**December 2018 Newsletter**

**Upcoming Event with RevAlex**

**December 4 & 18 - 7:00-8:15 p.m.** - “Three-minute Faith Statement - Wow!” with RevAlex
Come, come on one of two Tuesday evenings in December to play with RevAlex around how you might give voice to your faith. The three-minute parameter comes from the academic practice, currently in vogue, of doing a “3 Minute Thesis Presentation.” We’ll do similarly about what we believe. We’re also likely to laugh, think, and deepen in spirit. We’re certain to enjoy one another’s company and good holiday refreshments.

**Upcoming Worship**

**December 2- “Winter Holidays I” with RevAlex**
On this Sunday, we begin the joyous work of preparing our worship space and our spirits for the winter holidays. We’ll hang greenery. A tree will be erected, and covered with a multitude of lights and ornaments. We’ll also dust off our spirits and move towards restoration of our souls. We will once again lift up the great wisdom of making Merry in the cold and dark. Come, come to share the great gift of your being!

**December 9 - No-rehearsal Christmas Pageant**

**December 16- “Winter Holidays II - Gifting!” with RevAlex**
It’s a Sunday to ponder the practice of gifting. We’ll explore connections with faith. And we’ll have fun looking at how giving can go astray. Come, come to prime yourself for the giving demands of the season!

**December 23 - “A Child’s Christmas in Wales” with RevAlex**
We reconnect with the Dylan Thomas classic on this Sunday. We’ll read it, ponder how it came to be, and ask ourselves what value it still holds in this time and place. It’s a Sunday to poignantly remember a bit of the history of the upcoming Christmas holiday.

**December 24 - “Christmas Eve Candlelight Service” with Our UUCR Choir and RevAlex**
We gather this evening, as we have for many years, to remember the Christmas story and reconnect with how it still holds meaning for us. Readings, carols, and gifts of music will delight our senses before we close with a communal candle-lighting. It’s precious holiday practice to which All Are Invited!

**December 25 -“Christmas Day!” with RevAlex**
Come. Come to be together on Christmas Day! Readings, stories, and music of the holiday will be our practice. So too, the sharing of warm holiday greetings with each other.

**December 30 - Guest Speaker, TBA**

**January 6, 2019 - “New Year Aspirations!” with RevAlex**
It’s a Sunday to hear our congregation’s settled minister hold forth on his aspirations for his ministry and our congregation’s future. In other words, it’s a Sunday to hear an old fool ramble on about what is near and dear to him. Come, come in the goodness of the New Year!
from the Rev...

At the heart of the Christian Christmas story of the birth of Jesus is the age-old human hope that a savior can be found to lift us up out of life’s difficulties. That age-old human hope is with many, if not most, of the newcomers who come and go from UUCR each week. It’s also with many of us old-timers who come and go too.

Congregations can save people by giving, or reconnecting them with hope. John Murray, 18th century founder of our Universalist faith in this country, famously said “give them, not hell, but hope and courage.” His addition of courage, with its root meaning “of the heart”, wisely grounded the aspiration for hope in the necessity first of having loving disposition towards life’s difficulties.

I pray each winter holiday season that I never lose my faith in the potential for hope and courage to be found in the most challenging of human difficulties. I pray too that our American culture stays of similar faith. And I work along with all of you, week after week that isn’t holiday time, to do all possible to keep our congregation full of faith that hope and courage will abound.

Thank you, each of you, for all you do in this time of winter holidays to keep faith in the potential for hope and courage strong. Thank you for telling old stories and reconnecting with old myths. Thank you for singing, playing, cooking, smiling, laughing, lighting fires and all the other things you do to nurture faith. You are especially good and wonderful, great gift!, in doing this work of faith building.

Happy, Happy Holidays!
And much heart, RevAlex

Mark your Calendars!

UUCR’s No-Rehearsal Christmas Pageant!

'A Charlie Brown Christmas'
Sunday, December 9th
Lifespan Faith Development

"Each night a child is born is a holy night"
- Sophia Lyon Fahs

Our Faith Development Goals
- Catalyze and nurture learning and growth
- Foster religious literacy and our individual and congregational UU identity
- Provide relevant, inclusive, multi-generational faith development opportunities
- Act as individuals to develop our social conscience, and take compassionate steps to live our faith in community

Children’s Religious Education – 11 am

Nursery (ages 0-3)
Our trained caregivers provide a fun, loving, and educational environment to foster play and friendships

Chalice Children (pre-K)
Young children are introduced to basic concepts of religion and Unitarian Universalism in the context of our home and traditions at Unitarian Universalist Church of Roanoke, with crafts, activities, and play.

Picture Book Religions (grades K-2)
Using picture books and fun, meaningful activities for teaching young children about religious stories with a UU perspective, sourced from two great curriculum: Picture Book World Religions and Picture Book Bible Tales. The stories illustrate concepts such as the value of wisdom and loyalty in Hinduism, the importance of family in Islam, and the practice of compassion for all living beings in Buddhism.

Holidays and Holy Days (grades 3-5)
A newly revised version of an old favorite. Kids progress through the year’s religious calendar, learning about, practicing, and honoring holiday traditions from many cultures

Youth Religious Education

Building Bridges (grades 6-8)
A year-long exploration of the diversity of faiths in our neighborhood. Kids spend several weeks learning about a major faith tradition, including a visit to a local example of that faith community. Religious explorers of all ages are invited to join the youth on these Out of Church Experiences.

YRUU High School Youth Group (grades 9-12)
High schoolers have a schedule of activities through the Fall semester to include: mentoring, paintball, serving as greeters at worship, supporting pack-a-snack, It's Scary to be Hungry drive, escape room, chili cook off, holiday dinner, and events with other youth. The High School group engage in leadership development and social action, plan and execute fun activities, explore spirituality, and share within a circle of confidentiality.

Teen youth participation is also encouraged in Adult Faith Development and leadership programs
Adult Faith Development

Living the Questions – a weekly Sunday morning adult RE discussion group. Books are chosen by consensus, and then read and discussed over the course of several weeks. Sundays at 9:30 am in the Olin Room. For more information, contact Gene Edmunds at gene.edmunds@gmail.com

We continue through early December with the discussion of Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer. "A wondrous journey into First Nation mythology, the interconnectedness of plants, trees, and animals with the human community, and how we learn our best knowledge from the natural world"

Earth Friendly Fridays are on the second Friday of every month, consisting of food, fellowship, and a lecture and discussion on ways to heal and survive on our lovely lonely planet. In December we will have Our Holiday Party, 6:30 pm on the 14th.

Non-Theist Group meets on second Sundays after the worship service for a presentation on life and faith from varying sources and perspectives

Movie night occurs every month on third Tuesday evenings. We choose and discuss thought-provoking and inspirational titles to enjoy together.

Sangha – a new group for discussion, practice, and support of Buddhist and Buddhist-inspired principles and thought. Meets on fourth Tuesdays at 6:30 pm. Contact Alan amoore@uuroanoke.org if you are interested

Out of Church Experiences (OOCEs) – In support of this year’s LFD theme ‘Concepts of God and Neighboring Faiths’, we have congregational visits planned this year with local Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, and Native American communities in the area. These congregational engagement activities are primarily structured through our Middle School Building Bridges curriculum and YRUU High School youth group but are open to UUs of all ages to participate. Dates for visits will be announced on the church calendar and in church newsletters. The next OOCE (oooh-see) will be Friday December 7th at Temple Emanuel. Please RSVP to Peggy Wells <hpgwells@aol.com> if you plan to attend.

Community Service and Volunteering are also essential experiences for our UU individual and congregational faith development. Talk to staff or leadership about these opportunities
### UUCR Volunteers in December

#### December 2
- **Life lines** - Sally Garber
- **A/V** - Todd Hannabass
- **Head Usher** - Jim Overholser
- **Lead Greeter** - Judy Robertson
- **Coffee** - James Rosar
- **Kitchen** - Kitty Schear
- **Recycling** - Judy Robertson

#### December 9
- **Life lines** - Jane Harrison
- **A/V** - Adam Honeycutt
- **Head Usher** - Bruce Stewart/Barbara Horton
- **Lead Greeter** - Lydia Woerner
- **Coffee** - Pam Yates
- **Kitchen** - Sally Garber
- **Recycling** - Lorraine Fleck

#### December 16
- **Life lines** - Linda Wood
- **A/V** - Adam Honeycutt
- **Head Usher** - Alice Davis
- **Lead Greeter** - Suzi Newton
- **Coffee** - Ron and Robin Salzbach
- **Kitchen** - Mary Harshfield
- **Recycling** - Henry Woodward

#### December 23
- **Life lines** - Judie Lallmang
- **A/V** - Dave Perry
- **Head Usher** - Dick Hawkins
- **Lead Greeter** - Chris Yates
- **Coffee** - James Rosar
- **Kitchen** - Mary Harshfield
- **Recycling** - Laurie Spangler

#### December 24
- **Candlelight Service**

#### December 25
- **Christmas Day Service**

#### December 30
- **Life lines** - Linda Wallis
- **A/V** - Betsy Biesenbach
- **Head Usher** - Michael Gettings
- **Lead Greeter** - Nancy Brattain
- **Coffee** - Pam Yates
- **Kitchen** - Pam Yates
- **Recycling** - Susan Anderson-Hodges

### Faith Development:
Ally Weneta, Ava Wagner, Betsy Biesenbach, Bob Egbert, Chris Yates, Cindy Honeycutt, Danielle Teague, Dave Perry, Emily Marston, Joy Bruce, Jerry Trammell, Jessie McKeon, Jill Thompson, Josh Wainwright, Laura Weatherford Burns, Margie Garber, Matt Livingston, Peggy Wells, Ron Willson, Sadie Wagner, Sharon Fritz, Wilson Shi-Wang
Sundays:
Adult RE begins at 9:30 am
Children’s RE begins at 11:00 am
Worship Service begins at 11:00 am
uuroanoke.org

December Events

Saturday, December 1
9am-12noon UUCR’s Hanging of the Greens
10am - 12 noon Qoya Dance “Community” F.Hall

Sunday, December 2
9:30 am Living the Questions Class, Olin
11 am “Winter Holidays - I” with RevAlex
12:20 pm - 1 pm Song rehearsal for Christmas Pageant
12:30-1:30 pm Diversity Action Group Meeting, Olin

Monday, December 3
12 noon Caring Committee Meeting, Olin
6 pm Good Enuf Choir
6 pm Tai Chi (Qigong and Taijiquan), F. Hall

Tuesday, December 4
4:30-6:30 pm Board Executive Meet, Olin
7-8:15 pm Three-minute Faith Statements, RevAlex, Olin

Wednesday, December 5
7 pm Choir practice, Sanctuary

Thursday, December 6
11:30am - 1:30 pm Women’s Group, Olin
12:30 pm Men’s Brown Bag Lunch, Broker

Saturday, December 8
10am - 12 noon Qoya Dance “Community”, F.Hall

Sunday, December 9
9:30 am Living the Questions Class, Olin
11 am Service: “No-Rehearsal Christmas Pageant”

Monday, December 10
6 pm Good Enuf Choir
6 pm Tai Chi (Qigong and Taijiquan), F. Hall

Tuesday, December 11
6:30-8:30 pm Board Meeting, Olin
7 – 8 pm Special Performance for UUCR as a Thank You!
***Special Holiday Performance in the Fellowship Hall by Star City Chorus ***

Wednesday, December 12
12 - 1 pm Staff Meeting, Olin
1 - 2 pm Sunday Services Meeting, Olin
6-8 pm Writer’s Group, Olin
7 pm Choir practice, Sanctuary

Thursday, December 13
12:30 pm Men’s Brown Bag Lunch, Olin
6 pm Connections Team Meeting, Olin

Friday, December 14
6:30 pm Earth Friendly Friday Holiday Party

Saturday, December 15
7-9 pm Dances of Universal Peace, F.Hall

Sunday, December 16
9:30 am Living the Questions Class, Olin
11 am Service; “Winter Holidays II - Gifting!” with RevAlex
12:30-2:30 pm Turning Trash into Treasure with the Green Team and Mangala Kumar, Olin
12:30-1:30 pm Meditation Practice Group, Broker
3-5 pm Singing Circle (every 3rd Sunday), Broker
Monday, December 17
12–5 pm  PHHS Outreach Program
6 pm  Good Enuf Choir
6 pm  Tai Chi (Qigong and Taijiquan), F. Hall

Tuesday, December 18
6:30 pm  Family Movie Night: A Christmas Story
7–8:15 pm  Three-minute Faith Statements, RevAlex, Olin

Wednesday, December 19
7 pm  Choir practice, Sanctuary

Thursday, December 20
All Day  Newsletter Deadline, send to mbrauch@uuroanoke.org
11:30 am – 1:30 pm  Women’s Group, Olin
12:30 pm  Men’s Brown Bag Lunch, Broker

Sunday, December 23
9:30 am  Living the Questions Class, Olin
11 am  Service: "A Child’s Christmas in Wales" with RevAlex

Monday, December 24
All Day  Office Closed
6 pm  Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, with UUCR’s Choir and Alex

Tuesday, December 25
All Day  Office Closed
11 am  Service: "Christmas Day!" with RevAlex

Wednesday, December 26
All Day  Office Closed
6–8 pm  Writer’s Group, Olin

Thursday, December 27
12:30 pm  Men's Brown Bag Lunch, Olin

Friday, December 28
12:30 pm  Men's Brown Bag Lunch, Olin
12–5 pm  PHHS Outreach Program

Sunday, December 30
11 am  Service: Guest Speaker, TBA

Monday, December 31–January 2, 2019
All Day  Office Closed

December Birthdays...
Katherine Hoffman, Ron and Robin Salzbach, Candace Bell, Melanie Harkness, Peggy Cooper, Jerry Trammell, Danih Navarro, Lois Traver, Terry Smith, Kathy Overholser, Rudy Yates, Gary Crawford, Beverly Telfer, Christine Jordan, and Alice Davis.

Children's Birthdays
Aidan Skye, Brian, Clara

If your name isn't listed, email lindagwallis@gmail.com with your month and day.
Facilities Events Not to Miss

Women's Group at UUCR
Would you like to join the women's group? It's a place for sharing and reflecting with other UU women. Meetings are 1st and 3rd Thursdays at the church from 11:30 to 1:30. Contact Bonnie Nelson at 588-1452.

UUCR Holiday Outreach Program
Nearly 200 students at Patrick Henry High School - our across-the-street neighbor - are homeless or are unsure of where their next meal is coming from. Many of them have aged out of the programs that serve younger children, but can't yet provide for themselves. The school PTA's Student Outreach program provides food and clothing for these students while school is in session, but during the two-week winter holiday, these young people are on their own.

On Monday December 17 from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Friday December 28 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., our church will serve as a food pick-up location for these students. Here's how you can help:

We need two people in the building each day during pick-up hours in two-hour shifts to help distribute food, set up, and clean up for a total of eight volunteers.

Most of the food will come from the Student Outreach Program, but we can always use more.

We need items in pop-top cans (pasta, fruit, Vienna sausages, soups, stews) because the students may not have access to can openers. Granola bars, toaster pastries, and packaged peanut butter or cheese crackers are also needed. Shelf-stable milk is especially welcome. These foods are calorie-dense, portable and don't need preparation.

If you can donate any of these items, please leave them in the kitchen and label them "Vacation Outreach Program". Anything leftover will be donated to the Student Outreach Program. The Sunday after Thanksgiving, there will also be a bin outside the back door for donations. If you can help, please e-mail Betsy Biesenbach at beezinbox@aol.com or call 982-7892.
Green Team at UUCR, December Earth Friendly Friday Program
December 14, 2018; 6:30 pm.

Come share food, drink and good times. With another year almost past, let’s join together to celebrate the past and anticipate the new. Let’s party! Bring your favorite dish to share, and your spirit-enhancing libation of choice. As in the past few years, there will be an environmental trivia game.

This program is sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Roanoke and the Roanoke Group of the Sierra Club. Programs are held on the second Friday of each month and the Unitarian Universalist Church, 2015 Grandin Rd, SW, in Roanoke. Snacks for the social time before and after the presentation are welcome but not required. For more information contact Dan Crawford at dbcrawford@cox.net or 540-343-5080 or visit the Sierra Club Website: https://sites.google.com/site/roanokesierra/ and also visit the Green Team website: https://uuroanoke.org/outreach-justice/green-team.

All programs are Free and open to the public. Come and enjoy!

UUCR Recycling

We need your help! Now that we have clearly marked recycling bins in the kitchen and around the church, we are set up better than ever to recycle. The Recycling Team asks that you look carefully at the items being placed into our bins. You may not be aware that Roanoke City no longer accepts #3-#7 plastics. If it is a #1 or #2, it’s recyclable. If there is any other number or there is no imprint, please do not recycle it. Other items that are recyclable include: aluminum beverage cans, steel cans, and tin cans, glass bottles and jars, mixed paper, newspaper, magazines, cardboard boxes, and pizza box lids (with no food scraps or grease). If you’re in doubt about whether to recycle an item, and there is no one around to ask, it is probably best to put it into the trash bin.

Our Recycling Team assigns somebody to sort through the bins each Sunday and bring the recyclables out to the big blue bin. They often find plastic bags, aluminum foil, food, or other plastic or metal objects which Roanoke City does not recycle. For your own information, it is nice to know that you can take metal items to Gerdau Metals Recycling (off of Honju Street) or clean plastic grocery bags to the grocery store.
**UUCR's Reading Seeds Angel Tree**

This holiday season, Reading Seeds, UUCR’s own literacy initiative for at-risk children, has an angel tree in the Fellowship Hall at UUCR.

Please choose an angel and buy a new book for Reading Seeds to deliver to one of the children’s Raleigh Court’s Head Start Center. Each angel will have suggested books to make your shopping easy and it represents a child waiting on a book. Please return the new unwrapped books under the angel tree by December 23rd to ensure the children get their books for Christmas.

If you prefer to make a donation, donate at [https://support.firstbook.org/readingseeds](https://support.firstbook.org/readingseeds) or write a check to UUCR with Reading Seeds Angel in the memo line.

Readings Seeds thanks you! Happy Holidays.
Joys and Concerns

One of the missions of the Caring Committee is to provide support to the members and friends of UUCR in times of need. If you need assistance following surgery, during an illness or other emergency and would like a call from the Caring Committee, email Sally Garber at jessgarber@comcast.net. If you would like to occasionally help your fellow UUs by providing a meal or a ride, please add your name to the Caring Committee list of auxiliary volunteers, by contacting Sally Garber at jessgarber@comcast.net.

UUCR Housekeeping

The Church Member Directory is posted on the website with a member password. If you are a member, please contact me for that password. The directory is uploaded quarterly.

UU World Magazine subscribers: if you are not sure that you are subscribed or if you would like to be subscribed to get the quarterly publication, email me today with the correct address, phone number, and email address.

For safety and liability reasons, there should not be anyone in the church without prior scheduling. Please put all supplies away after using any room at UUCR on any given day. There are a lot of persons coming and going, and we like to have each room ready to be used at any moment. Thank you for taking care of your church.

It takes a village to grow our community of faith, and volunteers are the heart of our village. We are here on this earth to help others, and there is always good work to be done. We have openings! If you have a specific interest please let me know!

The office hours will vary so please call ahead if you need anything to ensure someone will be there to help you. Feel free to email me and leave messages as those will be checked regularly. Reach out to me if you need help or assistance, and thank you all for your help.

Megan mbrauch@uuroanoke.org

I feel that I have done a great deal of work to help get your Church home in a place that can continue to grow for years to come. If anyone would like to keep in touch with me outside of UUCR, call my cell phone (540) 797-6045. I thank the UUCR board and Staff for being so accommodating!
Rev. Kirk Ballin, Minister Emeritus of UUCR
Email: kirkuuemeritus@uuroanoke.org | 540-793-0752

Alan Moore, Director of Lifespan Faith Development
Email: AMoore@Uuroanoke.org | Mobile: (540) 818-4964
Alan can meet Tuesday afternoons and by appointment.

Kerry Morgiewicz, Music Director
Email: KMorgiewicz@uuroanoke.org | Home: (540) 989-3190
Kerry can meet by appointment. Choir practice at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays.

Megan Brauch, Congregational Administrator
Email: Mbrauch@uuroanoke.org | Office: (540) 342-8888
Office hours vary. Please call in advance. Closed on all major holidays

Bonnie Evans, LFD Administrator | bevans@uuroanoke.org
Linda Wallis, Office Assistant | (540) 342-6214
Beth Caruthers, GoodEnuf Choir Director | bcthe0@yahoo.com
uuroanoke.org

Thank you to our Elected Leaders:
Cy Dillon, Board President
Bob Egbert, President Elect
Spike Harrison, Past President and Nominating Committee
Jeanne Larson, Board Clerk
Katherine Hoffman, Personnel
James Rosar, Tim Andriano, and Jimbo Harshfield, Members at Large
Lynn Yates, Shared Ministry Committee
VP Finance is an open position on the board.

"A diverse caring community, nurturing each other toward spiritual growth, and living our faith through service to the larger community."