



All Souls News

A newsletter for the members and friends of All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Shreveport, Louisiana

9449 Ellerbe Road, Shreveport, Louisiana 71106 ♦ (318) 868-3313 ♦ www.allsoulsuushreveport.org

DECEMBER SERVICES

Worship Service starts at 11 a.m.

Children and Youth are dismissed during the service for Religious Education. Nursery care is available during Adult RE and till the service ends.

December 6—Rev. Barbara Jarrell is in the pulpit. *Board Persons of the Day are Eric First and Jocelyn Lanham.*

December 13—Rev. Barbara Jarrell is in the pulpit. The annual **Monster Cookie Swap** (see Page 6) is today, as is our annual **Congregational Meeting** where we approve the budget for the coming year (see Page 7). *Board Persons of the Day are Amanda Lawrence and Diane Bundy.*

December 20—“Awaiting the Light,” our Winter Holiday Service, which also celebrates the conclusion of our Religious Education pillar on Jewish and Christian Heritage. Join the children, youth and adults of our congregation to celebrate the holidays in the context of these living streams of our faith heritage. Please note, there is no Adult RE today. *Board Persons of the Day are Bob Jordan and Melissa Gibson.*

December 24 at 6:30 p.m.—Our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service features a reading from the Christmas Story in the book of Luke, from the Christian Testament, as well as carol singing, music from our choir and guest musicians, and of course, the growing glow of candles reflected in the window against the dark of a winter's night. Be sure to bring the kids early, as they have a special part at the beginning of the service. *Board Persons of the Day are Amanda Lawrence and Kathy Osuch.*

December 27—Something wonderful to ring out the old and ring in the new, to be announced. Please note, there is no Adult RE today. *Board Persons of the Day are Kathy Osuch and Ken Peterson.*

Angel Tree List Now Available in Foyer

It's time to claim the name of a child from our Community Support Angel Tree list, and make that child's holiday wishes come true!

The 30 children on our list are all involved somehow with the Department of Children's and Family Services, and are all currently in their homes, whether returned there after time in foster care, or remaining in the home under DCFS supervision. You can be an Angel for a child this year by choosing a child's name from a list available on one of the tables out in the church foyer. You can also request a child online by emailing **Susan Caldwell**.

Buy and, if desired, wrap the requested present(s), and bring them back labeled on or before December 20. On that day, we will wrap any unwrap gifts as part of the Children's Christmas Party activities.

Our congregation steps up beautifully for this effort each year, and this year should be no exception!
Submitted by Susan Caldwell, DLRE



OFFICE HOURS Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
OFFICE EMAIL office@allsoulsuushreveport.org
OFFICE PHONE (318) 868-3313



CONTACT INFORMATION

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office@allsoulsuushreveport.org

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efirst@lsuhsc.edu

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OPEN

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Phil Boswell
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Newsletter Editor

Melissa Gibson
(318) 550-1296 – Cell
MelissaInkDesigns@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Tuesday, December 29
by 8 p.m.

All Souls is a
Welcoming
Congregation.



Membership Matters

Join Us for an Info Session on December 6

By Ron Thurston,
Membership Committee



The next information session is December 6, following the service in the High School Religious Education room (the one with the couches and big T.V). All are welcome but the meeting is designed for visitors and guests to give you a chance to ask questions, find out more about Unitarian Universalist and activities for involvement within the church and in the community.

The membership process will be explained and a DVD will be shown to give

you a bigger picture of our movement.

We will share ongoing activities at All Souls, ways to get involved, and our membership process. Staff and members will be present to answer questions, and we will share spiritual journeys, as you are comfortable.

Please take the time to greet and get to know our visitors and welcome them to All Souls.

Those who sign the Stepping Stones book at the information session are eligible for membership 30 days later.

If you have questions regarding membership, please see me before or after church or contact me at (318) 300-9509.

Jocelyn Lanham Named December's VOM

The All Souls Board of Directors is pleased to announce **Jocelyn Lanham** as December's Volunteer of the Month.

Jocelyn is a regular fixture in the children's Religious Education classrooms, having taught PreK through 1st and 2nd through 5th.

Jocelyn also contributes her talents to All Souls potlucks, most recently offering a crepe bar at our recent Pledge Breakfast Kickoff.

She currently serves as a member-at-large for the Board, teaches RE, and is

sponsoring a fundraiser via her Scenty business. (Speaking of, you can order by following this link: <http://allsoulsuushreveport.org/cms/2015/11/29/2015-scentys-fundraiser/>).

Jocelyn's son, **Bayla**, recently completed a bridge along the nature trail for his Eagle Scout project. He worked alongside his dad, **Jason**, and several other members and friends.

Thanks to the Lanhams for all they do to make All Souls a better place!

Playground Sponsors

The following contributed donations to continue improvements to the All Souls playground. The kids are loving their new, safe playhouse!

Eric First, Leigh Anne & Joshua Chambers, Susan Caldwell, Betty Parent, Bob Jordan, John & Rebecca Tuggle, and Kathy Osuch



CORNER OFFICE WITH A VIEW

Learning the Christian Message of Grace and Hope



By Susan Caldwell,
Director of Lifespan Religious Education



As we move from the Season of Giving and Thanksgiving into the Season of Light, our children and youth continue their pillar on Jewish and Christian Heritage

As many of you remember, last year in Adult RE, we read *The Good Heart: A Buddhist Perspective on the Teachings of Jesus*, and one of the many things the Dalai Lama said to the Christians who came to hear him, and has said to many others over the years, is that while he is always pleased when people

show an interest in Buddhism, he recommends that before people take that step, they try instead to explore more deeply the path of their own religious origins.

Many of us within this faith, and indeed, the faith itself, came out of the Christian tradition, which grew out of the Jewish tradition, so it serves us well to have a solid grounding in both.

Our fourth source is "Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves."

We teach the stories of Jesus, his kindness and depth of compassion for "the least of these," as a reminder of the true message of Christianity, unsullied by the layers of fear and tribal prejudice that have obscured the message over the years.

This is particularly crucial right now, when frightening events in our world have caused some to distort the Christian message as one of exclusivity and fear instead of grace and hope.

We learn the lessons of the Hebrew Prophets, who spoke truth to power and called out the wrongs of the ruling class, even as the adults study the work of a modern day prophet, Michelle Alexander, who calls out the evils of mass incarceration.

In that tradition, we have spoken our truth to many of our candidates for public office, and though we still have a great deal of work ahead of us, it's quite possible that the tide has begun to turn on the incarceration issue and others that are important to us.

We learn the stories for all the lessons they have to teach us today.

We teach our children the stories for the same reasons, and also because if we don't, this is the Bible Belt, and, like sex ed, they will "hear it on the street."

Most importantly, in a world where it is ever more tempting to succumb to fear and isolation, we need to give to our children a faith that welcomes the stranger and always seeks to see the humanity in the one we might see as "other."

It is the faith we practice as we live in covenant with each other, that we might live it as we walk out into the world.

Building & Grounds Work Day



Saturday,
December 12

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

All ages and abilities
encouraged to
participate!

Highland Blessing Dinner

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church co-hosts the Highland Blessing Dinner on the first Thursday of every month. On months with five Thursdays, all sponsoring churches are asked to send volunteers.

The intent of the meals is to serve individuals and families who may "fall through the cracks" of social services. Currently, more than 120 meals are being served each Thursday.

Volunteers are needed to host tables, serve, and help in several other capacities—but the cooking is already done.

Sign up with Susan Caldwell or just show up at the Highland Center, 520 Olive Street, at 5 p.m.

Upcoming Meal(s): Dec. 3 & Jan. 6



Submit Your 2016 Pledge ASAP

Have you turned in your 2016 pledge?

All members are asked to file a pledge of financial commitment

each this—this helps us plan our budget for the entire year. It's important!

No amount is too small! This is about investing in your church home. If this is an intimidating commitment for you, don't be afraid to start small and increase as you're able—it all adds up!

The Pledge Committee and Board Treasurer are always available to discuss your pledge, should you need to make an adjustment.

Pledge forms are available in the foyer. If you haven't done so already, please fill one out and drop it in the offering basket or in the church office. You can also hand it to Pledge Committee Chair **Amanda Lawrence** or Board Treasurer **Melissa Gibson**.

All Souls exist solely on the generosity of our members and friends.

Please send any questions or concerns to Amanda at (318) 402-3314 or Melissa at (318) 550-1296.
Submitted by Melissa Gibson, Treasurer



"The extremists will not win this battle. The goal of these attacks is to get Planned Parenthood to stop providing care—and that will never happen. We have proudly provided reproductive health-care services for 99 years, and we are only getting started."

-Cecile Richards, President for Planned Parenthood

UUA Bookstore Offering Free Shipping

Unitarian Universalist Association Bookstore is offering free shipping until December 11 on orders totaling \$50 or more.

The site features many recommendations for holiday gift giving. There's something for everyone on your list.

In addition to many books, there are t-shirts, socks, coloring books, bumper stickers, blank cards, holiday cards, CDs, coffee mugs, children's items, and more.

Browse and order at www.uuabookstore.org.

Submitted by Melissa Gibson, Newsletter Editor



Unitarian Universalist Association
BOOKSTORE

DENOMINATIONAL EVENTS

15-17 January 2016 Gulf Coast YRUU Youth Rally Bay Area UU Church (Houston TX area). For high school youth ages 14 to 19. For more information, contact the church office.

26-28 February 2016 SW UU Women's Conference (Lawton OK). Keynote speaker is Lauren Zuniga – an internationally touring poet, activist, and teaching artist. She is the author of two poetry collections -- *The Nickel Tour* (Penmanship Books, 2009) and *The Smell of Good Mud* (Write Bloody, 2012) – and a finalist for the Oklahoma Book Award. Her work has been featured on Upworthy, MoveOn.org, BoingBoing, Autostraddle, and Everyday Feminism. She is a three time national slam finalist and one of the top ranked female slam poets in the world. Conference musicians include SJ Tucker and Emma's Revolution. Conference flyers and registration information can be found on

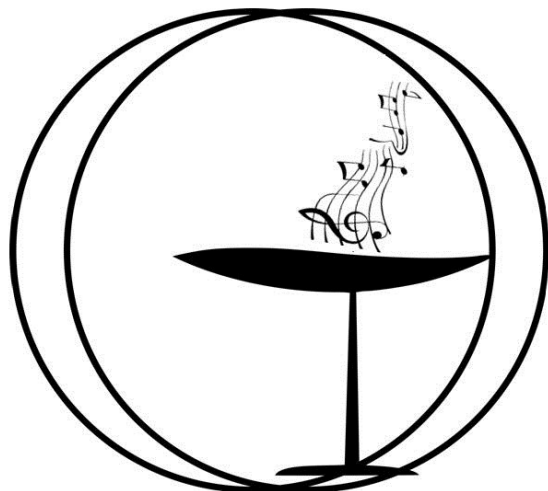
the SWUUV web site (www.swuuv.org).

29 April–1 May 2016 North Texas YRUU Youth Rally (Community UU Church – Plano TX). For high school youth ages 14 to 19. For more information, contact the church office.

27-29 May 2016 Louisiana Cluster YRUU Youth Rally (TBD – UU Church of Baton Rouge will probably host this event). For high school youth ages 14 to 19. For more information, contact the church office.

22-26 June 2016 UUA General Assembly (Columbus OH). For more information, go online here: <http://www.uua.org/ga>

Submitted by Steve Caldwell, Denominational Affairs



All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church presents: ...

KARAOKE NIGHT 2015 Gala & Silent Auction

Thank you to everyone who helped make the All Souls Annual Gala & Silent Auction a huge success! We raised about \$7,000 that night and had a great time doing it. Who knew we had so many brave and talented (and sometimes just brave) singers in our midst?

A big thank you to **Kathy Osuch**, who has played my partner in Gala & Silent Auction crime for several years now. Together, we have put together five galas. Kathy's husband, **Mike Roberts**, and my husband, **Jonathan Gibson**, are always great helpers throughout the weeks, days and hours leading up to the event.

Karaoke was provided by **Ole Sky Ranch**, located in Stonewall. Thank you to **Richard Denton** for securing the entertainment for the evening.

Thanks to everyone who helped setup, cleanup, and manage tasks throughout the event: **Betty Parent, Ron Thurston, Juan Villarreal, Jocelyn Lanham**, and **Diane Bundy**. Thanks to the fearless checkout team: **Sarah Boswell, Susan Caldwell**, and **Jan Daczyk**.

A special thank you to all the individuals and businesses who donated to the event. Please keep them in mind as you complete your holiday shopping!

Do you want to plan the fun next year? Kathy and I are totally ready to pass the torch. Please see one of us if you're up to the task. It's a lot of work, but you receive mass amounts of gratitude for your efforts and you get to pick the menu for the evening! Chairing the event does have its perks.

Most sincerely,

Melissa

Thank you to the event sponsors:

Diamond Album Level
Anonymous

Platinum Album Level
Gene and Ryan Self
Sally and Paul Martin

Gold Album Level
Norma DeBrow
Joe Goerner & Sauny Knowles
Marcella and Dale Snow

Thank you to following individuals, groups, and businesses contributed to the event:

All Souls PreK-1st Class

All Souls 2nd-5th Class

Anonymous

Akin's Nursery

Susan Bettinger

Sarah Boswell

Nancy Brown

Susan Caldwell

Patrick Early

The Enchanted Garden

Melissa & Jonathan Gibson

Joe Goerner & Sauny Knowles

Glenwood Village Tea Room

Carol Graywing

Ron Hagar

Debbie Hollis & Alan Dyson

Rev. Barbara Jarrell

Bob Jordan

Lex's Plant Farm

Libbey Glass

Jocelyn & Jason Lanham

Laurie Lyons & Henry Walker

Mrs. McGregor's Garden

Robert McLane

Oh So Designs & Embroidery

Kathy Osuch & Mike Roberts

Betty Parent

Robinson Film Center

Shreveport Symphony

Stephen Miller Fine Jewelry

Strawn's

Works In Progress

Young Equipment Solutions

Ole Skye Ranch

Callie's Concessions & Catering

Get Your Fill at the 5th Annual Monster Cookie Swap



Everyone is welcome to participate in the Annual Monster Cookie Swap on Sunday, December 13. After the service, cookies will out in the hallway outside the social hall. Glove your hand and fill up a tray (or two or three). The swap will continue after the Congregational Meeting.

Please bring a dozen or more cookies to trade out—basically, you make a single recipe and you'll leave church with all different ones. We also anticipate full pies, cakes, and fresh bread too! Eric First will have his famous baklava and I've also heard rumors of an amazing hand scrub (not a cookie, but it's still a great gift).

Don't bake? Even better. Take what you want and toss a worthy donation in the donation basket. Or do both! We're cool with that.

An assortment of cookies makes a great gift for everyone on your Christmas list! They're also great for potlucks or just as a personal treat.

The Monster Cookie Swap has been a great success year after year—let's keep it up, folks!

Submitted by Melissa Gibson, Food Folks and Fun

How the Unitarians (and Universalists!) Saved Christmas

It's that time of year again, when we begin to hear the strident voices of some who are ready to take up arms and do battle against "The War on Christmas." Shunning the more inclusive, "Happy Holidays," they are determined to hear and to say "Merry Christmas," even if they say it through the gritted teeth of a chiseled-on smile. Because, truly, what says "Peace on Earth" and "Good will toward men" better than a forced and hostile "Merry Christmas"?

As they campaign for nativity sets and Christmas trees and pipe up with "Merry Christmas" at every opportunity, I find it amusing that these ardent lobbyists for Christmas are the direct theological descendants of the early Reformation Protestants who were completely against any celebration of Christmas! After all, the earliest celebrations of Christmas were adapted by the Christian church from the ancient Roman festival of Saturnalia, a feast for the god Saturn featuring days of sacrifices, celebration and gift-giving, culminating in the Winter Solstice.

The new Christian holiday was known as "Christ's Mass." As the

Church moved northward, it adapted the customs of the Celtic and Germanic Yule celebrations already in place, including trees with lights and garlands of greenery.

However, the Reformation Protestants were not nearly as taken with the holiday. Both Calvin in 16th-century Geneva and Cromwell in 17th-century England outlawed the celebration of Christmas because of its pagan roots.

Reformation leaders who didn't forbid the celebrations outright still preached against the revelry and drunkenness associated with the holiday.

The opposition to Christmas found its way to our shores as well, particularly in the New England colonies, where it was thought to have too strong a

connection to Catholicism. In 1659, the General Court of Massachusetts ruled the celebration of Christmas a punishable offense.

The southern colonies did celebrate the holiday, but it was considered more of a secular celebration and an excuse for a lot of partying than a religious observance. **(Continued on Page 7: CHRISTMAS)**



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

From: Kathy Osuch, Board Secretary

To: All Members, Inactive Members, and Friends

In accordance with the Bylaws of our church, and as Secretary of the Board, I hereby announce that All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church will hold a Congregational Meeting in the sanctuary.

NEW DATE & TIME: Sunday, December 13 at 12:30 p.m.

ON THE AGENDA

- Vote on 2015 Budget.
- Elect three members to Nominating Committee.

Please make every effort to attend. All active members should attend this meeting or give their proxies to those who can. Inactive members and friends of the church are invited and encouraged to participate, but bylaws stipulate that only those members who have been active 30 days or longer may vote. We must have a quorum. Childcare provided.



CHRISTMAS: Practically alone among their fellow New England Protestants, the Universalists did celebrate Christmas. Many of them lived in rural areas where a celebration of light and feasting was particularly welcome in the midst of a harsh winter, and they resonated with the story of a holy child born in simple surroundings.

A Universalist congregation in Boston celebrated the first Christmas service in that city in 1789. The Unitarians joined them in the promotion and celebration of the Christmas holiday.

They liked the idea of celebrating the birth of the great teacher of their tradition, but even more than that, they liked the idea of the holiday itself.

There was a new emphasis on a warm and loving family home life, and supporters of the holiday framed it in a more family-friendly fashion, as an alternative to the choices of a decadent festival of excess or an outright ban on all things Christmas.

Both the Unitarians and the Universalists endorsed the idea of shops, banks and other businesses closing to give workers time at home with their families.

It was a German Unitarian professor at Harvard, Charles Follen, who introduced the custom of the Christmas tree to America at a party in his home in 1832.

Finally, it was a Unitarian, Charles Dickens, who in 1843 wrote a book, *A Christmas Carol*, that would move the focus of Christmas even more toward family, compassion and good will. So next time snarly people insist that you say, "Merry Christmas," remind them to thank a Unitarian!

Submitted by Susan Caldwell, DLRE (Reprinted from All Souls News, December 2013)

Decorate the Mitten Tree to Benefit Maggie Lee's Closet

Once again, we will be putting up a special Christmas Tree in the sanctuary where we will collect mittens, gloves, scarves, and hats for children who may not have proper outerwear for winter!

We are contributing our gift of warmth to Maggie Lee's Closet, the free children's clothing resource of Highland Center Ministries.

For those who may not know the story, Church for the Highlands pastor Rev. John Henson and his wife Jinnie lost their daughter Maggie Lee several years ago in the tragic bus crash involving youth from First Baptist Church. Since Maggie Lee was crazy about clothes, it seemed only fitting to name their children's clothing area Maggie Lee's Closet.












If you have gently used children's clothes that are ready for a new home, don't forget about Maggie Lee's, and if you are ever at the Highland Center during office hours, be sure and pop downstairs for a visit.

Submitted by Susan Caldwell, DLRE



"We think it possible to have a Church, and even a denomination, organized, not on a creed, but on a purpose of working together. Suppose that the condition of membership was the desire and intention of getting good and doing good."

James Freeman Clarke, Unitarian minister, *Orthodoxy: Its Truths and Errors*, 1866

Sun	Mon	Tue 1 7 PM Great Questions Group	Wed 2 5:30 PM Choir	Thu 3 5 PM Highland Blessing Dinner  5 PM Support Group	Fri 4 7 PM Family Game Night	Sat 5 10 AM Finance Committee Meeting 10:30 AM Meditation 3 PM ADF
DECEMBER						
6 9:15 AM Adult RE 11 AM Worship / RE 12ish Newcomer Info Session 1:30 PM LTA 	7 5:45 PM Yoga 	8 7 PM Great Questions Group 	9 5:30 PM Choir 	10 5 PM Support Group 	11 	12 9AM to 1 PM Building & Grounds Workday 10:30 AM Meditation 3 PM ADF 
13 9:15 AM Adult RE 11 AM Worship / RE 12:30 PM Congrega- tional Meeting & Cookie Swap  	14 5:45 PM Yoga	15 6 PM Board & Council Meeting 7 PM Great Questions Group	16 5:30 PM Choir	17 5 PM Support Group 7PM Interfaith Candidate Accountability Meeting	18 7 PM Family Game Night	19 10:30 AM Meditation 3PM ADF
20 No Adult RE 11 AM Worship (Intergenerational) Children's Christmas Party	21 5:45 PM Yoga	22 6 PM Board & Council Meeting 7 PM Great Questions Group	23 5:30 PM Choir	24 6:30 PM Christmas Eve Service (No Highland Blessing Dinner)	25 	26 10:30 AM Meditation 3 PM ADF 4PM Wedding
27 No Adult RE 11 AM Worship / RE	28 5:45 PM Yoga	29 8 PM Newsletter Deadline	30	31 New Year's Eve (No Highland Blessing Dinner) 5 PM Support Group	JANUARY 1 Happy New Year!	2 10:30 AM Meditation 3 PM ADF

Poinsettias for the Holidays

Each year, we decorate the sanctuary with poinsettias for the season of Christmas, Hanukkah, and Yule. All are invited to purchase a poinsettia and specify a dedication featured in the Order of Service for December 13, 20, and Christmas Eve. You may purchase your poinsettia in honor or memory of a loved one, or simply as a way to help the church. Unless you specify anonymity, your name will be printed in the Order of Service. The flower is yours to keep after the Christmas Eve service concludes.



NAME _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

POINSETTIAS _____ @\$5/ea. = \$_____ TOTAL

DEDICATION(S) AS YOU WOULD LIKE IT TO READ:
