



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2021 - 10:30 AM

REV. CLARE L. PETERSBERGER: *"SURPRISED BY JOY"*

Wordsworth wrote that he was surprised by joy when the wind moved him to remember the pain of grief. C. S. Lewis wrote of being surprised by joy when, atheist that he was, he was moved to theism. Christmas carols promise "Joy to the world" when human life on this planet has never been free of turmoil and strife. This begs the question of "What is joy?" and when and where do we find joy (or does joy find us?)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2021 - 7:30 AM - BLUE HOLIDAYS SERVICE

REV. CLARE L. PETERSBERGER: *"ELUSIVE JOY"*

Our spiritual theme this month is "Opening To Joy." But sometimes it is difficult to open to joy. Joy can be elusive---especially at this darkest time of the year. Tonight, we make space to honor losses and worries, as well as feelings of grief, loneliness, anxiety, and disappointment. You are invited to bring five candles to your device (it is not necessary to do so to participate.) The purpose of this contemplative service is to acknowledge our feelings; to sing; to meditate and pray; and to light candles in the darkness.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5 SERVICE INFORMATION

For Sunday, December 5, please join us at 10:15 AM to be admitted prior to the service starting at 10:30. We will have break-out rooms for coffee and conversation following the service.

Zoom Link: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/98256691031?pwd=eJZLNfJESUYrWmFmWk9uK3RnUHJFZz09>

Meeting ID: 982 5669 1031 Passcode: 948407

YOUTH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

We invite families to join us for a walk with some talk at Hampton Mansion this Sunday from 2 to 3 PM. This family gathering will be on the move to help us stay warm outside. We will meet in the main parking lot outside the visitor center and then walk down to the area that has out buildings, including buildings where enslaved people and, later, tenant farmers lived. These buildings and the exhibits in them are now open after being closed for the previous year. Visiting this site will deepen our discussion of the 8th UU principle that we started last week: We work for a society without racism or other oppressions. Please contact Joyce Duncan at tuudre@towsonuuc.org for more information or to register for the religious exploration program.

CLARE'S COLLOQUY

At a collegial gathering last spring, colleagues watched a video of children in a UU congregation describing what they had done and learned throughout the first year of the pandemic. I was struck by the range of emotions.

On the one hand, many students shared how they missed being with friends at school; missed particular teachers; missed celebrating with friends for birthdays; missed celebrating holidays with families; oh, and they certainly did not like social distancing and wearing masks.

On the other hand, each student shared something positive that they had done or learned or experienced during the pandemic: spending more time with a pet; spending more time with parents; learning how to cook a dish; doing yoga every day; creating a cartoon strip; jumping rope outside; painting; reading books; and dancing! In the midst of what was a difficult time for everyone these children had found, created and shared moments of joy.

In the ancient stories of this season, joy comes in the most challenging and dire of circumstances: people fearing their sources of food had ended; people facing a defiled place of worship after a long and divisive war; a couple making a journey away from the home of the teenager about to give birth with no room for them in the inn. People shout in joy when they realize the light is returning to the land; people rejoice at the miracle of a single jar of oil burning for eight days; and people hear tidings of great joy when the baby is born.

The ancient stories and the narratives of children last spring are a reminder that joy comes in the midst of, not in spite of, hardship. And it is often found in the ordinariness of our days. Brenee Brown writes: Joy comes to us in moments – ordinary moments. We risk missing out on joy when we get too busy chasing down the extraordinary... when you talk to people who have survived great losses, it is clear that joy is not a constant. Without exception, all the participants who spoke to me about their losses, and what they missed the most, spoke about ordinary moments. “If I could come downstairs and see my husband sitting at the table and cursing at the newspaper...” “If I could hear my son giggling in the backyard...” “My mom sent me the craziest texts – she never knew how to work her phone. I’d give anything to get one of those texts right now”.

Our spiritual theme for December is “opening to joy.” With scary news about the Omicron variant; the economy; social injustices; the viciousness in politics; etc.,---this may seem like an untimely theme!

Perhaps we need to open ourselves to joy--not in spite of these realities--but because of them. Perhaps we need to open ourselves to the joy to be found in the ordinariness of our days. We will do so on December 5 as we reflect on times when we were surprised by joy and on December 12 when we remember where the Buddha sought and found enlightenment. And if opening to joy seems too difficult, there will be an “elusive joy” or “Blue Holiday” service at 7:30 p.m. on the evening of Dec. 10. You will not want to miss our multigenerational service on December 19th. Our students have recorded an ancient story for us to enjoy! For Christmas Eve, at 5 p.m. you are invited to bring an ornament to your device that sparks joy and be prepared to share its story. At 7:30 p.m. we will celebrate a more traditional service focused on sharing joy. For either or both services, please bring a candle to your device so that we can “pass” the flame while singing “Silent Night.”

May we experience moments of joy in the midst of all that is unknown in December. May we share our joy with others. For as the UU students reminded us such sharing brings joy to the world!

TUUC AUCTION— WE DID IT—THANK YOU!



All of us are looking forward to next year when we can party in person, enjoy a delicious potluck dinner (with Jane and Steve doing all of the cleaning up), sidle up to the bar to buy some okay beer and respectable wine, and return to the Auction Floor to figuratively beat each other into submission with our auction paddles.

That being said, I think we've gotten rather good at this virtual thing and the results bear that out: **Over \$17,400 to support the Towson Unitarian Universalist Church and its excellent programs!** It has to be conceded that there are some things about the virtual format that we might want to keep around long after Covid. Entertainment for instance. Our LIVE Auction Night and ZOOM Party was a blast thanks in large part to some top-notch performances by some very talented UUs. Spice gave a touching rendition of a Kate Wolf's "Give Yourself to Love," the Azzam family sang a lively version of "The Bare Necessities" (You've got to love the ukulele.), we couldn't stop dancing while Tracy sang "Can't Stop the Feeling" and Tony Bonta and friends performed songs of several genres including an original composition, "Let's Go Streaking," whose genre has yet to be assigned. We heartily thank these musicians who brought us such delight and Andrew Hager our Entertainment Captain who organized it all.

Thank you Members of the Auction Committee who worked hard over the past two months to make this a fun and profitable experience. What a great team you are! Special thanks to Samantha Saalfield our Head Coach, and Linda Talley our Publicity Captain for both doing so much more than a fair share.

Thank you Neil for serving as Raffle Master Supreme. Thank you Patty and John for letting us into your home and serving as Host and Auctioneer extraordinaire. Thank you technical ushers for being well-rehearsed and skillfully coordinating this complex production on Zoom. Thanks to Kai and Phil who tirelessly fulfilled every one of a thousand requests that always had to be done "right away." Thanks especially to my co-Chair, Marilyn Maze who wrote the script both literally and figuratively for this year's Auction and who does so much with so much dedication.

Most of all, thanks to all of you donors and bidders, buyers and participants who gathered and shared your considerable gifts to make this year's Auction a great success.

Dan Alper, Auction 2021 Co-Chair

ONLINE CONTRIBUTIONS

When making your contributions online, please be sure to designate your donation to the correct fund by using the dropdown arrow. Click on the fund you wish to contribute to and write the entity (ex: ODB) in the note area for clarification.

Give to Towson Unitarian Universalist Church

\$ 0.00

Give to 2021-2022 Stewardship Campaign

Add Gift to Another Fund

Give this One Time

Give by Credit/Debit Card

Continue

Give to Towson Unitarian Universalist Church

\$ 0.00

Give to Restricted Fund

Give to 2021-2022 Stewardship Campaign

Give to Building Fund

Give to General Fund

Give to Green Products

Give to Kate Venables Music Fund

Give to Memorial Garden

Give to ODB Casseroles

Give to Plate Collection

Give to Religious Education Registration

Give to Restricted Fund

Give to Social Action Collection

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS AT TOWSON UUC

GREEN SANCTUARY MEETING—SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5 AT NOON

The Green Sanctuary Committee is meeting at noon on Sunday December 5th via Zoom. All are invited to join. The Zoom link is on the church website.

DECEMBER ETHNIC LUNCH—DATE CHANGE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8 AT 12:30 PM

December's Ethnic Lunch will be at Daniela's in Hamden, 824 W. 36th Street: <https://www.danielaristorante.com/> on **Wednesday, December 8 at 12:30 PM**. This is a week earlier than usual. Daniela's will do a similar meal to the one we had last time. There will be appetizer plates, pastas and a mini dessert platter for \$27 per person. Drinks will be extra. If there are special diet considerations (like gluten free) they can accommodate but need notice before December 8. This is the meal that will be provided. We will not be ordering off the menu.

Staying healthy is always a concern for everyone, but as we approach the holidays, it is important to remember to respect the protocols for Covid-19. Daniela's asks everyone to wear a mask when entering the restaurant. They do not ask for proof of vaccination but expects that customers will be vaccinated.

RSVP to ethniclunch@towsonuuc.org by Monday, December 6.

TUUC BLOOD DRIVE— SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 FROM 9 AM TO 2 PM

Working with the American Red Cross, we've scheduled Saturday, December 11th, 2021 for the next TUUC Blood Drive. There is a critical need for blood right now but we are also in a different time with COVID-19 disease prevention. **We at TUUC strongly encourage anyone that has ANY reservation about giving blood at this time for ANY reason to please sit this one out.** We will get past this and will have more blood drives in the future for you to participate in. Please only join us on December 11th, if you are healthy and have no concerns about donating. To sign up for an appointment time between 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM please use this link: <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=TOWSONUUCHURCH>

OR email Clare Flynn-Avallone with your preferred times. Give the Gift of Life - Give Blood!

HOLIDAY FAIR TRADE SALE—SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 FROM 11AM TO NOON

Now is the time to stock up on Equal Exchange coffee, tea, chocolate, nuts, and baking cocoa for Holiday gifts and entertaining! The Green Sanctuary Committee will be on TUUC's front porch from 11 am - noon on Saturday 12/11 (rain date is 12/18).

TUUC ANNUAL HOLIDAY SING-ALONG (VIRTUAL) - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 AT 3PM

On Saturday, Dec. 11th at 3 PM, join the TUUC Choir and other TUUC musicians for a fun, festive, and meaningful afternoon of singing music of the winter holidays! We'll have a variety of live and recorded song leaders for your enjoyment, and lyrics will be provided on slides. Gather family and friends, capture your holiday decorations or festive wear in your device camera, bring a warm beverage, and prepare to sing your heart out! Login information is on the church calendar.



WRITING AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE—FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17 AT 1 PM

In these drop-in sessions, we reflect on a writing prompt; write for about 15 minutes; and then share what we have written without comment or judgment. Participants are amazed by what they learn about themselves and others. You are welcome to join us, this Friday, with a prompt by Hal Borland on evergreens at this time of solstice! ----Rev. Clare

REOPENING PLANS SIMPLIFIED

TUUC intends to re-open for in-person worship when the COVID ActNow website shows Baltimore County, MD at the risk level Medium for 14 consecutive days, and when we have the capability to stream our worship services from the meeting room.

We will be requiring those who attend in person to register, social distance, wear a mask and be fully vaccinated. We will have reduced capacity at the Medium risk level.

Baltimore County is currently at the High risk level. Here is a link to the website: https://covidactnow.org/us/maryland-md/county/baltimore_county/?s=26201524

A vendor has been selected to provide and install streaming equipment and we're excited to move forward with them!

Our re-opening plans are subject to change.

LISTENING SESSIONS WITH THE BOARD

Please join us and share your thoughts during an upcoming listening session with the Board of Trustees. Mark your calendar for these dates in the first quarter of 2022:

- Sunday, January 23 at 12 noon
- Sunday, February 27 at 12 noon
- Sunday, March 27 at 12 noon

At the October 27 listening session, we reviewed our reopening matrix and started discussions on adopting the 8th Principle. At the November 28 listening session, we focused on the adoption of the 8th Principle at TUUC. You can view the slides from that meeting at [Listening Session on the 8th Principle](#).



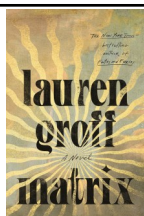
It's not too late...60 undedicated chairs available!

If you would like to purchase a plaque for our new chairs, it's not too late. You may dedicate a plaque in memory of someone or honor someone for \$75. This money will go to the TUUC Building Fund. Complete this [form](#) to place your order. Thanks!

TUUC BOOK CLUB

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5

7:30 PM



CABIN FEVER

TICK, TICK...BOOM! (2021)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5: 4:30PM



SOCIAL ACTION

EARL'S PLACE

Earl's Place, along with Prospect Place, are programs of Cornerstone Community Housing (CCH). CCH is dedicated to helping men experiencing homelessness rebuild their lives and to changing attitudes toward homelessness through outreach and education. Earl's Place, which is a stepping stone on the way to attaining a permanent home, houses 17 men at a time. The support of organizations like TUUC help provide the steady income necessary to provide hope, help and home to men experiencing homelessness. To learn more about Cornerstone Community Housing (Earl's Place), visit their website: <http://www.cchbaltimore.org/>

At the November 14 service Sheila Helgerson, director of Earl's Place, provided a wonderful talk about Earl's Place. To contribute to Earl's Place, use one of these methods:

- Send a check payable to TUUC and send to 1710 Dulaney Valley Rd. Lutherville MD 21093 and specify "Earl's Place" or "CCH" on the memo line
- Text your donation to TUUC (410-834-0700) for SAC Social Action Collection ex: text "30 SAC."
- Donate on Breeze: From the top of the first page of the website select "donate" and choose "EP" on the Drop-down list.

ASSISTANCE CENTER OF TOWSON CHURCHES (ACTC) FOOD DONATIONS

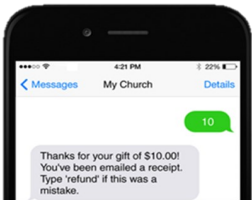
Nonperishable food can be dropped off at these locations:

- Mondays, 12 to 2 PM: Ascension Lutheran Church parking lot (7601 York Rd.)
- Thursdays, 12 to 2 PM: Trinity Episcopal Church parking lot (120 Allegheny Ave.)
- Thursdays, 5 to 6 PM: Valley Baptist Church parking lot (1401 York Rd.)

YEAR END GIVING HELPS MAINTAIN OUR BUILDING

Now is a good time for year end giving to the Building Fund to help pay for our office remediation project. This can be done by purchasing plaques for the chairs (limited supply available) and make donations to the Building Fund by December 31.

We are also seeking members for our House Team to maintain our religious home. Please speak with Clare Flynn-Avallone for more information at houseandgrounds@towsonuuc.org.



DONATE BY TEXT
Send an amount to
(410)834-0700

PASSING THE PLATE
DONATE TO TUUC VIA PAYPAL, TEXT, OR BREEZE
MORE INFORMATION ON THE TUUC WEBSITE [HERE](#)

AMAZON SMILE QUARTERLY DONATION: \$98.21

Thank you for choosing Towson UUC as your preferred charity with [Amazon Smile!](#) Every time you use the site with TUUC listed as your preferred charity, Amazon donates a small amount (0.5%) from your purchase to our church.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT TUUC

Calendar is subject to change. Check the website calendar [here](#) for most current schedule. Click [here](#) for the schedule of ongoing regular TUUC virtual meetings.

3 Dec	Friday	Writing as a Spiritual Practice	1:00 PM
5 Dec	Sunday	Sunday Service and Coffee Hour	10:30 AM
5 Dec	Sunday	Family Gathering	2:00 PM
5 Dec	Sunday	Cabin Fever—Tick, Tick...Boom	4:30 PM
7 Dec	Tuesday	Men's Reflection Group	7:30 PM
7 Dec	Tuesday	Women's Group Meeting	7:30 PM
8 Dec	Wednesday	Ethnic Lunch—Daniela's	12:30 PM
9 Dec	Thursday	TUUC Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
9 Dec	Thursday	Men's Group Meeting	7:30 PM
10 Dec	Friday	Blue Holiday Winter Service	7:30 PM
11 Dec	Saturday	TUUC Blood Drive	9:00 AM
11 Dec	Saturday	Holiday Fair Trade Sale	11:00 AM
11 Dec	Saturday	YRE Stocking Stuffing	2:00 PM
11 Dec	Saturday	TUUC Virtual Holiday Sing-Along	3:00 PM



SEEKING TECHNICAL USHERS—WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Two of our regular technical ushers have moved from the area. We need additional volunteers to give the regulars a break. The most pressing need is for people who are comfortable with PowerPoint (or Keynote) and have a very good internet connection – to be the A/V usher once a month on Sunday morning. Rehearsals are Thursdays at 6 PM. Please contact churchoffice@towsonuuc.org for additional information or to volunteer.

Don't Work Sick
Don't School Sick
Don't Church Sick

ZOOM SUNDAY SERVICE

ATTENDANCE REPORT

(Does not reflect actual number of people watching)

Date	Time	Adults/Children
11/28/2021	10:30 AM	52