

Hopedale News



Community

*Hopedale Unitarian
Universalist Community*

Volume 21

Number 4

December 2009

December Sunday Services

December 6—"Paaa-rum-pa-pum, pum." For weeks, the "Little Drummer Boy" has been assaulting us from every radio and shopping mall loudspeaker. Somehow this carol has become a popular icon of sappy holiday overkill. Today, we'll put aside such petty grown-up annoyances and give the little boy and girl in each of us a chance to "talk back." And none too soon; it's already the second Sunday of Advent. Drums and other percussion will be provided, but if you wish to bring your own instrument, please do. Conductor: Pete Carels; Service Leader: Judi Hetrick.

December 13—"The Promises We Make." As Unitarian Universalists we are a covenantal community. As a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations we, "covenant to affirm and promote" the Unitarian Universalist Principles listed inside the cover of the hymnal. Rev. Linda Eppert will explore what it means for us to be in covenant with one another as individuals of a congregation. This will be the first in a three-part series on covenant, mission and vision. Service Leader: Gretchen Ziolkowski. **Potluck after service.**

December 20—"WUUUD?" What would Unitarian Universalists do? In spite of our insistence that we aren't a Christian church, UUs do turn out for Christmas services. Yes, it has become a secular holiday, too, but is there something in its spiritual message for us? Let's think about this together. Speaker: Rev. Annie Foerster; service leader: Patty Klingenberg.

December 24—"A Traditional Christmas Eve Service." (4:00 p.m.)
This family service will be filled with stories of long ago. We will sing carols and welcome Christmas. Come, celebrate, and bring some cookies to share following the service. Service Leader: Rev. Linda Eppert.

December 27—"UU in the Car: Drivetime Essays." According to the UUA, these "short, spoken essays are designed to engage, inspire, uplift, enlighten, rejuvenate and motivate." Sounds like a good idea at the end of the year! This low-key, participatory service will give us a chance to reflect and recharge for the coming year. Service leader: Kim Jacobs-Beck.

Consulting Minister's Meanderings



The other day I was thinking back to when I first came to Hopedale (October 2008). Knowing that I was working part-time as the Consulting Minister at the church, Patty Klingenberg asked me, "so what else do you do?" "I am the Growth and Leadership Development Coordinator for the Heartland District of the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations)," I responded.

As I do my part-time work with Developing and Emerging Congregations in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky and Michigan, I realize how much in common Small Congregations, like Hopedale, have with Developing and Emerging Congregations.

Here are some facts: There are currently three Emerging Congregations in the district and one Developing Congregation. A Developing Congregation is a group of people thinking and working toward becoming an Emerging Congregation. An Emerging Congregation is one that has a meeting place address, telephone number, some programming, and usually a web site. Although not yet a full-fledged member congregation of the UUA they can be listed on the UUA website as an Emerging Congregation. When an Emerging Congregation is ready, they request to become a member congregation of the UUA. Hopedale went through a similar process twenty years ago. There are 13 small congregations in the district with memberships less than 70. As we become a greener planet and work to reduce our carbon footprint I believe more and more small congregations will either crop up or be planted.

Members of small congregations share ministry. I'm not talking about sharing a professional minister, although that may be the case in some congregations, but shared lay ministry within the congregation. This literally means that everyone pitches in and helps each other fulfill the mission and vision of what the congregation wants to be in the world. Part of my responsibility is to help you understand who you are as a congregation and develop a mission and vision.

As your Consulting Minister, I strongly urge you to say, "yes," when asked to do something at Hopedale. In order to say, "yes" be informed of what the job or position entails. Be aware of the skills you have or want to develop. Begin to dream of what Hopedale could be and then plan on attending the Appreciative Inquiry on Saturday, February 6. This is a very important step in aiding you, the members and friends of the congregation, to move forward in a positive direction.

In Faith,

Rev. Linda

Prez Message

Brooms, Mops and Squeegees

Several weeks ago several HUUC members and friends spent a part of a late afternoon cleaning the building. Some came with “a plan” and favorite tools ready to go after grit, dust, and grime that invade even a spiritual home. We found suitable cleaning implements for the empty-handed and eager workers who arrived after work, finishing their workday in the kitchen or behind the john on hands and knees. We vacuumed and we swept.

One person recalled youthful memories of expert mop wielding at a past job. Others confessed to love affairs with doing dishes and washing windows. All agreed that the best part of the afternoon was doing the work together in community. Just being there rewarded us with small talk, some quiet time and a chance to complete tasks that we all knew needed doing.

Afterwards we headed off to our own homes, some knowing housework awaited. Those chores would get done too, eventually. Sunday morning we would hear murmurs of delight concerning the sheen of this loved space. My thanks to all of you for the time and talent you so generously share with the congregation.

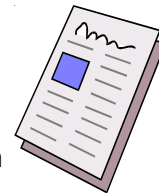
Liz Woedl, HUUC Prez

Rev. Linda's December Office Hours

Rev. Linda will be at the Hopedale Office on **Sunday, December 13th** and **Wednesday, December 16th** from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. During the rest of the month, you can reach Rev. Eppert at 513-378-5769 (cell.) or via email: eppert@fuse.net

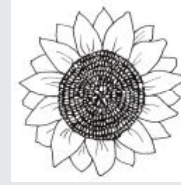
EARLY DEADLINE

The Deadline to submit items for the January 2010 issue of the *Hopedale Community News* is **Sunday, December 13th**. Please email: hucoffice@gmail.com



GREEN CORNER

from Gisela Bahr



Encouraging News From Earth Policy Institute, Part 2

Lester Brown, president of Earth Policy Institute says the US is headed in the right direction in developing new energy sources, and carbon emissions will probably continue to decline. While coal plants are closing, wind farms are multiplying. In 2008, 102 wind farms came on line, with more than 8,400 megawatts of generating capacity. In the first half of 2009, 49 wind farms were completed; 57 more are under construction.

US solar cell installations have been growing at 40% a year. This fast growth in rooftop installations on homes, shopping malls and factories is likely to continue. Moreover, some 15 large solar thermal power plants using mirrors to concentrate sunlight to generate electricity are planned in California, Arizona, and Nevada.

As for geothermal energy, in addition to the Geysers project north of San Francisco with 850 megawatts of generating capacity, the US now has 132 geothermal power plants under development. After our long love-affair with the car, mass transit is getting new attention. A majority of US cities is either building new light rail, subways or express bus lines, or is upgrading and expanding existing ones.

Oil use and imports are both declining. This will continue as the new fuel economy standards raise the fuel efficiency of new cars 42% and of light trucks 25% by 2016. But the big gains in fuel efficiency will come with the shift to plug-in hybrids and all-electric cars. Electric motors are three times more efficient than gasoline engines. Also, they enable cars to run on wind power at a gasoline-equivalent cost of 75 cent a gallon. Major car makers will soon be making plug-in hybrids, electric cars, or both.

With new energy policies already on the books, carbon emissions will likely continue to decline. But we don't know yet how much because we are just beginning to make a serious effort. Whether we can move fast enough to avoid a catastrophic climate change remains to be seen.

Earth Policy Release (by e-mail), October 14, 2009



JOYS & CONCERNS

Let us know your joys and concerns. Call Caring Committee coordinators **Jane Flueckiger**, 523-2289 or **Susan Thrasher**, 523-5860.

⌘ A joyful Hopedale welcome to Berit Boon Churchwright, born November 8th! The happy parents are Kelly Church and Tom Wright.

⌘ Our sympathy goes to Paula Dickerson, whose father died last spring.

⌘ We are holding in our thoughts friends dealing with illness, including Richard Schlub, David Killian, and Jim Corson.

⌘ We were delighted to have Sandra and John Sebastian with us for a service, here for a visit from their new home in California.

⌘ Chris Buice, our former intern/student minister, joined us for an evening recently. He now serves a UU congregation in Knoxville, Tennessee, where a shooting took place last year, killing two and wounding several. It was wonderful to see Chris and we appreciated his sharing some perspectives on this tragic event. The immediate outpouring of assistance from other congregations of all denominations was a moving story.

⌘ It is a special joy to welcome Lindsay Ross as a member and to wish her a happy 18th birthday!

⌘ Thanks to Rev. Linda for leading us in a stimulating service and discussion based on "Unplug the Christmas Machine." The holidays present such a mixture of both joys and concerns. It was good to hear ideas and experiences to help us navigate the season.

The Congregational Appreciative Inquiry has been rescheduled for Saturday, February 6th from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. A light breakfast and lunch will be provided. An online (and snail mail) invite will be coming in the new year.



Do you buy holiday presents for your friends and family? Is your Hopedale family on your gift list? New or "lightly" used items for Hopedale's R.E. space, kitchen, yard or garden, or to decorate the premises for the holidays, are things you might consider. Looking for a "gift idea"? Beginning a month before Christmas, you can stop by our holiday tree to find suggestions for what to put in the Hopedale stocking this year!



From Pete Carels

Free Annual Christmas Concert

By popular demand, the award-winning Canterbury Brass quintet returns for the fifth consecutive year on the Midday Music in Oxford series at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 16 at the Oxford Presbyterian Church, 101 N. Main Street in Oxford. Members of the group have performed as orchestral players with major orchestras, including those of Cincinnati, Columbus, Pittsburgh, Dayton and others. The quintet will perform carols and other selections of the holiday season. Information: 513-523-6969.

Caroline Soule Sisters

Carol Hennessey has agreed to host our Annual Hillary Clinton Cookie Exchange **Thursday, December 10, 7:00 pm at her home, 6026 Vereker Drive in Oxford.** This annual Holiday event is one of our holiday traditions. It started out when Hillary Clinton was asked to provide a cookie recipe to a magazine. Since Ms. Clinton has never had baking as one of her noted accomplishments, it came as no surprise when the recipe she provided resulted in, well, let's just say that they will not be on anyone's list of favorite treats. Bring a dozen cookies if you want to exchange a dozen, two if you want to exchange two, etc. If you don't have cookies to exchange, come anyway. Our cookies usually range from favored family recipes to store-bought Pecan Sandies or Oreos. If you can, bring something to snack on.



The new Committee on Ministry has been formed.

It consists of Jennifer Blue (chair), Elinor Loucks, and Peter Carels (Board representative). We meet once a month with Reverend Linda Eppert to discuss all aspects of ministry at Hopedale. If you have any concerns about the professional or shared ministry of the congregation, please contact one of us.

Happening at Hopedale this month...

No membership or Sunday Service Committee meetings in December.

Caroline Soule Sisters annual Hillary Clinton Cookie Exchange - Thursday, December 10th 7:00 pm at **Carol Hennessey's, 6026 Vereker Drive in Oxford.**

POTLUCK is **Sunday, December 13th** after Sunday Service.

Newsletter deadline is **Sunday, December 13th.**

Board meeting Wednesday, December 16th (6:30-8:30 p.m.)

Community Dinner 5:30 p.m / Movie 7:00 p.m. December 26th (see back page.)

10 Good Ideas for Small Congregations

By Kim Jacobs-Beck

A goal of mine for this year is to start us thinking about how Hopedale's challenges and opportunities are sometimes caused by our size. Many other congregations under 100 members have similar issues. I thought it might provide us a broader context for positive change. I participated in a teleconference called "10 Good Ideas for Small UU Congregations," moderated by Dori Davenport Thexton. I will be posting one idea a month in the coming year.

1. Pay attention to the stories we tell about the congregation.

* The stories (descriptions or statements) that are repeated are our strengths to each other and the community - they can encourage us or stop us.

* When leadership or lay members get tired or discouraged it is too easy to focus on failures which are hard to overcome and hard to enter into as a newcomer.

* Learn from what has failed in the past and try to state what your greatest strengths are. Introduce yourselves and your work from that strength and also with your hopes and dreams.

Sunday Service Schedule-*Monthly Rhythm*

1st Sunday Food Drive (Oxford Community Choice Pantry)

Everyone is encouraged to bring canned goods and nonperishables.

3rd Sunday Special Collection.

7:00 p.m. Movie and Community Dinner for December 26th

Peter O'Toole is King Henry II, and Katherine Hepburn is his Queen in the powerful "The Lion In Winter". Their dysfunctional family meets on Christmas Eve to decide who will inherit the throne. And you thought your family gatherings were rough. O'Toole and Hepburn. Need we say more?

At 5:30 p.m., prior to the movie, there will be the usual Community Potluck get together. Feel free to attend either or both events.

Hopedale Unitarian
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