: Ugwu, a thirteen-year-old houseboy who works for Odenigbo, a university professor full of revolutionary zeal; Olanna, the professor's beautiful young mistress who has abandoned her life in Lagos for a dusty town and her lover's charm; and Richard, a shy young Englishman infatuated with Olanna's willful twin sister Kainene. A tremendously evocative novel of the promise, hope, and disappointment of the Biafran war. 560 pages, Anchor, 2007.

January 6, 2010. *Down Town* by Ferrol Sams. With his naturalistic and humorous storytelling style, few storytellers are as endearing as James Aloysius "Buster" Holcombe, Jr., the observant narrator of Sams's new novel. From Reconstruction, the first World War, the Depression, and World War II, to racial integration, land speculation, and economic boom, Buster Holcombe recounts the events that have shaped our country since the mid-nineteenth century through the eyes of the wide-ranging denizens of "our town." *Down Town* offers a panoptic history of the American South, carefully observed and skillfully presented by a native son. 309 pages, Mercer University Press, 2007.

February 3, 2010. *Serena* by Ron Rash. The year is 1929, and newlyweds George and Serena Pemberton travel from Boston to the North Carolina mountains where they plan to create a timber empire. Although George has already lived in the camp long enough to father an illegitimate child, Serena is new to the mountains--but she soon shows herself to be the equal of any man, overseeing crews, hunting rattlesnakes, even saving her husband's life in the wilderness. Together this lord and lady of the woodlands ruthlessly kill or vanquish all who fall out of favor. Yet when Serena learns that she will never bear a child, she sets out to murder the son George fathered without her. Mother and child begin a struggle for their lives, and when Serena suspects George is protecting his illegitimate family, the Pembertons' intense, passionate marriage starts to unravel as the story moves toward its shocking reckoning. Rash's masterful balance of violence and beauty yields a riveting novel that, at its core, tells of love both honored and betrayed. 384 pages, Ecco, 2008.

Submitted by Gail Brownlee

## THE DRE's Corner

### Religious Education Fund Raising

The children and youth collected for UNICEF in the Trick or Treat for UNICEF program. We collected at the Fellowship on October 25<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>. Then some children also collected on Halloween. They managed to raise \$124.53 this year.

Usually we participate in the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's Guest at Your Table program over Christmas. This year we've decided to put that off until February. Two fundraising activities so close together seemed a little too much. And this can fit in with Valentine's Day - giving from your heart. Look for more information on the UU Service Committee and their Guest at Your Table program in the months to come.

Thank you for supporting Religious Education at the Fellowship.

Meg MacArthur

Director of Religious Education



UUFC WORLD is published monthly by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson. Please send your submissions to heidisong@nctv.com or visit us at 230 Pendleton Road, Clemson, SC 29631.

The deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month for the following month's edition.

Visit our web page at [www.uufc.org](http://www.uufc.org).

Our Web-master is Steve Bynum.

**Happy Holidays to one and all!**

The Green Sanctuary Committee is sponsoring the showing of the video "The End of Suburbia - Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream." At UUFC on Tuesday, December 1 at 5:30 pm. (*The film is 65 minutes.*) All are invited, and new members to the Green Sanctuary are always welcome.

Karel Keel

### Holiday Cheer & Other Announcements!

It's time for the UUFC Women's White Elephant Holiday Party!

Monday, December 7, 5:00 p.m., at Founders' House. Bring a dish to pass and that "white elephant gift" which you are eager to part with, but might be just what another woman has always wanted! :-)

(RSVP to Jan at [jmarsh@clemson.edu](mailto:jmarsh@clemson.edu)).

Another UUFC Tradition of 10 years:

Marsh Chili Open House: December 19, 4:30 - 7:30 p.m. RSVP by 12-14-09 by calling Ken or Jan Marsh at 888-0011. A simple dessert or beverage is welcome, but not required.

Fund Raising News: The Holiday Bazaar was a big success and raised about \$900!

A reprise will take place on Sunday, December 6 from 1 - 4 p.m. Any vendors who want to return should contact Marty Bynum or Jan Lay. - Holley Ulbrich -

Our condolences to member Cindy Rodgers, who lost her her mother, Theresa Hege, age 94, on Tuesday, November 17, and her uncle, Ed Hege, age 99, on Thursday, November 12.

## COUNCIL OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS-2009

Cindy Lee	Board Representative & Chair of Council
Building/Grounds	Allen Guest & Meg Williamson
Communication	Jan Lay
Hospitality/Holidays	Anita Stutzman
Membership	Karen Hiebel
Outreach	Kathryn Smith
Religious Education	Mark Mellott
Stewardship	Bob Snelsire
Ways and Means	John Kenelly
Worship	Holley Ulbrich

## Monthly Board & Committee Meetings

**Covenant Groups: We have 6 on-going Covenant Groups.** Please inquire at the office if you are interested.

### UUFC Board, Committee, and other Business Meetings

Outreach Committee, 1st Thursday, 6:00 pm,  
Library

Membership Committee, 4th Wednesday, 5:30pm

RE Committee Meeting, 3rd Tuesday, Noon,  
Founders House

### Board Meetings, Second Wednesdays 7:00 pm, Social Room

Finance Committee, 1st Wednesday 6:30 pm,  
Library

Green Sanctuary, 1st Tuesday, 5:30 pm,  
Founders House

COSMOS, 3rd Thursday, 4:45 pm,  
Founders House

Staff Meeting, 3rd Wednesday, Founders House

## Miscellaneous Monthly Events

Clemson Community Care Food Collection,  
1st Sunday, Main Building

Trading Post, 2nd Sunday usually

Benevolence Offertory, 4th Sunday, Sanctuary  
(but this month it is the 5th Sunday!)

UUFC Women's Salad Supper Group,  
4th Wednesday, 6:30 pm, Founders House

Novel Circle, 1st Wednesday, 7:30 pm,  
Founders (*See Page 6* - All are welcome!)

Literary League, For people who love words.  
3rd Tuesday, 5 pm, (call Bonnie Worthen for  
details. 646-3319) Bring an appetite to become  
real wordsmiths!) Founders House

Fourth Sunday Food for Thought: Pot luck  
lunch & discussion on UUA-relevant topic.  
Main Building Social Room

## Miscellaneous Weekly Events

Course in Miracles - Saturday, 10 am - Library

Choir Practice\* Thursdays, 5:30pm. - Sanctuary

### UUFC Board of Directors

President	Martha Alexander
President-Elect	Robin Kimbrough-Melton
Past President	Karel Keel
Secretary	Carolyn Turner
Treasurer	Christine Grewcock
Finance	Sandra Sanderson
Council Chair*	Cindy Lee
At Large	Eleanore Richardson
Ex Officio	Rev. Cynthia Prescott
Personnel (Interim)	Robin Kimbrough-Melton
Minister, Rev. Cynthia Prescott	654-8832
Director of RE, Meg MacArthur	639-2847
Administrator, Julie Craig	654-5959
Choir Director, Elaine Fredendall	654-3834
Pianist, Shayna Hollander	
Main Building Phone:	654-5980
Email: uufcadm@yahoo.com	
Receiving Treasurer, Jeannine Varenhorst	
UUFC Webmaster: Steve Bynum	
UUFC website: www.uufc.org	
Newsletter Editor: Heidi Campbell	653-7835

(\*See page 8 for individual committee Chairs.)

**Newsletter Deadline for the January 2010 is December 20th.** Please send articles, letters, announcements and other submissions to [heidisong@nctv.com](mailto:heidisong@nctv.com).

Want to know what's going on at UUFC between newsletters? Subscribe to the electronic announcement list and you'll receive one or two messages each week keeping you up to date on fellowship activities and people. To subscribe, send an email to [uufcadm@yahoo.com](mailto:uufcadm@yahoo.com) and ask to be signed up or call the Fellowship office at 654-5959.

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We affirm and promote:

- the inherent dignity and worth of all people
- justice, equity and compassion in human relations
- a free and responsible search for truth and meaning
- the right of conscience and use of the democratic process
- a goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all
- acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth
- respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are a part.