

# All Souls News

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, 9449 Ellerbe Road, Shreveport, LA 71106 | (318) 868-3313 | [www.allsoulsshreveport.org](http://www.allsoulsshreveport.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 (9:15 a.m.) and till the service ends.*

**December 4 — “Seeing the Future” by Rev. Judith Taylor** of Unity of Shreveport. Join us to welcome a great friend of the church to our pulpit. A Newcomer Information Session will follow the service. *Board Persons of the Day are Diane Bundy and Nicki McLain.*

**December 11 — Rev. Barbara Jarrell** is in the pulpit. A Congregational Meeting will follow the service. We must have a quorum. Childcare provided. Our Annual Monster Cookie Sale also takes place before and after the meeting. *Board Persons of the Day are James Peck and Jocelyn Lanham.*

**December 18 — “Waiting for the Light”** On this final Sunday of Advent, we celebrate the common thread of light and love that runs through the season, and how we might carry it forward into a world that needs our all-embracing message. *Board Persons of the Day are Alice Normand and Eric First.*

**December 24 — 6:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service** Our traditional candlelight service includes the reflection of glowing candlelight in the church window, carols with the original words, and a message of hope that is welcoming to all people. *Board Persons of the Night are John Allen and Substitute BPOD Amanda Lawrence*

**December 25 — Merry Christmas!** We will be here, same time and place. We will have no religious education classes for children or adults, and no nursery care, but children will be welcomed into the sanctuary. *Board Persons of the Day are Melissa Gibson and Substitute BPOD Susan Caldwell*

## Mitten Tree Collection Benefits Maggie Lee's

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

All year, Maggie Lee's Closet accepts gently used children clothing. If you are ever at the Highland Center during office hours, be sure and pop downstairs for a visit.

*Submitted by Susan Caldwell*



## Angel Tree Now Available

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 that will be available in the church foyer and online.

Buy and wrap the requested present(s), and bring them back labeled on or before December 18. While you are welcome to bring the gift wrapped (and clearly label with the child's name), we will be able to wrap gifts at the church that day.

Our congregation steps up beautifully for this effort each year, and this year should be no exception!

*Submitted by Susan Caldwell*



**OFFICE HOURS** Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**OFFICE EMAIL** [office@allsoulsshreveport.org](mailto:office@allsoulsshreveport.org)

**OFFICE PHONE** (318) 868-3313

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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OPEN

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OPEN

### Social Justice Committee

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**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**  
**Tuesday, December 27 by 8 p.m.**

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All Souls is a  
Welcoming  
Congregation.



# FROM THE MINISTER

## Moving Closer to Peace on Earth

By Rev.

Barbara Jarrell



On the day known some places as Black Friday I found myself in a large discount store returning something. I overheard one of the employees say, “No, our Black Friday was yesterday.”

What? Thanksgiving Day has now become an extension of Black Friday—the day of the year most dedicated to unapologetic materialism? I thought that incredibly sad.

One day a year we set aside to remind us that if we actually spend some time noticing all the aspects of our lives for which we can be grateful we might feel better all the way around; and now some seem to think one day is too much.

I shared what I had heard and how sad I found it with some people in another establishment.

One of the folks there said, “Oh no! It was wonderful! I got so much of what I needed and there weren’t all the crowds that you run into on Friday.” I said, “But what about Thanksgiving?” She said, “We ate at 1 and were done with all that by 3.”

I’m glad she enjoyed her day, but, man, am I grateful that isn’t how things look for me.

The time we share at All Souls the Sunday before Thanksgiving has great meaning and value for me. I am so very

thankful for you, the sensibilities you bring to such occasions and the honoring we try to do of not only humankind but of life and the connected whole.

I then get to carry that with me through the week that follows.

The winter holiday season is famous for generating stress when it has been intended as a season of gentleness and peace.

It often encourages us toward over-extension and over-indulgence rather than the simple cycles of opening to the gifts that surround us.

The world is changing quickly, and while that is nothing new I think we are now being called upon to attend our actions and intentions more and more mindfully.

As I work with the choir to prepare for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, over and over I get to hear words and sounds that fill me with appreciation for the Wondrous Mystery that continues to unfold and for the stories that can (if we allow them) bring perpetual awakening to our still quite sleepy species.

One of my favorite musical moments of the year occurs during the choir’s performance of “Oh, Holy Night” when after singing unison for a while they break into parts for the words “Fall on your

knees / Oh, hear the angel voices.”

Each time I hear it I feel as though Love has been born anew in the world—it is so moving and burgeoning with hope and possibility. I see the

“falling on knees” as what comes from being awestruck with something inconceivably beautiful rather than an act of shame or fear.

That moment in the song is preceded by a lyric that captures my imagination, as well. We made one minor adjustment to the words so that we perform them as “Long lay the world in fear and error pining / ‘til He appeared and the soul felt its worth / A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices / For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.”

I believe there had to have been some point at which human evolutionary development brought us to the recognition of self as more than the observable sum of parts. That would have been the dawning of deeper awareness—grasping the inherent worth and dignity of EVERY person—the “worth of the soul.”

I see us all still growing/evolving/awakening into this awareness, grappling with the new edges and not yet fully formed capacities.

**Continued on Page 6:**  
**MINISTER**





# Corner Office with a View

## REsources for Resistance: Holiday Edition



By Susan Caldwell,  
Director of Lifespan Religious Education

Remember last month, when I wrote to you about how to talk to your relatives about your newfound Unitarian Universalist faith? It was a simpler time, when I thought that might be the most difficult issue to undertake.

Now I hear stories of families torn apart, and many people even opting to skip holiday dinners this year in favor of spending time with “family of choice.”

In many, many cases, I get it. I am grateful these families of choice exist to create a safe place to land for so many who need it.

Many people throughout the country have felt explicitly targeted by the incoming administration, based on word-for-word threats that came from the candidate himself, and the people with whom he is surrounding himself.

Voices of racism, white supremacy, xenophobia, homophobia and transphobia have felt emboldened to speak and often do horrendous things, against a backdrop of other voices who say, “That isn’t why I voted for him,” and “He won’t really do that.”

So not only do I get it, but I think that anyone who has been marginalized or targeted needs to do whatever they need to do to take care of themselves and feel as safe as possible right now, whether that involves blocking or unfriending people in virtual or actual reality, or staying away from family or friends whose votes and rhetoric have discounted their lives.

But then there are the rest of us: Those of us who are white, straight, cisgender U.S. citizens with safe employment and health insurance have an opportunity ... even an

obligation ... to stay in the lives of our relatives and friends who say, “That isn’t why I voted for him,” to be willing to engage in difficult conversations, and to continue as best we can to speak our truth in love.

I believe, even now, in my heart of hearts, that that is the only way the world changes.

When I look at the positive changes I have seen in the people around me, and I read about attitudinal changes in the most rock-solid conservative parts of the country, this is the one thing those changes have in common: The people who experienced the changes had to come to see the humanity in the one they considered “other.”

Whether it was a dad who found out his honor roll son was gay, a woman whose Muslim neighbor changed her flat tire in the rain, a veteran who found out that Larry, who once saved his life in battle, was now Lisa and overcame a lifetime of transphobic conditioning to honor that bond, these kinds of changes can happen.

Have happened.

Are happening, despite the so-called leaders who might wish them away.

When those most marginalized are not in a position to speak safely for themselves, that’s where we have to speak for them, and keep speaking. By our words and by our actions, with our friends, with our relatives, in all circumstances where we encounter hatred born of fear and ignorance, we who have privilege can also be the face and voice of “the other” that someone else needs to see and hear.

Now more than ever, even surrounded by hate and hopelessness, love and hope need us to be their messengers.

Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward All, Ya’ll.

**2017 Pledges Due ASAP**  
Information available in the foyer, in the church office, and on the church website!

**Interested in planning the 2017 Budget?**

### FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, December 6 at 7 p.m.  
9312 Wiscassett Dr., Shreveport  
(Board Treasurer Melissa Gibson’s home)

If you are unable to attend but have comments, please submit them via email to [melissainkdesigns@gmail.com](mailto:melissainkdesigns@gmail.com) prior to the meeting.

## 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):** December 1, January 5

# Interfaith Day of Prayer for Standing Rock

On November 20, in below-freezing temperatures, unarmed water protectors just north of Standing Rock survived shocking assaults from water cannons. Many were traumatized, and some needed emergency room care. In the aftermath of these attacks, and in the months prior, my congregation has received countless messages from people around the country – and world – asking, "What can we do?"

Meanwhile, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship & Church of Bismarck-Mandan received one of the most important invitations we are ever likely to receive, as people of faith and conviction. Chief Arvol Looking Horse, Keeper of the White Buffalo Calf Pipe Bundle, has called upon each of us to join him at Standing Rock on Sunday, December 4, for an Interfaith Day of Prayer. In solidarity with indigenous people and mutual love for the water, it is my hope that you and your communities of faith

will participate in this history-making day.

As those who have visited know, the nonviolent water protector movement at Standing Rock is deeply rooted in prayer. Each day Rev. Karen Van Fossan spends at Oceti Sakowin camp, she feels challenged and inspired

to live a more prayerful and faithful life. The community awakes with prayers, dines with prayers, goes to rest with prayers, and prays continuously throughout each day.

The camps at Standing Rock are based on the conviction that prayer, especially collec-

**... prayer, especially collective prayers, can protect our living water. Your prayers—and your presence—mean the world.**

tive prayers, can protect our living water. Your prayers – and your presence – mean the world.

For more information and to register to participate, please visit [tinyurl.com/standingrockdayofprayer](http://tinyurl.com/standingrockdayofprayer).

*Article adapted from Standing on the Side of Love Email Newsletter, November 23, 2016. Images by Dea Brayden, UUA.*



## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

From: James Peck, 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.

**DATE & TIME: Sunday, December 11 at 12:30 p.m.**

### ON THE AGENDA

- Vote on 2017 Budget.
- Elect three members to Nominating Committee.
- Elect three members to Committee on Ministry.

**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.

# Membership Matters

## Newcomer Information Session on December 4

By Ron Thurston,  
Membership Committee



Join us for this month's Newcomer Information Session on Sunday, December 4 at about 12:15 p.m.

Grab a cup of coffee after the service and join us in the middle/high school classroom—the one with the

couches.

The meeting is open to anyone interested in exploring more about Unitarian Universalism and membership at All Souls.

We will watch a short DVD from our Unitarian Universalist Association headquarters, spotlighting our principles, our history, and our ongoing mission in the world.

We will also share ongoing activ-

ities 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.

If you have questions regarding membership or would like to join the Membership Committee, please see me before or after church or contact me at (318) 300-9509.

### DENOMINATIONAL EVENTS December 2016 & Beyond

**13-15 January 2017 Houston Area YRUU Youth Rally** (Houston TX). For youth ages 14-19 in high school. For more details, contact the church office.

**10-12 February 2017 Southwest UU Women's Conference** (Magnolia Hotel Dallas Park Cities – Dallas TX). For women and teens ages 13 and older. Speakers, music, worship, workshops, vendors, fellowship and fun. Early registration \$190.00 before 1 Jan 2017 – \$225.00 from 1 Jan 2017 to 28 Jan 2017. Final registration deadline 28 January 2017. This conference will include a workshop led by our Board Treasurer and Newsletter Editor Melissa Gibson ("ERA: Unfinished Business"). For more information, go online to [www.swuuw.org](http://www.swuuw.org).

**24-26 February 2017 Middle School CongrUUity Conference** (First UU Church, Oklahoma City OK). Although this is a "cluster" event for Oklahoma UU congregations, groups from other churches are welcome to attend. For more information, contact the church office.

**3-5 March 2017 Middle School CongrUUity Social Action Conference** (First UU Church, San Antonio TX). Although this is a "cluster" event for "Heart of Texas" UU congregations, groups from other churches are welcome to attend. Description form even flier: "CongrUUity is an annual conference specifically for middle school youth. Gathering with other UU youth from around the region is empowering and gives youth a broader sense of our movement. An emphasis on spiritual as well as intellectual growth is expressed through a worship service, social action project or activities, connection circles and mini workshops throughout the event. And it is a lot of fun!" For more information, contact: Sheri Phillabaum, [dlre@uusat.org](mailto:dlre@uusat.org), (210) 344- 2431.

*Submitted by Steve Caldwell, Denominational Affairs*

## FOOD DRIVE

Benefiting the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana

Drop off your nonperishable canned, bagged, and boxed food. Boxes marked "FOOD DRIVE" are located in the foyer.

**Top Needs: Canned Meat, Peanut Butter, Dried Beans, Rice, Pasta, Canned Veggies, Canned Fruit, Cereal**

**Drive concludes Christmas Day!**

## Southwest UU Women's Conference



**February 10-12 | Dallas, Texas**

More information: [www.swuuw.org](http://www.swuuw.org)

Our own **Melissa Gibson** will be presenting a workshop entitled "ERA: Unfinished Business." If you would like to discuss sharing transportation and/or hotel, please get in touch with Melissa!



# John Allen Named VOM

All Souls wishes to recognize **John Allen** for his exceptional work on the Veterans' Day service. John worked with **Robert McLane**, **Bennett Upton**, and **Sylvania Mercer** to put together an outstanding tribute to honor service members, past and present.



John also serves on the Board of Directors and has led the Communications and Building & Grounds Committees in the past. He sometimes still shows up for Building & Grounds Work Day.

John is also an active member of the Worship Committee. He has exercised his acting chops several times on the All Souls stage, as the Sylvester McMonkey McBean, the Devil, and Rev. James Reeb.

John will gratefully accept any gifts of pumpkin spice coffee, pumpkin bread, pumpkin spice-scented candles. The man is just crazy for pumpkin spice.

Thanks for all you do, John.

## MONSTER COOKIE SWAP Sunday, December 11

Bring a batch of cookies to swap — make one recipe and take home a variety!

Don't bake? Even better, make a donation to All Souls in lieu of providing cookies. Or do both! That's cool too!

There are always tons of cookies available—treat yourself to dessert, use them as neighbor/teacher gifts! This event always receives amazing support. Let's keep it up!



Drop your cookies off in the social hall prior to the service. The swap will be open before and after the Congregational Meeting.

Questions? Contact Amanda Lawrence, 402-3314 or Melissa Gibson, 550-1296.

**MINISTER:** I see this new layer as one that carries with it an ability for us to embrace paradoxical and perhaps even diametrically opposing things that at this point seem irreconcilable.

The result, admittedly still some distance down the road—Peace on Earth. May we each do all we can in this season to bring its arrival closer.

My love to each of you with warm wishes for joyous holidays.

In ever evolving faith,

*Barbara*



Join us at  
**Bossier Night  
Market & enter  
for your chance  
to win a Kindle  
Fire or Harry  
Potter DVD box  
set.**

DECEMBER 16TH & 17TH  
5:00PM-9:00PM

South Parking Lot of Pierre Bossier Mall  
2950 E. Texas Street, Bossier City, Louisiana

Limit one entry per household, per night.  
Drawings will be held on December 18th and winners will be notified by phone.

Bossier Parish Libraries

## Building & Grounds Work Day

Second Saturday of  
Every Month

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

All ages and abilities  
encouraged to  
participate!



# 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.

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*



*All Souls*

## Help the Helpers

### Who deserves a "thank you" this Christmas Eve?





Firefighters, ER staff, police, EMTs, Nursing Home Staff, etc.

Bring cookies or other holiday snacks to the church social hall on Friday, December 23 between 5 and 7 p.m. Amanda Lawrence and friends will then divide the goodies up into decorative trays.

After the Christmas Eve service, everyone is invited to grab a tray or two and deliver them to wherever they see fit.



*Please note, we cannot accept snacks that need refrigeration or heating.*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <h1>DECEMBER</h1>				<b>1</b> 5PM Support Group 5PM Highland Blessing Dinner (Page 3) 5:45 Yoga	<b>2</b> 7PM Game Night 	<b>3</b> 10:30AM Meditation 3PM ADF
<b>4</b> 9:15AM Adult RE 11AM Worship/RE 12:15PM Newcomer Info Session (Page 5) 1:30PM LTA	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 7PM TED Talks Discussion Group 7PM Finance Committee Meeting (Page 3)	<b>7</b> 5:30PM Choir	<b>8</b> 5PM Support Group 5:45 Yoga	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 9AM to 1PM Building & Grounds Work Day (Page 6) 10:30AM Meditation 3PM ADF  <i>Runoff Election</i>
<b>11</b> 9:15AM Adult RE 11AM Worship / RE 12:30 Congregation Meeting (Page 4) Monster Cookie Swap	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 7PM TED Talks Discussion Group	<b>14</b> 5:30PM Choir	<b>15</b> 5PM Support Group 5:45 Yoga 7PM Barbara Jarrell CD Release Party	<b>16</b> 7PM Game Night 	<b>17</b> 10:30 AM Meditation 3PM ADF
<b>18</b> 9:15AM Adult RE 11AM Worship / RE 11AM to 4PM High- land Bizarre Bazaar, Olive & Highland	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 6PM Board & Council Meeting 7PM TED Talks Discussion Group	<b>21</b> 5:30 PM Choir   <i>Winter Solstice</i>	<b>22</b> 5PM Support Group 5:45 Yoga	<b>23</b> 7PM Game Night	<b>24</b> 10:30AM Meditation 3PM ADF <b>6:30 Christmas Eve            Service</b>  <i>Hanukkah Begins at            Sundown (till January 1            at Sundown)</i>
<b>25</b> 11AM Worship / RE  <i>Christmas Day</i>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 7PM TED Talks Discussion Group 8PM Newsletter Deadline	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 5PM Support Group 5:45 Yoga	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 10:30AM Meditation 3PM 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 11, 18, and Christmas Eve.

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.

Please submit your order to the offering basket with payment or to the church office.

YOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_

# POINSETTIAS \_\_\_\_\_ @\$5/ea. = \$\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL

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

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