



THE OPEN DOOR

**NEWSLETTER OF THE FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
(UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST) AUBURN, MAINE
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(207) 783-0461 - UUAUBURN@MYFAIRPOINT.NET
WEBSITE: WWW.AUBURNUU.ORG
SUNDAY WORSHIP AND RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION AT 10 AM**

***AN OFFICIAL UUA WELCOMING CONGREGATION:
ALL ARE WORTHY, ALL ARE WELCOME!***

We need not think alike to love alike - Francis David

DECEMBER, 2010

Jodi's Corner - Words from our Minister

"I should be content," writes David Ignatow, "to look at a mountain for what it is and not as a comment on my life." Indeed. But it can be so hard, when we are racing from one task to the next, always slightly behind on the list, always thinking ahead to what must be done next... Everything around us can, without any effort or intention at all, turn into a reminder of something else that must be done, or must be thought through, or must be paid attention to- something so much more important than the mountain itself, right?

The season of blessed dark offers, some would suggest insists upon, a respite from such frenetic living. We are invited to tuck into our warm homes, with a fire or a book or a glass of wine or mug of cocoa, and simply be still. 5 pm in the summer might very well find us just beginning to compile our list of tasks and errands for the evening. But by 5 pm in December, the cold and dark are nudging us back through our doors, the warm blanket calling us to settle in. It's true we may not actually be able to call it a night quite so early- I sure can't. But the invitation stands...a gentle insistence that we slow down, let things be what they are, let ourselves be who we are, what we are, where we are.

Such quiet is a gift and also a necessity- we are programmed to move in cycles. Deny the period of rest and the active times suffer the consequences. So in these upcoming months, may we all accept the invitation of the season to quiet ourselves- or minds, our spirits, and our bodies, rediscover what truly is.

And may your days and nights be blessed,

Jodi

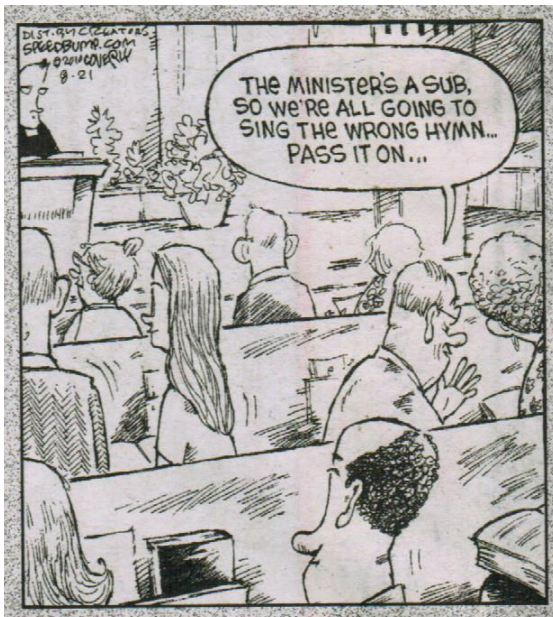
Sermon Excerpt -

Excerpted, from "You Shall Tell Them Yes!" Preached by our Bangor Theological School student Kate Connelly on Nov. 14th:

"...So what do we do to counteract all these "No's? Obviously, we say "Yes!" The question is, how? Figuring this out can be almost more daunting than coping with catastrophes. Thousands of worthy causes bombard us from all sides, begging our sympathy, time, and money, until we start to feel like the character in the comic strip Pogo who laments, "We are confronted with insurmountable opportunities." (Yes, that's up on my refrigerator too.) We all want to make the world a better place yet few of us have the resources to give time or money as much or as often as we would like. Our own day-to-day necessities, especially in this economy, can frequently dictate the loudest "no's. And the onslaught of demands may batter us to the point where for our own peace of mind all we want to say is "no." But saying "yes" does not have to be a major undertaking.

Do you vote? Recycle? Are you listed as an organ donor on your license? Have you spent a couple of hours helping an elderly neighbor? Given \$5.00 or an hour of your time to a soup kitchen because that was all you could afford? You said "yes." And if, as the Nike ad says, there are a thousand ways the world tells us no, then there must a hundred thousand relatively painless ways to say yes..."

(Here's the website Kate Connelly mentioned in her sermon: www.thehungersite.com)



News from Team Sabbatical:

Watch for more information in December about Jodi's upcoming Sabbatical. Team Sabbatical is working on our list of guest ministers and other essential services for Jodi's Sabbatical. (March-August 2011). The Team will have a bulletin board, a brochure and other means to communicate. Start imagining the possibilities for all of us to step outside of the normal routine!

Thanks to Funny Times, December 2010 for this little gem! Happy Holiday Season from Team Sabbatical: Rick O'Brien, Ann Perron, Bob Wolf, Ginny Starbird, Ellen O'Brien, Clara Bolduc, Jodi Hayashida.

Gingerbread Fair

Thank you to all of you who participated in the Gingerbread Fair. It was a huge success mainly due to all of your efforts. We still have some expenses to pay but I believe we will be end up over our budgeted goal of \$5,000. Since this is one of our major fundraisers, that is great news. In addition, it was a wonderful community event. Thank you all for your efforts and enthusiasm.

--- *Mary Low Hofmann*, Chair

Wanted: Wreath Decorating Elves

Do you yearn to express your creative side while enjoying fellowship with your fellow UUs? Tap your creative juices and your holiday spirit. Join us in decorating wreaths ordered during the Gingerbread Fair. We will gather in the vestry from 9 AM to 12 noon on Saturday, December 4, 2010. All equipment will be provided. (Bring a glue gun if you have one.) Refreshments will be on hand.

Reminder:

Wreath Pick-up on Sunday, December 5, 2010 after church service.

--Mary Kay Weisenberger

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Dearest Congregants,

Thank you for all your support and kind words through this transitional period. I have been a member of this church since 1994. Steve Jean and I joined together and got heavily involved with building and grounds. We first came to the church because of the birth of "Outright". I randomly picked up a brochure one night and was set aback by how similar my beliefs were with this establishment. What a beautiful thing to be a part of. The people, the support, the message, the room to grow and explore... Thank you all for this wonderful space and giving me the opportunity to know you.

The gingerbread fair was a blast! It was great to see everyone working together. I also got to see a bunch of faces I haven't seen for a long time. It's funny how, even as time passes, some people feel that connection to this space.

I Hope all your holiday celebrations are amazing!

--ANNE PERRON, PRESIDENT

HYMNALS

We have noticed lately there has been a shortage of hymnals in some of the pews. This makes it difficult to participate in the responsive reading and the music portions of the service. If you have borrowed one of our hymnals, please return it to the sanctuary. If you enjoy having your own copy at home and would like to purchase one for yourself (or to help purchase some for the church), please contact the Music Associates. We are researching the cost and will be submitting an order soon.

---Hillary Schau, (336-3605) for the Music Associates

MEMBERSHIP NEWS



We are pleased to announce that Hope Tracy, Greg Onnen, Russ Perham, Gordon Twitchell, Glen and Jerry Ricard (Shown left to right with Beth Ayotte and Rev. Jodi) and Iliana and Allen Cory, have joined our congregation. We welcomed them in a special ceremony during the church service held on Sunday, Nov.7th.

These are some things they shared with us about themselves during the New Member Sessions. While busy parenting son Jayden together, Iliana teaches Spanish and Allen Corey has started a new job. Hope Tracy's favorite wildflower is the lupine. Greg Onnen has a strong interest in meditation. Russ Perham says he enjoys putting on harvest suppers and is a mural artist. Gordon Twitchell hails from Norway, Maine, and he is already working to improve the outdoor walkways around the church, Gen and Jerry Ricard were married on Friday the 13th in October of 2000 and they feel blessed to have three wonderful children.

Please join us in supporting them in their individual searches for truth and meaning.

Greeters, please stand downstairs just inside the door to the lobby closest to the parking lot.

--- Beth Ayotte, Membership Committee Chair

Pearl Sawyer's Latest Poetry Edition!

Pearl Sawyer, poet extraordinaire, has donated copies of her latest book of poetry to the church. They are \$14 each and will be available during coffee hour for the next several Sundays as well as by calling the church office (783-0461) to order a copy. Another wonderful holiday gift for family and friends.

News From Religious Exploration

Holiday Pageant

We hope to have all of our children participate in this year's Holiday Pageant! The pageant will be performed on Sunday, December 19 during the Sunday morning service.



Rehearsals take place during Sunday morning classes. The Seekers and The Chalice Lighters (2nd through junior high) will be rehearsing on 11/27, 12/5 and 12/12. The Explorers and The Discoverers (Pre-K through 1st) will be rehearsing on 12/12. **All participants need to meet at 9 a.m. on**

December 19th. If your child has to miss a rehearsal, but would still like

to participate, please contact Clara ASAP.

Children's Choir



This year, in addition to performing during the Holiday Pageant, our children's choir will be performing at Clover Manor in Auburn at 1 p.m. on Sunday, December 19th.

We'll have a potluck lunch at the church after the service, then carpool and caravan to Clover at 12:40.

The children's choir will rehearse from 11:10 to 11:30 a.m. on 11/27, 12/5 and 12/12. Our children's choir is open to all our children, ages 5 and up, and younger children who like to sing and are able to stand still for a short time. Please see Clara for copies of the music for the performance!

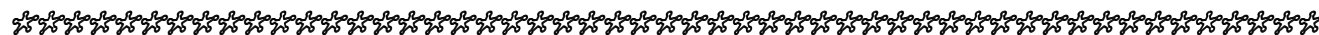
It's time to Welcome A Guest At Your Table!

Each year at this time, friends and families in our congregation participate in the UU tradition of "Guest at Your Table." We bring home special boxes, place them at our tables and share our financial blessings with our "guests." You can learn more by visiting www.uusc.org.

If you did NOT receive a Guest at Your Table box, you can pick one up from the rear of the sanctuary. We will close the Guest at Your Table program on the second Sunday in January.



Director of Religious Exploration Clara Bolduc can be reached at DREuuAuburn@myfairpoint.net

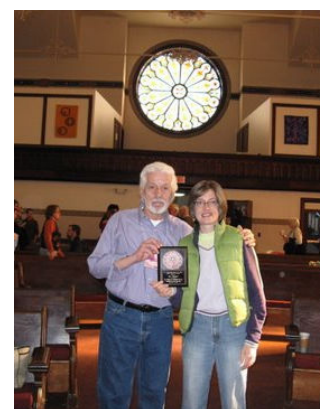


UU Cookbooks

The UU Cookbooks have arrived and they look great!. They will be available each Sunday after church during coffee hour or you can call the office to order yours. They are \$10 each and they make great Christmas gifts. From the books we sold at the Fair, we have covered are expenses for the printing, so all the additional books that are sold will be profit to our budget. Stop by and check them out.

Rose Window Award Recipients 2010

Each year our congregation pays tribute to one or more members who have been outstanding models of our Unitarian Universalist principles. Our *Rose Window Award* recognizes their exceptional contributions to our faith community, often offered tirelessly in the background. This year we honor Toby Haber-Giasson and Ron Spofford, whose efforts have made a significant impact on the health and vibrancy of our church.



Toby Haber-Giasson

From the inception of her membership at Auburn UU, Toby has dedicated her talents to the enhancement of our congregation. She has willingly taken on numerous tasks, often at the same time. As a singer and musician, Toby joined with others to rebirth the church's former coffee house as an 'Open Mic & Jam & Poetry Slam.' This monthly event now attracts many community performers and new talents, including those from other faith communities as diverse as our area's new Somali Muslim population.

Toby is also one of the co-founders of our innovative and award-winning *UU Theatre*, which explores social justice themes that both inspire and provoke our consciousness. *UU Theatre* has been a source of enlightenment and challenge to audiences, and along with Open Mic has attracted new members to our church.

A strong advocate for networking, Toby has been a key leader of Auburn UU's Social Justice endeavors, helping to connect us with immigrant farmers and environmental leaders, and encouraging us to explore issues of peace and sustainability. She also serves as our Public Relations spokesperson with area and state media, keeping information and photos about Auburn UU's programs steadily in the public eye.

Along the way, Toby has stepped up to serve the congregation as its president for two terms. Inspired by her growing connections to our denomination, Toby has been one of our General Assembly delegates to UUA annual gatherings in Fort Lauderdale, Salt Lake City, and Minneapolis where she served as an on-site reporter to help with the UUA coverage of events for publication on the UUA website. Toby continues to represent our church, our district, and our denomination as an articulate and committed advocate for our religion and our mission.

Ron Spofford

Ron Spofford is visible up front on most Sundays where he can be seen and heard lending his rich voice to our church choir. But much more often, he is working behind the scenes to assist other church members in accomplishing a great variety of tasks to help our church live its mission.

An advocate in linking us to other groups which engage in community outreach efforts, Ron gathers our Sunday food donations and delivers them to Trinity Jubilee Center each week. For a number of years he also led and coordinated our church's involvement in the ecumenically-sponsored New Year's Spaghetti Dinner at Trinity.

Ron was also one of our volunteers who traveled to New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to help with recovery and rebuilding efforts. He was recently a performer in our production of *The Katrina Project*, which memorialized the 5th anniversary of the Gulf Coast tragedy. He has regularly assisted in a variety of other ways in our ongoing UU Theatre productions.

Ron is active at our monthly Open Mic and Coffee House, helping to set up, selling refreshments, and often performing a song or reciting an original piece of his own writings. He is a co-leader of our Events Committee, which creates and coordinates activities to bring members together for fun, socialization, and cultural functions. He is also quietly on hand to assist with the numerous tasks that challenge our Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Ron's presence is always a caring and compassionate one. His is often a voice of support for members and friends who are struggling with life challenges. He makes a careful effort to warmly

greet our visitors, to personalize our church welcome, and to help newcomers become acquainted. Ron's steady and reliable involvement graces all of us as he lives and models our principles.

Council of Committees

Our monthly meetings continue to be a useful forum for your church leaders to find synergy! If you are a chair and cannot attend, please send a representative or send news of your doings!

Building and Grounds

The November 16, 17 and 18 fair weather and mild temperatures accommodated the contractors in their work to install a new stainless steel chimney liner through the original brick chimney opening, connecting new breechings from top of the old and new boilers and installing a new copper chimney cap. This concludes the work on our heating system in time for the winter ahead.

--- *Bob Thorpe*, for the **Building and Grounds Committee**

COMMUNITY RELATIONS thanks to all of you who have joined the First Universalist Church of Auburn Facebook page! This is a fun way of spreading news about events, and sharing pictures after the events. If you have not yet joined, please do!

Social Justice Corner

2nd Collections remaining: **Dec:** New Beginnings; **Jan:** Advocates for Children, **Feb:** Trinity Jubilee Center for Souper Sunday

2011 2nd Collection nominations will be taken on all Sundays in December. Forms will be in the Order of Service so you can nominate a LOCAL NON-PROFIT whose work benefits the L/A AREA. Put your form in the collection plate so SJ can include your organization. NOTE: Voting will take place on Sunday, January 9 only.

Our 2nd collection began after a Tsunami struck Indonesia in 2004. We took an extra collection which was donated to recovery efforts there. The congregation was so generous that we began to wonder about showing our concern for the local community. We now vote annually on which local groups we will collect for, and SJ carries out that process.

Seen the Domestic Violence posters hanging in church? Our friends at AWAP gave them to us. Please note that AWAP is now known as Safe Voices.

Microloans- at the Fall meeting, the congregation adopted SJ's recommendation to invest the majority of the \$6,000 set aside from the Arlene Siekowski bequest in a L/A area small business loan program, as originally tasked, and a portion to be invested in leadership development. \$5,000 will go into a fund administrated by Coastal Enterprises, Inc., and \$1,000 will be used for training our own church leaders. SJ is gratified to have facilitated this compromise to carry out the congregation's wishes.

Feed the Hungry - volunteer once a month to cook, set up or serve a meal on a Wednesday evening (4:30-6:30pm) or a Sunday morning (7:30-9:15) at Calvary Church in Lewiston. Join members of other churches who have served 3000 meals at Calvary in 2010. To sign up for volunteer training, call Diane Nelder at 782-3221.
-- **Social Justice Committee**

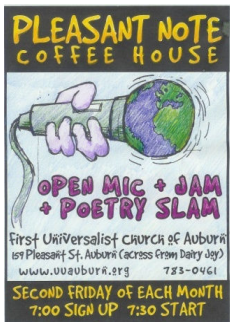
UU Theater News

UU Theater has already raised over \$2500 for the church with its theater productions and playbill ad sales. Our audiences were moved by "The Katrina Project"- thanks to all of you who made it happen. The show may perform an encore in January...

UU Theater - How can YOU Play a Part?

- Support our playbill advertisers -- tell them you appreciate their ad and show of support for us:

- * Major support comes from Mechanics Bank, Jim's Rent-It and Marc's Auto Body.
- * Strong support comes from Evergreen Subaru and Roy's All-Beef Hamburgers.
- * Neighborly support comes from: Beal's Cleaners, Brad's Auto Repair, Bread Shack, Calm Health, Cascia, Dillingham's Funeral Home, Dr. Haltof, Fireside Stove, Godin Auto, Goin' Postal, Handy Anne, High-5 Massage, Holly's Own, Michel Giasson Architect, Minuteman Auto Sales, Next Level Business Coaching, Orbitz Hair Salon, Pam-Price-Wharf massage, The Pop Shoppe, Susan Dube Realty, Vectorsonics, The Village Inn, Judy Webber and Wicked Illustrations.



OPEN MIC

Open Mic had a great show in November- you should have been there! Old friends and new ones joined to share in the spirituality of music and spoken word. Pat Gardiner had us transfixed with her stories of Harvey and Stella in the fictional town of Moose Cove- come listen to the next installment of her Maine tales. Thanks to Hillary and Augie Schau for running the refreshment table!

Please plan to attend on Friday, December 10. Our free show on the 2nd Friday of the month begins at 7:30pm in the vestry.

PS- Your goodwill donations have funded some new equipment for Open Mic. Thanks for your generosity!

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY EVENTS

GENESIS AND RENAISSANCE GIFTS

This holiday season, we will be collecting gifts for the young men and women who are staying at the Genesis and Renaissance Houses.

St Mary's Genesis and Renaissance House are two residential programs run for at risk youth in our community. They work with youth ages 13-18, helping them to learn healthy coping and relationships skills so as to assist them in becoming productive members of our community. Many of the youth come from homes where abuse was prevalent and are often victims of trauma themselves. Substance use has, at times, become a way to cope with pain and the loss that often comes with it. Involvement with the Juvenile Justice System is frequent.

Each winter there are many teens without coats, hats, and boots. Many only have one pair of sneakers with holes or one pair of jeans. Many are very talented at art, music, or sports, but without the resources to take lessons, or purchase the gear to play with an organized team. It is a struggle to have adequate supplies to support the craft, sewing, or scrap booking groups that would channel their creativity in a positive direction.

But WE can help. There will be Gift Tree in the back of the sanctuary. Pick up a tag with a gift listed on it, buy the gift on your tag, bring it to the back of the sanctuary by 12/19, and elves will bring our gifts over to the Houses for Christmas.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY CONCERT:

The annual Holiday Concert with The Dave Rowe Trio, Phil House and Denny Breau, will be held in the Sanctuary on Saturday, December 18 at 7 PM. Tickets for sale at the door. This is a highlight of our Christmas season!

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE:

We will hold our Christmas Eve service at 7 pm on Dec. 24th. This service of song and candlelight is one of the loveliest of the year!

As always, we will hold a reception in the vestry following the service. For all you bakers (or shoppers) out there, we invite you to bring treats to share!

The Barton Center Campership Fund for Diabetic Girls and Boys – Christmas Eve Collection

Every year the church donates 10% of the Christmas eve collection to the Barton Center for Diabetes Education, Inc., formerly known as the Clara Barton Camp for Girls with Diabetes, Inc. and now adding the Joslin Diabetes Center for Boys with Diabetes.

Should anyone wish to make a special donation for the Campership Fund, checks should be made to the Barton Center earmarked “Campership”.

The Barton Center offers many programs for children with diabetes and their families. The Fall 2010 issue of the Barton Center newsletter headlined exciting news that the Barton Center purchased Camp Joslin. The Barton Center had been managing Camp Joslin since 2008. The two camps are only three miles apart. The Fall 2010 newsletter is posted on the bulletin board in the downstairs lobby. Take a few minutes to read the whole newsletter to understand how the children who have experienced the camps and their families feel about them. The history of how long our church has supported these camps follows. I feel it is important to keep this worthwhile project in mind to understand why we donate 10% of the Christmas Eve collection. Esther Tucker.

Each December, when thinking about Christmas, Universalists remember **Clara Barton** who was born on Christmas day. **Clara Barton**, who was brought up in a Universalist, was the founder of the American Red Cross.

In 1921 the Women's National Missionary Association of the Universalist Church purchased the **Clara Barton Birthplace** at North Oxford, Massachusetts, to make it into a monument to the life and work of **Clara Barton**.

Thousands of lives have been touched and improved by that decision. In 1932 the Clara Barton Birthplace Camp for Diabetes Education and Treatment was established. This humanitarian project to honor Clara Barton is inspirational. **The Clara Barton Camp for Girls with Diabetes** was the only camp of its kind in the world that helped children to see a brighter future while living with diabetes. The donations of the Universalist women's groups maintained the camp and also made it possible to offer camperships.

In 1960, when the Unitarian and Universalist Denominations merged to become one denomination, the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation adopted the program. Locally, as long as our church had an organized women's group, there was an annual ingathering service in December or January to commemorate the birthday of **Clara Barton** who was born on Christmas day. Dime cards in the shape of baseballs and

stockings were filled. (The baseballs for the boys and the stockings for the girls.) The donations received from the baseballs went to the Elliot P. Joslin Camp for Boys with Diabetes. The women's group also raised money to send a local girl to the camp.

Starting in 1989, when there was no longer an organized women's group in the church, an Ingathering Service was held during a church service in December to continue the church's support of this worthwhile project. In 1998, instead of the Ingathering Service, the policy to give 10% of the collection received at the Christmas eve service was adopted.

The Barton Center for Diabetes Education, Inc., formerly known as the Clara Barton Camp for Girls with Diabetes, Inc., continues to inspire children and empower families. As Clara Barton herself fought a continuous battle to meet the needs of others, let us also help to meet the needs of this worthy cause.

Doing Your Holiday Shopping Online This Year??

If you are doing your holiday shopping online, consider using www.iGive.com/auburnuu. We are registered with this shopping gateway and any purchases made with any of the 600 + retailers available through this site, will earn our church a percentage of the sale. This a great way to increase our fundraising budget without any extra work or additional \$ out of our own pockets. There are many great retailers that are available through this gateway -- JC Penney, Lands End, LLBean, KMart, Brookstone, Disney Store, HSN etc. If you are an online shopper, check this site out and help out your church at the same time.

Standing Up for our GLBTQ Teens

Last month at a community rally on our church grounds about 100 people gathered in remembrance of GLBTQ teens who have committed suicide as a result of bullying and exclusion. Outright L/A sponsored the "You Are Not Alone" speak-out, which featured youth and adult presenters, including teens and their advisors from the weekly drop-in for GLBTQ youth held at our church.

Church member Craig Saddlemire made a wonderful video of this event that can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/> (type in: "You Are Not Alone Rally").

Speakers offered sobering statistics about the barrage of homophobic remarks and harassment that occur, often within school settings. "Name it and claim it!" they urged. When you witness a biased act or statement, address it, and clearly indicate that it is unacceptable. Outright created a "You Are Not Alone Resource Pamphlet" to list steps individuals can take against homophobia, and to delineate more systemic solutions to affect real change in our communities.

The words at the rally resonated deeply – encouraging and hopeful even while many people in our society cling to rigid ideas about gender and identity. As Unitarian Universalists we are joined every day by like-minded people who value the inherent worth and dignity of all persons. As long as anyone is harassed or ridiculed, we will continue to demand an end to the bullying. As long as anyone is judged because of their gender identification or presentation, we will continue to rise up and seek justice. As we commit to standing on the side of love, our church community is grateful for our ongoing collaboration with Outright L/A.

---Anne Kinney, for the **Welcoming Congregation Committee**

UU AUBURN - DECEMBER 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																	
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5 Worship and RE at 10am, then Coffee Hour - Second Collection- New Beginnings - Adult RE 11:30 Nominationd for 2nd Collection Yankee Boyz 3-5pm PICK UP WREATHES	6 7-9pm Guy2Guy (R) 7-9pm Co-Counseling Support (R)	7 7-8pm AA (R)	8 Council of Committees	9 4-8pm Phil House in Vestry (R) 6-9pm Men's Group (R)	10 Outright L/A "Drop-in" (R) 6pm OPEN MIC 7:30pm	11 7pm Leah Wolfsong Concert and Solstice Celebration (R)																																																	
12 Worship and RE at 10am, then Coffee Hour - Adult RE 11:30 Finance Committee 11:30 Nominations for 2nd Collection	13 Co-Counseling Support (R)	14 7-8pm AA (R)	15 6:30pm Membership Committee	16 6-9pm Men's Group (R)	17 Outright L/A "Drop-in" (R)	18 7PM Holiday Concert in Sanctuary																																																	
19 10am RE Pageant Multi-generational Service, then coffee hour - 11:30 Adult RE - 11:30 Music Associates meet - 2nd Collection nominations	20 7-9pm Guy2Guy (R) - 7-9pm Co-Counseling Support (R) -6:30 Board Meeting	21 7-8pm AA (R)	22 11-1pm Phil House (R)	23 6-9pm Men's Group (R)	24 7pm CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE	25																																																	
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For an up-to-date calendar, visit auburnuu.org and click on "Calendar." - (R) is a rental event.