

December 2022 NEWSLETTER



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**Holly—one of the flowers
of December**

**“To appreciate the beauty
of a snowflake it is
necessary to stand out in
the cold.” – Aristotle**

SUNDAY SERVICES SCHEDULE

Sunday Service at 10 am
Zoom Meeting ID: 832 129 662
<https://uuma.zoom.us/j/832129662>

After-worship COFFEE HOUR
Stay in the same Zoom site as Sunday Service

December 4 – Rev. Sharon Wylie
“Feelings are Information”

Too often we struggle with not feeling the way we think we’re supposed to: feeling sad at parties, giggly at serious events, tired when we’re getting ready to go somewhere fun. This morning we’ll consider what to do when our feelings don’t match the moment. This is the second Sunday of Advent.

December 11 – Rev. Sharon Wylie
“May Your Life Be As a Song”

Today we reflect on our theme for the Advent season. This is the third Sunday of Advent.

December 18 – Rev. Sharon Wylie
“Winter Solstice”

Let’s celebrate the shortest day of the year! This is the second service in our 8-part series “UU Values and Covenant.” This is the fourth Sunday of Advent.

December 24 – Rev. Sharon Wylie
Christmas Eve Service

We gather at a time of longest night to honor one of the most significant holy days in the Christian tradition. Masks required. Childcare is not available for this service.

5:15 pm Caroling on the Courtyard

6 pm Service in the Chapel begins

6:45 pm Candles on the Courtyard (end of gathering)

December 25
“A New Day” Multigenerational Service

Our Christmas morning gatherings include breakfast at 9 a.m., a recorded service of story and song at 10 a.m., and coffee and conversation after the service. Childcare is not available this morning.



Minister's Message

The following are excerpts from Rev. Sharon Wylie's sermon "Miracles Abound" offered on November 28, 2021. You can watch the full sermon on Chalice's YouTube channel.

This is our lives now: living and coping with the ongoing stresses of a pandemic without definitive end.

And because this is our lives now, we have to be as intentional and proactive as we have ever been at seeking out experiences that help us keep our spirits up. We need laughter, we need joy, we need reminders of all that is good.

And great news, that's what the December holidays are all about. This time of year, when the days grow shorter and shorter, and the diminished sunlight contributes to depression and keeps us from spending time outdoors...here come Hanukkah and Winter Solstice and Christmas, full of good food and time with friends, lit candles and inspiring stories, meant to help raise our spirits and cheer us up....

For most of us, we probably use the word "miracle" from time to time. In looking through Facebook posts, I read people in this congregation using the word miracle to describe: taking a walk after hip surgery, 30 days of sobriety, an assisted living facility where no one has gotten COVID, and all of life. We use "miracle" to describe a happening that fills us with so much wonder—wonder-ful—that the happening seems to be inexplicable.

Things that didn't seem possible: taking a walk after hip surgery, 30 days of sobriety, an assisted living facility where no one has gotten COVID, and all of life itself.

Of course, science can explain each of those things. They are not impossible—they happened! They aren't even that extraordinary, on the face of it. What the word "miracle" is telling us, is something about the person who witnessed the happening.

Taking a walk after hip surgery won't make the nightly news, but to the person doing the walking and to their loved ones...they feared that day would never come.

Sobriety has been achieved by millions of people, but 30 days sober feels impossible to the person who is on day one. And feels impossible to the loved ones who are worried about them. 30 days—a miracle!

After all the death we have seen, all the stories we have heard, even now, an assisted living facility where no one has gotten COVID—definitely a miracle!



Rev. Sharon Wylie
Minister



Somewhere between the assertion that nothing is a miracle, and everything is a miracle is how most of us, I think, witness what we would call miracles—from time to time. Yes, on a good day, at a beautiful location, we might be swept away into appreciating that everything can seem miraculous at times. But not everything is wonderful, nor is everything inexplicable.

I contend that miracles are special, unusual, to be surprised by and savored. But this is also why I'm encouraging us all to be on the lookout, because there may be more in the world to be surprised by than we'll ever see with our heads down.

Blessings and love to you,
Sharon



"Every gardener knows that under the cloak of winter lies a miracle ... a seed waiting to sprout, a bulb opening to the light, a bud straining to unfurl. And the anticipation nurtures our dream."



~ Barbara Winkler



President's Column

As the days grow shorter and I spend more time indoors and at home, I like to take time to reflect on the past year. I am always filled with gratitude for my family and friends, and for my Chalice community. It is a time for celebration and renewed hope for a just and generous world.

As a native of the Northeast, I look for new traditions to celebrate this time of year. Instead of going for a toboggan ride down the hill at Rob's farm behind my boyhood home and traipsing through the woods to cut down an evergreen to bring into the house, I now go to the beach to watch the sunset on the winter solstice and bring in a bough of pyracantha with its bright red berries and green leaves to decorate my home. And okay, I still do put up a few lights to brighten the evenings. No matter how you celebrate, I wish you a very happy holiday season.

We are well on our way to making our "Powering the Future" campaign for solar panels and technology hardware a success. The goal is almost in reach. Because of our grants, your donation will be doubled! Please give generously to these much needed capital improvements to our facility. The solar panels will be a big step in our quest to become a "Green Sanctuary". Green Sanctuary is a UUA program whose mission is to provide structure, leadership and support, in broad collaboration, for the UU faith community to engage in an ambitious environmental and climate justice movement that seeks to live fully our seventh and eighth principles and achieve our vision of a sustainable and just world for all. You can find out more at

<https://www.uua.org/environment/green-sanctuary>. We have a team of Chalice members working on this and they could use your help. If interested, please contact chaliceuucgreen@gmail.com.

Inspire, connect, act.

Blessings,

Tom Carlstrom, Board President



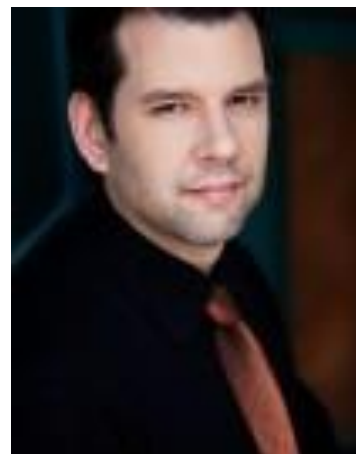
Tom Carlstrom
Board President



Music Program

Chancel Choir Sings at the Winter Party on December 3rd

Come join the Chancel Choir and other Chalice musicians at the Winter Party on December 3! Potluck starts at 5:00p and musical entertainment starts at 6:00p. Dress for a chilly evening and enjoy good food, good music, and a good time. RSVP and sign up for the potluck here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/>.



Tim McKnight
Music Director

Sunday Worship Music – December Highlights

Dec 4: **Justin Gray** will be our worship musician.

Dec 11: **Tim McKnight** will be our worship musician.

Dec 18: **Justin Gray** will be our worship musician.

Dec 24: The **Chancel Choir** will present “Light the Light – A Seasonal Carol” composed by Carl Strommen, and the Austrian carol “Still, Still, Still”, with lyrics by Marilyn Keith and Alan Bergman. The **Handchime Ensemble** will present “Coventry Carol”, an English Christmas carol dating from the 16th century, and “O Come, O Come Emmanuel”, a Christmas hymn dating from the 9th century. **Tim McKnight** will be our worship musician.

Dec 25: **Tim McKnight** will be our worship musician.

Looking Ahead

Chancel Choir RehearsalsThursdays @ 7:30p in the chapel
Handchime Ensemble Rehearsals Thursdays @ 6:30p in the Hub
Winter PartySaturday, Dec 3 @ 5:00p
Christmas Eve Service Saturday, Dec 24 @ 5:00p



Auction News



The Coordinating Team is happy to present this year's Auction Team: Wendy Metzger, Judy Winn, Andi Stout, Lara Brown, and Jody Roney!

Here is a short message from the Auction Team:

Get ready for the 2023 Chalice Auction! For the first time, we will have both a week-long online auction, and a one night live, in-person auction. The online auction begins Sunday March 5th and runs till Sunday March 12. The live auction will be held at Chalice on Saturday, March 11th. Mark your calendars and start thinking about events you'd like to create and items you'd like to donate. More info to come, but please contact the Auction Team by email at chaliceauction@gmail.com or call Judy Winn if you have any questions.



Green Sanctuary Team



Note: Don't forget the December Full Moon Drum Circle Wednesday, December 7, from 6 to 7 p.m. at Chalice!

Winter Solstice

In cultures all over the world, the promise of longer days has spawned Winter Solstice celebrations for millennia. In modern times, the tilt of Earth's axis isn't such a big deal. We can flip a switch to light our indoor spaces and flip another to warm them. But just 200 years ago or less, the amount of daylight mattered a lot. Ancient societies marked important astronomical events with monuments like Stone Henge, some of which are still around today. Ancient cultural rituals and monuments are known from places as diverse as modern Egypt, Peru, Mexico and Iran. Many people have an unbroken tradition of Solstice celebration.

In North America, the Zuni people of New Mexico mark the winter solstice with an annual religious ceremony called the Shalako. The Zuni prepare for the Shalako months in advance, with several households in the pueblo selected to welcome the Shalako spirits during the ceremony. Six people are chosen to dress as a Shalako, wearing richly



embroidered garments steeped in meaning. Towering 9 or 10 feet high, the Shalako figures approach the village from the south at dusk, entering six new homes built for the occasion, where venison stew and home baked bread await the many visitors. There, the Shalakos perform a dance throughout the night.

Why dance? Why of course to encourage the sun on its pathway to make the light last longer again so that the earth and days will warm up and the crops will grow. This happens after the harvest, and Zunis are both giving thanks for the past harvest but also asking blessings from the spirit beings for the year ahead. Carved and constructed Shalako figures called *koko* are given to children. They are kept as sacred objects and hung high in Zuni homes, embodiments of the Shalako spirits.

Solstice observance is important because people who are close to the earth recognize that the sun is the thing that gives us life and provides us what we need to survive. That's probably where this very old belief that the longest and shortest days of the solar year are cause for celebration. Thoughts can't help but turn to Chalice's solar power project. In 2023 we will have much to celebrate!

Chalice Green Sanctuary meets the 4th Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. There is no December meeting. We hold a monthly, full moon drumming circle on the Chalice campus. Contact us at Chaliceuugreen@gmail.com



Narcissus, another December flower



Solstice Spiral Walk

The green team will be hosting a solstice advent spiral walk and pot luck on Wednesday, December 21. The area between the main chapel and the Hub will be decorated with pine boughs and other natural items. They plan to start around 3:30 PM to accommodate those who prefer not to drive in the dark. Music will be provided by Jeff Heys and friends from 4:30 to 6:00 PM. There will be a shared meal from 6:00 to 8:00 which will allow those who watch the sunset on the beach to join if they wish. Rev. Sharon will be on hand to start off the walk with some inspiring words.

To help with set-up and clean up, contact the Green Team at Chaliceuugreen@gmail.com

Hope to see you there!



Coordinating Team Report

Anti-racism Goal:

- Nothing to report at this time

Transitioning back to face-to-face interactions:

- We agreed that food is allowed in the Hub as long as there is clean-up
- We held an evacuation drill

Oversight of Chalice programs and committees:

- We welcomed Sharon back and thanked Susan Spoto for her service during the Sabbatical
- We approved a new social justice action regarding reproduction rights. Suzanne Delzio will lead this group.
- The Tuff Shed was sold to a neighbor for \$1000
- The playground equipment was repaired
- The Auction leaders are Judy Winn, Andi Stout, Lara Brown, Wendy Metzger, and Jody Roney. There will be both an online component and an in-person event.

Board Report

- Power into the Future! This champagne will raise funds for technical improvements and Solar panels for the campus. Our share of the cost will be \$32,000.00. We have received a Sprit Level Foundation Grant to match our funds. Funds are gathering – but more is still needed.
- Prepare a five-year plan and associated goals ready for approval at the June 2023 Annual Congregational meeting. This is an ongoing process.
- Create an ongoing evaluation of engagement, membership and revenues. This assignment will also include strengthening relations within our congregation and our outside community.



Group Announcements

Women's Book Discussion Group

On December 20th at 7:00 pm the Chalice Women's Book Discussion Group will meet in the Blue Room in the Hub and also via Zoom to discuss *West With Giraffes* by Lynda Rutledge. If you are interested, please contact Mary for the Zoom information. Non-binary and trans women are warmly invited.

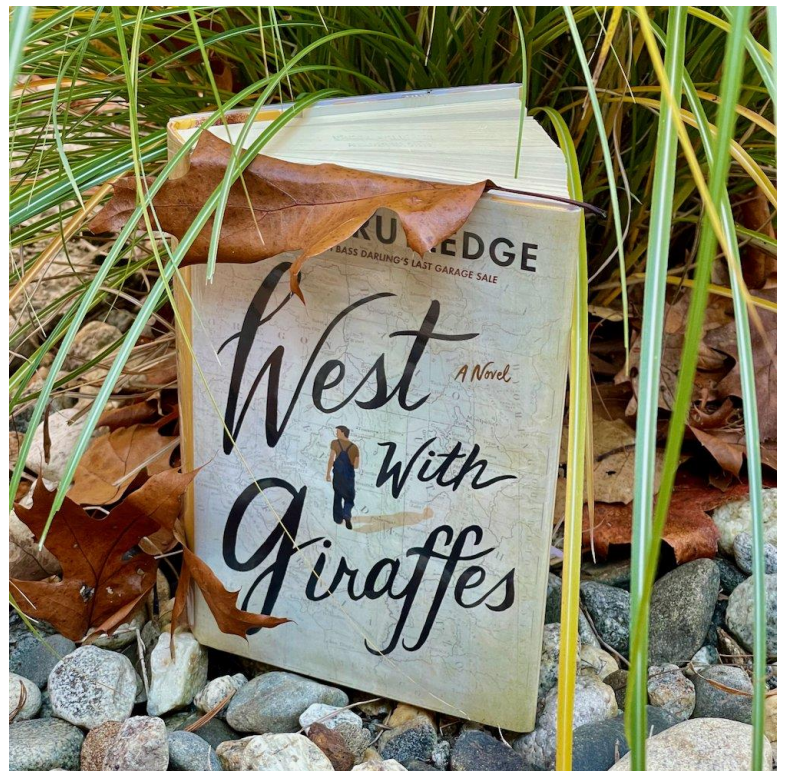
"Few true friends have I known and two were giraffes..."

Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to his grave.

It's 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo.

Behind the wheel is the young Dust Bowl rowdy Woodrow. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world's first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as spotty as the giraffes.

Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, *West with Giraffes* explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late.

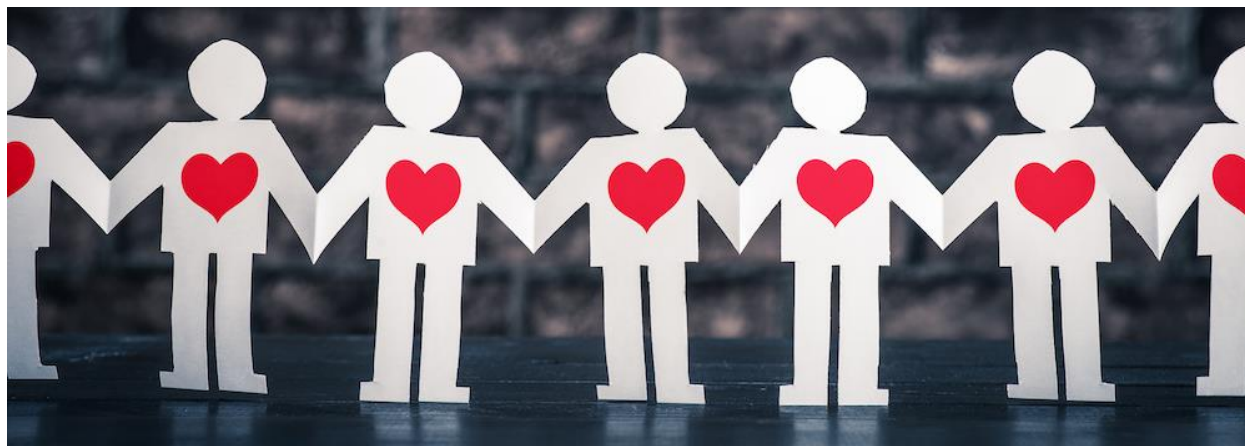


Information

MEMBERSHIP

Official membership is not required for participation in most Chalice activities, but there may come a time when you hear a voice inside saying, “This is my religious home. I want to support it.” If so, it may be time to think about making the commitment of membership.

To learn more about membership, contact Kathleen Swift, our Office Administrator, by email at office@chaliceuucongregation.org.



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PrevUUs is published monthly by Chalice Unitarian Universalist Congregation. The complete newsletter is distributed via email to members and posted on the Members Only section of the website. An edited version (without congregant contact information) is posted on the public section of the website. Paper copies are available per request. Deadline is the 24th of the month.

Submit articles by the 24th of each month to: Office@chaliceuucongregation.org

**With much gratitude to our Editorial Team:
Hope Campbell, Callie Leef, and Andi Stout.**



Calendar for December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 10:30A Women's Meditation 10A CT 6:30P Hand Chimes 7:30P Choir	2	3 2P Tech Rehearsal 5P Winter Party
4 10A. K-6 RE 10A Worship 11:10A Coffee Hour 4:30P Youth Group	5	6 12P Zoom Lunch 7P Exec. Board	7 9A Men's Breakfast 6P Drum Circle	8 10:30A Women's Meditation 1P CT 6:30P Hand Chimes 7:30P Choir	9 12P Elder's Lunch	10 10A Widen Circle Study 10A Music Committee 2P Tech Rehearsal
11 10A. K-6 RE 10A Worship 11:10A Coffee Hour 1P Private event 4:30P Youth Group	12	13 12P Zoom Lunch 7P Board of Trustees	14 9A Men's Breakfast 1P Games at Chalice 6:30 Men's Support	15 10:30A Women's Meditation 1P Finance 6:30P Hand Chimes 7:30P Choir	16	17 10 A Worship Team 2P Tech Rehearsal 3P Hand Chimes Circle Supp.
18 10A. K-6 RE 10A Worship Service 11:10A Coffee Hour 4:30P Youth Group	19	20 12P Zoom Lunch 1P CT 7P Woman's Book	21 9A Men's Breakfast 1P Fiber Arts	22 10:30A Women's Meditation 6:30P Hand Chimes 7:30P Choir	23	24 2P Tech Rehearsal 5P Christmas Eve Service
25 10A Worship Service 11:10A Coffee Hour	26 6:30P Readers Theater	27 12P Zoom Lunch 2P Staff	28 9A Men's Breakfast 7:15P Prayer Circle	29 10:30A Women's Meditation	30	31 2P Tech Rehearsal

