



# The Forum



A Southwest Unitarian Universalist Publication

[www.swuu.org](http://www.swuu.org)

December 1, 2016

## Sunday Services

10:30 AM

6320 Royalton Road, North Royalton



### **December 4**

*Into the Quiet*

We begin our month of remembering the Sabbath. During what can be the busiest season of the year, we will explore this ancient practice of time apart from weekly routines for the benefits it can bring to all of us.

-Led by Rev. Kristen Rohm

Worship Associate: Emily Heath Wilson

Focus Collection: Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

### **December 11**

*Renewal and Delight*

Taking time to rest and renew, to allow our senses to once again find delight in simple things. As we come together for music, candles and contemplation, let us rediscover the richness that comes from Sabbath time.

-Led by Rev. Kristen Rohm

Worship Associate: Ken Ellis

### **December 18**

*The Peace of Wild Things*

As we near the Winter Solstice, we look to the cycles of nature for how to refresh our weary spirits. During these long nights, let us rest alongside the earth, so that we are ready to wake with the light.

-Led by Rev. Kristen Rohm

Worship Associate: Eve Dilport

### **December 24**

*The Gifts of Christmas*

Through the ancient story, we take a fresh look at the gifts given to the baby Jesus. During this interactive service we will share the gifts of music, story and song as we ponder what we most wish to give and to receive this Christmas. **The service begins at 5:30 PM**

### **December 25**

*Sharing Our Own Christmastime Stories*

The Christmas holiday holds memories for each of us. This will be a time of intergenerational sharing of the varied ways we have celebrated, observed, or just *dealt with* what can be both joyful and stressful. Bring your stories.

-Led by Bruce Melville, SWUU Worship Team

# The Forum

## Message from your Minister

### **Sabbath**

*“Sabbath time assumes that if we step back and rest, we will see the wholeness in it all.*

*We will naturally apprehend the good in how things are,  
taste the underlying strength, beauty, and wisdom that lives even in the  
difficult days,  
and take delight in the gift and blessing of being alive.”*

-Wayne Muller

Several years ago, I was invited to peruse a friend's bookshelf before she moved. I found a treasure there, Sabbath by Wayne Muller. I have read and re-read this book about five times. Sabbath is a word not much used these days and you may find yourself thinking, “huh, what does that even mean?” This is a great month to explore it together. I find making time for quiet in this busy month is exactly what helps me to be able to enjoy it. It is my hope each of us will find some Sabbath times in December and be enriched by this ancient practice.

I enjoy this time of year. I like Christmas lights, Christmas trees and Hanukkah candles. I don't even mind the incessant holiday music in stores! What I aspire to is to have enough space to do the things I enjoy, like making Christmas cookies, without being overly stressed. I know that there are some among us who do not enjoy this time of year, who find it depressing or overwhelming. Please know that I have plenty of time and would love to meet with you -- when a walk, a talk or some company would be helpful.

I hope for each of us that we make thoughtful choices about what we do with our time during this holiday season. Maybe you would choose to do some shopping using Amazon Smile (and SWUU will get 0.5%) instead of heading to the crowded mall and come to a fun activity at church instead! You might like to help decorate the SWUU tree and make Christmas cookies on Saturday the 10th. You might like to meet for a holiday lunch on Friday, December 16th. Or go caroling at the Senior Center on the 18th after church. Please come to the Christmas Eve service. Or on Christmas morning to share stories.

Remember that you are an important part of this beloved community, however you relate to the holidays...

Know that you are loved,

Rev. Kristen

[minister@swuu.org](mailto:minister@swuu.org)

# **The Forum**

## **Focus Collection for December: UUSC** by Mark Jackson, Social Justice Committee

The December Focus Collection will benefit the U.U.S.C. (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee). Southwest U.U. Church has had a tradition of supporting the U.U.S.C. during the month of December, given their overwhelming support of our First Principle. According to their website, they "... advance human rights through grassroots collaboration in more than a dozen countries throughout the world. U.U.S.C. fosters social justice and works toward a world free from oppression. U.U.S.C.'s innovative approaches and measurable impact — in promoting economic justice, bolstering environmental justice, and protecting rights at risk — are grounded in the belief that *all people have inherent power, dignity, and rights*.

They are currently advocating in three focus areas, which include economic justice, rights at risk, and environmental justice. Their advocacy for economic justice develops strategic partnerships and networks, builds movements, and influences local, statewide, and national policy on workers' rights. There are three goals for this focus area, including: empower and organize workers to advocate for their rights, foster the creation of fair, safe work environments that are free from intimidation and harassment, and where the human rights and dignity of workers are respected, and hold corporations accountable for violations of their workers' human rights.

In terms of the rights at risk initiative, the program strategically addresses the needs of the most vulnerable by providing aid and pursuing structural change, especially during times of natural disaster, armed conflict, genocide, forced migration, and systematic injustice. There are five goals in this focus area, which include: advance sexual orientation and gender identity rights in Southern Africa, decriminalize migration and safeguard the fundamental human right to seek asylum, provide humanitarian assistance to refugees in transit and document abuses perpetrated by border enforcement authorities, build organizational capacity of Burmese human rights activists, and lastly, ensure that natural disaster relief and reconstruction efforts are guided by the voices and needs of affected communities.

The third initiative, environmental justice, works to influence government policies related to environmental justice and mobilize activists to hold government, agencies, and socioeconomic elites accountable for water-rights violations. This focus area also has five goals, including: support civil society and grassroots groups in the struggle against water privatization and depletion, promote citizen involvement in the utilization and management of water as a common resource, advocate for new laws guaranteeing the human right to water, challenge corporate and governmental violations, and create new models for implementing the human right to water.

They have been rated a Four Star Charity by Charity Navigator, so you can rest assured that your contribution will benefit those who are in need.

## **SWUU Walkers Update for December** by Susan Paxson

Even though winter is upon us, the weather so far has been quite mild. I have decided to continue planning walks during the winter if the weather permits. The walks for this month will be Tuesday, December 6th at 10:00 AM at West Creek (Ridgewood between State and Broadview) and Saturday, December 31st at 3:30 PM at Paw Paw Picnic area ( at the corner of Valley Pkwy and 130th ST). If you plan on attending, or for more information, please contact me. Happy healthy holidays!!!

**Let the Good Times Roll**  
**At SWUU's Mardi Gras Celebration on February 25!**  
 by Danelle Baker-Miller



**"All for SWUU..." August 2016-January 2017**  
by Sherry Spencer, Board President

**Save the Date**

What: Annual mid-year State of the Church Report by the Board of Trustees  
When: Sunday, January 22, 2017

# The Forum



## **SWUU on the Web**

For general information about SWUU, services, sermons, committees and the most up-to-date calendar of events, visit our website at:

[www.swuu.org](http://www.swuu.org)

## **Receive The Forum Electronically!**

If you would like to receive The Forum via email, contact

[forum@swuu.org](mailto:forum@swuu.org)

## **Join the SWUUList**

If you would like to join a newsgroup focused on those issues of importance to SWUU, check out the SWUUList. Go to

[www.SWUU.org](http://www.SWUU.org) and click on SWUUList for details.

## **Sermons**

If you would like to receive sermons via email or by mail, contact [office@swuu.org](mailto:office@swuu.org)

## **Board Minutes**

If you would like to receive the Board Minutes via email, contact [office@swuu.org](mailto:office@swuu.org), and put "Board Minutes" in the subject line

## **Editorial Team**

Dan Paxson  
Susan Paxson

## **Would you like to submit something to The Forum?**

- ♦ Write as if the reader is new to SWUU
- ♦ Include first and last names, and area codes
- ♦ Include a contact person, phone number, and email if possible
- ♦ Include the city in which the event is located
- ♦ Avoid or explain insider terms and abbreviations
- ♦ Explain Who, What, Where, and When (How and Why are often helpful as well.)
- ♦ Encourage volunteering and participation gently.

Submission guidelines apply to articles and Order of Service announcements. Order of Service announcements may be sent to [office@swuu.org](mailto:office@swuu.org) by Thursday morning of each week.

Articles are edited minimally, only to ensure that these guidelines are met.

The Forum is published on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each month  
Submissions should be sent to [forum@swuu.org](mailto:forum@swuu.org) by the dates listed in the calendar of each issue.

The Board of Trustees meets once per month. Check the calendar in each Forum for the specific date. Everyone is welcome to attend. Minutes from the meetings will be available for members upon request to the Board Secretary.

---

# **The Forum**

---

**Sunday, December 25th**

by Bruce Melville

Yes, the church will be open on Christmas morning, and we will have a service. Whether or not you plan to be at the Christmas Eve service on the 24th, join us if you can on Christmas day. The service will be a bit more informal. We plan to share our own stories. Even if you can't be there, you're invited to write your short (a minute or two) Christmas story and e-mail it to me. We'll read your stories for you on Christmas morning. If you can be present, better yet: You can share your own story.

Even when I think I know what I want to say, I find it helpful—and time-saving—to write it out. So I encourage you to scratch your Christmas-time memory cells and recall a story from your own life.

Stay tuned for an update as Christmas approaches. One more thing: It would be nice to have some light refreshment after that service. If you'd like to bring something, that would be great.

## **Sharing and Singing for Seniors in North Royalton**

by Susan Paxson

We have two ways to reach out to the senior residents of our community. During the month of December, we will collect food donations for the Christmas boxes which will be given out to needy families here in North Royalton, many of them seniors. There is a list of items needed in the lobby at church. Any donations and even checks (made out to "Charitable Trust of NR Kiwanis") will be appreciated.

Then on December 18th, we will deliver the food when we go over there to sing Christmas carols and share some cookies after church. No practice is required and song sheets will be available. The Senior center is located at 13500 Ridge Road. We plan to leave from church around 12:30 and start singing promptly at 1:00 p.m. Please sign up in the lobby to sing or bring cookies on December 18th. We hope you will join with us as we spread Christmas Cheer here in our community!

## **Laugh, Learn, and Love Group**

by Judy Newell

Our new "Laugh, Learn and Love" group has been meeting on the last Sunday of the month at 12 noon in the sanctuary after service. The group is open to people that have concerns about their memories.

What does the group focus on? First of all—Laughing and Learning: We are learning to relax through laughter, and we hope to discover as much as possible about our how our brains function. Learning to support and lovingly care for one another is also on our list.

At present here is our agenda for meetings: After check-in, Gay Cady leads us in a short and relaxing meditation exercise. Because researchers suggest that we challenge our brains to pay attention and to learn new things, we tend to take the advice of these persons. We listen to music and to stories to keep our brains occupied. Our members have made good suggestions for future activities as well.

If there are questions or suggestions, contact Judy Newell .

# **The Forum**

## **Holiday Luncheon**

by Gay Cady

The Women's Group is sponsoring the annual Holiday Luncheon which will be open to all members and friends (male and female) on Friday, December 16, at 1pm. We will have a private room at Matteo's NR (North Royalton) the new Italian restaurant on Ridge north of Bennett. Please let Gay Cady know if you would like to come! We always have a good time.

With wishes for a great Holiday Season!

## **Smile When You Shop on Amazon Smile!**

by Danelle Baker-Miller

We hope you've heard the good news about Amazon Smile — SWUU is now officially a registered organization with this charitable shopping opportunity. When you shop online through Amazon Smile, 0.5% of your purchases will be donated to SWUU. Follow this link: [smile.amazon.com/ch/34-1892299](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/34-1892299) to our page (or copy and paste in your browser), sign in using your email and password (or if you don't have an account, create a free account) and begin shopping. "Supporting Southwest Unitarian Universalist Church" should show up at the top of your page.



Remember to visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), not amazon.com, for SWUU to receive a percentage of your purchase!

## **Welcome to Our New Members!**

by Susan Paxson, Membership Committee

Last month, we welcomed five new members into our congregation. Their pictures are on the bulletin board in the lobby by the elevator. Pat Mellott, who has been attending for 3 or 4 years, has helped out with the SWUU service auction and helped to organize the pledge drive two years ago. Betsy Clark, who first came to us around 2011, is a regular member of the SWUU Choir and has also filled in for Ellen on occasion when she was on vacation. Her partner, Bernie, is an avid photographer and has submitted pictures which you have probably seen on the screen during Sunday services. Pam Benedict has been attending SWUU for about a year and jumped right in and volunteered to join the Hospitality Committee last spring and helped out with the garage sale as well. Russell Allbery comes to us from right around the corner. He says he was dedicated in the UU church and has attended all of the UU churches in the area. We are lucky he decided to join SWUU. Please take the time to introduce yourself to our newest SWUUsers and get to know them a little better!





# December 2016

To contact the minister, Rev. Kristen Rohm, or make an appointment to see her, call or email: 440 390-3567, or minister@swuu.org

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
For calendar adds/changes/deletes notify us at <a href="mailto:forum@swuu.org">forum@swuu.org</a> , or call 440-888-3615						
Week day meetings are held in the church unless otherwise noted.						
<b>4</b> <i>Into the Quiet</i> -Rev. Kristen Rohm 5:30 PM COA Workshop	<b>5</b> 1:30 PM Meditation Group	<b>6</b> 10:00 AM -SWUU Walk@ West Creek	<b>7</b> 1:00—3:00 PM Spiritual Book Group 7:00 PM Zentangle Group	<b>8</b> 4:00 PM Social Justice	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 12:00 –3:00 PM Cookie Baking and Tree Trimming 3:30 PM Women's History
<b>11</b> <i>Renewal and Delight</i> -Rev. Kristen Rohm	<b>12</b> 1:30 PM Meditation Group	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 1:00-3:00 PM Spiritual Book Group 7:30 PM Covenant Group	<b>15</b> 10:00 AM Membership 7:00 PM Earth Alliance	<b>16</b> 1:00 PM — Holiday Lunch @ Matteo's 7:00 PM Men's Group	<b>17</b> 7:00 PM Youth Group Christmas Party
<b>18</b> <i>The Peace of Wild Things</i> -Rev. Kristen Rohm 1:00 PM Caroling for Seniors at the North Royalton Sr Ctr.	<b>19</b> 1:30 PM Meditation Group	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 1:00—3:00 PM Spiritual Book Group	<b>22</b> 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 5:30 PM Christmas Eve Service <i>The Gifts of Christmas</i>
<b>25</b> <i>Sharing Our Own Christmas-time Stories</i> -Bruce Melville	<b>26</b> 1:30 PM Meditation Group <b>FORUM DEAD-LINE</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 1:00—3:00 PM Spiritual Book Group	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 3:30 PM -SWUU Walk @ Paw Paw 8:00 PM New Year's eve party @ The Ellises'

All events are handicap accessible unless indicated by a \*\*



# The Forum

## Sharing and Caring

**Andy White** was just readmitted to Cleveland Clinic on Tuesday. It sounds like he is in good hands. Judy is cautiously optimistic.

Keep **Nancy Matsko** in your thoughts and prayers. Her Aunt Kay, who is her mom's twin, died last week.

*\* send your joys and sorrows to [forum@swuu.org](mailto:forum@swuu.org) for inclusion in the next issue*

**Southwest Unitarian Universalist Church**  
**6320 Royalton Road**  
**North Royalton, Ohio 44133**



We are happy to mail The Forum to anyone who would like to receive it. If you have a blue dot on your mailing label, we haven't heard from you in a while. Please contact us by phone 440 877 1686 or email [office@swuu.org](mailto:office@swuu.org) – if you'd like to continue to receive The Forum