



DECEMBER 10—10:30 AM—THE MYSTERY OF HOPE – REV. CLARE L. PETERSBERGER, KARA TYLER, DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, TRACY HALL, MUSIC DIRECTOR, AND THE TUUC COMMUNITY CHOIR

The Jewish holiday of Hanukkah began Thursday evening. The story of the military victory of the Maccabees was not included in the Hebrew Bible. (It was included in the Christian Bible.) In Judaism, the rabbis centered their message on the hope of those who lighted the lamp to rededicate their temple knowing they did not have enough oil to last eight days. Today we explore the mystery of hope. When, in your own life, have you discovered that “the only thing more powerful than fear is hope?”

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10 ONLINE SERVICE INFORMATION

For those who plan to join us on Zoom this Sunday, please see below for the Zoom information.

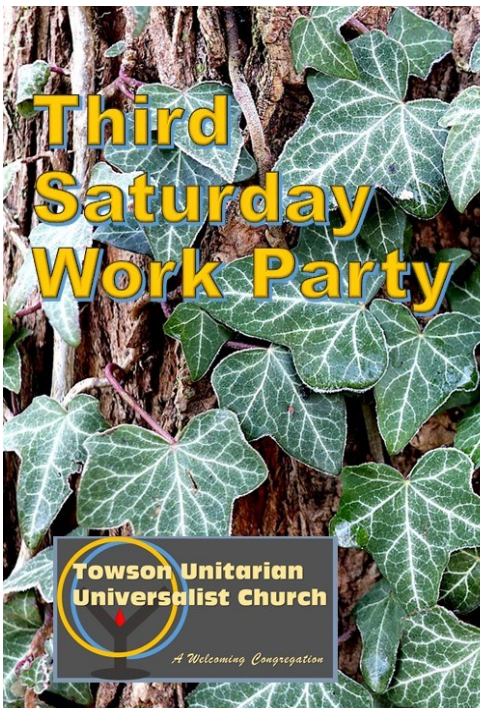
Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/98873312873?pwd=U29lTUZyU1dpNHl5ZWZ1UTFOVXhSUT09>

Meeting ID: 988 7331 2873 Passcode: 334627

YOUTH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION—CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY SERVICE

Join us at the Christmas Eve Family Service at 5:30 PM for a short, no-rehearsal play called **The Smallest Star!** There will be parts available for children and adults.

We need some help with costumes and props. Especially six flashlights! Please let me know if you can help or have something we could borrow.



**December 16, 2023
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

Contact Todd Robertson
(listed in Breeze) for more
information.

-Invasive Species Removal: Multiflora Rose
Multiflora Rose is an eastern Asian plant brought to the US as rootstock for other roses and for erosion control. Now considered invasive in the Eastern US it forms dense, thorny thickets. Manual removal is the way to go. We will be removing it from around the parking lot and Cherry Grove.

-Invasive Species Management: English Ivy
English Ivy was brought to the US as a garden plant. It has quickly become established as an invasive. Currently impossible to eradicate, it must be managed in a forest setting to prevent damage to mature trees. We will be working on the trees in and around the parking lot.

-Invasive Species Management: Porcelain Berry
Native to SE Asia, the Ampelopsis Glandulosa was brought to the US and is still planted as an ornamental in gardens. It can overwhelm smaller trees. We will be working on the trees in and around the parking lot.

CLARE'S COLLOQUY

Direct experiences of transcending mystery and wonder are primary sources of Unitarian Universalist inspiration. These experiences open our hearts, renew our spirits, and transform our lives.

(from the amended proposed Article II of the Unitarian Universalist Association)

The stories retold at this time of year are all about direct experiences of transcending mystery and wonder. The Hebrew people expected to have enough oil to burn for only one night to rededicate their temple. They watched the flame burn for eight days. By the fourth century, Christians celebrated the journey of the wise people, following a bright star, who worshipped the holy in a human baby. For centuries before that humans sang and feasted when they noticed the minutes of daylight lengthen and knew that the natural world and their own lives would continue.

These were all direct experiences of mystery and wonder that opened hearts, renewed spirits, and transformed lives. A few delegates to the UUA General Assembly in June expressed concern that this language implied that Humanism was becoming a second-class theology in our faith tradition. But one can be a Humanist and still have direct experiences of mystery and wonder. Andre Comte-Sponville, a retired professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne, (and self-identified Atheist) wrote:

...Some friends and I had gone for a walk in the forest we liked so much. Night had fallen. We were walking. Gradually our laughter faded, and the conversation died down. Nothing remained but our friendship, our mutual trust and shared presence, the mildness of the night air and of everything around us...My mind empty of thought, I was simply registering the world around me – the darkness of the undergrowth, the incredible luminosity of the sky, the faint sounds of the forest...only making the silence more palpable. And then, all of a sudden...What? Nothing: everything! No words, no meanings, no questions, only – a surprise. Only – this. A seemingly infinite happiness. A seemingly eternal sense of peace. Above me, the starry sky was immense, luminous and unfathomable, and within me there was nothing but the sky, of which I was a part, and the silence, and the light, like a warm hum, and a sense of joy with neither subject nor object ...Yes, in the darkness of that night, I contained only the dazzling presence of the All.... ...'This is what Spinoza meant by eternity', I said to myself – and naturally, that put an end to it.'

With humility and humor Andre Comte-Sponville lifts-up how trying to think our way into direct experiences of transcending mystery and wonder does not work. But we can open ourselves to such experiences. Each December we light tiny flames to re-enact the wonder of the oil that burned for eight days; the wonder of the holy being born in a baby; the wonder of the return of sunlight. We light flames that we might have our own direct experience of union with nature, with others, and with “the dazzling presence of the All.” May our experiences and celebrations this December bring us closer to one another and move us to work for a world made fair with all her people one.

TUUC ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

COMMUNITY CHOIR ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

The next Community Choir Sunday will be Sunday, December 10th. This is an opportunity to sing without a prior rehearsal. All ages are invited (students attending YRE can sing at the beginning of the service). You will need to arrive at 9:00 AM that morning to learn the music, and then we'll sing in the service that morning! You will have a lengthy break after the rehearsal, during sound checks. The service will be observing Hanukkah, and on the topic of hope. There will be a variety of musical styles included in this service. Hope you will join us!

LET'S GET THE RECORDS STRAIGHT!

The end of the year is creeping upon us and we want to be able to supply you with correct financial records for your 2023 calendar year end contributions. **Members**, please check your profile in Breeze and look under Giving to determine if your contributions have been credited to the correct fund. **Friends**, since you do not have access to Breeze, please contact us at churchoffice@towsonuuc.org or bookkeeper@towsonuuc.org for a copy of your current giving report before December 31st so we can make sure your contributions are coded correctly. Should there be any discrepancies, please let us know. The final year end statements will be sent out the second week of January 2024. Thank you in advance!

GREEN SANCTUARY TIP OF THE WEEK

Are you looking for creative gifts for family and friends during this holiday season? Instead of searching for items in stores, consider giving the gift of an experience, such as attending a musical or theatrical performance, going on a day trip or a walk together, giving a gift of lessons to learn something new, etc. These gifts can produce lasting memories, strengthen bonds, and avoid increasing the number of items to store in your home.

NEWS ABOUT US

Our TUUC community sends healing wishes to:
Dr. Neil Porter following hip replacement surgery;
to Sean Mackey who is now, after his hip repair, walking with a walker--Go Sean!;
to Susan Woolhiser following her successful procedure;
and to Marilyn Thorn who is making slow but steady progress in physical rehab.
Neil, Sean, Susan, and Marilyn welcome cards of encouragement.
Their contact info is in Breeze.

Congratulations to Spice Kleinmann and Lizza Lewis on the recent publication of their book "Grandmother Moon Tells a Tale: How the Moon Got Up In The Sky!"

---Rev. Clare

FAIR TRADE SALES—COFFEE, CHOCOLATE, AND MORE—DECEMBER 10 AND 17

Stop by the Fair Trade table in the lobby this Sunday to purchase stocking stuffers and hospitality gifts, and celebrate the arrival of winter with TUUC's Green Sanctuary Committee. Available items include coffee (including decaf, ground, and whole bean), a variety of chocolates, teas, almonds, cashews, and olive oil. When you buy fair trade and organic products from us, you support sustainable farming, small-scale farmer co-ops, and the fair trade coffee served during our Sunday coffee hours. Learn about some of the producers who supply fair trade products: <https://www.info.equalexchange.coop/partners>

YULE RITUAL AND POTLUCK—SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16 AT 5:00 PM

Join us in celebrating the returning of the light and our hopes for the new year in ritual and song! We'd like to take this time of transition to begin the new year with positive intentions. The ritual will begin at 5 pm. (Please arrive between 4:30 and 4:50 PM.) Snacks and drinks to follow the ritual. The participation is free and open to all. However, cash donations are always welcome. We are asking participants to bring a non-perishable food item for the Assistance Center of Towson Churches basket.



CABIN FEVER

GRACE QUIGLEY (1984)
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10
4:30 PM DISCUSSION

BOOK CLUB

HELLO BEAUTIFUL
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27
7:30 PM

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

SOCIAL ACTION

NONPERISHABLE FOOD

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.)

TUUC SOCIAL ACTION HOLIDAY GIVING

You are invited to experience the joy of giving this holiday season by gifting to men healing from homelessness. Your generosity is greatly appreciated! Earl's Place is a recovery-based housing program providing long-term (up to two years) housing and supportive services to men experiencing homelessness; 17 men at a time.

Adopt-a-Resident: Holiday Wish List for Anthony Falcon

Anthony is 57 years old. He likes Tai Chi, Bowling, Nature Walks, and Animal Documentaries.

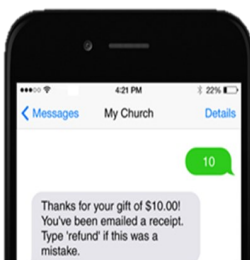
- Amazon Gift Cards

Prospect Place is in Rosedale and serves 12 chronically homeless men. Amazon, Giant, Aldis and Walmart are convenient for the men. Our TUUC goal is to gift a total of 29—\$25.00 gift cards. Starting with 12 for the men of Prospect Place and hopefully another 17 for the men of Earl's Place.

When: by Sunday December 10th

Where and How: Drop off wrapped gifts in the church lobby near the countertop Poinsettia or in and near the Earl's Place bucket on the floor of our coat closet. Place Gift Cards in the small holiday box next to the countertop Poinsettia. You are also welcome to order online and ship directly to Earl's Place, or email, or snail mail gifts and gift cards for Earl's Place & Prospect Place by sending to Sheila Helgerson, Cornerstone Community Housing Executive Director at: sheila@cchbaltimore.org | Earl's Place 1400 E. Lombard Street Baltimore, MD 21231

Please update Sheila Malenski at sheila@cchbaltimore.org to help keep track of items purchased.



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](#)

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT TUUC

Calendar is subject to change. Check the website calendar [here](#) for most current schedule.

8 Dec	Friday	Ethnic Lunch	12:30 PM
10 Dec	Sunday	YRE—Making Faith	9:00 AM
10 Dec	Sunday	Community Choir Rehearsal	9:00 AM
10 Dec	Sunday	YRE—OWL	10:00 AM
10 Dec	Sunday	Sunday Service	10:30 AM
10 Dec	Sunday	Cabin Fever—Grace Quigley	4:30 PM
12 Dec	Tuesday	Aging Together	1:00 PM
12 Dec	Tuesday	Makers' Meetup	7:00 PM
12 Dec	Tuesday	Soul Matters Sharing Circle	7:30 PM
14 Dec	Thursday	TUUC Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
15 Dec	Friday	Parkinson's Support Group	12:30 PM
15 Dec	Friday	Writing As a Spiritual Practice	1:00 PM
16 Dec	Saturday	Third Saturday Work Party	9:00 AM
16 Dec	Saturday	TUUC Choir Rehearsal	1:00 PM
16 Dec	Saturday	Yule Celebration	5:00 PM
17 Dec	Sunday	YRE—Making Faith	9:00 AM
17 Dec	Sunday	YRE—OWL	10:00 AM
17 Dec	Sunday	Sunday Service	10:30 AM

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

SUNDAY SERVICE ATTENDANCE REPORT

(Does not reflect actual number of people watching)

Date	Time	In-Person / Online
12/03/2023	10:30 AM	Unknown / 22