

November 2015 newsletter

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NOVEMBER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Nov. 1st – Join Sara Goodman and the congregation as we remember our ancestors on All Souls Day. How do we balance celebrating the lives of our lost loved ones and at the same time acknowledge that we're sad that they're gone?

REMEMBER THAT DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS.

Sunday, Nov. 8th – **Lynda Johnson, UUCRV** member, will give a report from the Welcoming Congregation Task Force on what we have been learning about welcoming LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender) people and offering our acceptance and love.

Sunday, Nov. 15th – **Sara Goodman** - The past and the future aren't so far apart. What do we want our legacy to be? What will we leave for our descendents?

Sunday, Nov. 22nd – **Intergenerational service** – "Getting to Know You" Watch for further information about this service.

Sunday, Nov. 29th – **Judy Pickle, UUCRV** member, will lead a discussion on "Owning our Ancestry." Members of the congregation may share something embedded in their ancestry that they cherish, or something that they protect, or something that they have learned.

Monday, Nov. 30th- Worshiping Congregation Task Force meets at **6:30 p.m.** at 2143 Collingswood Dr. Beloit.



The article below was submitted by Sara Goodman

Samhain, Ancestors, and Descendants

October 21, 2015 by [Rev. Catharine Clarenbach](#)

I loved the litany of Saints when I was a Roman Catholic child. I loved the celebration of All Souls. I have always loved learning about my ancestors. Pictures, clothing, ceramics, words...everything about my forebears has always nated me.

I remember the last conversation I had with my great-grandmother. She was a tiny bird lady who loved tiny things. Candies. Figurines. Images. Anything beautiful and tiny. There is a tintype photograph of her—Annie—and her Grandmother Stuart, both dressed in their tartans. Annie was probably six years old when that picture was taken. I treasure that bent piece of metal.

Annie lived to be 102, and I cherish every memory, every photograph, every story of her.

My Love of Samhain

Since I first learned of it, Samhain has always had a privileged place in my life. And since my work with Stone Circle Wicca and its celebrants and initiates, Samhain has expanded from some of its traditional observances. The ethics behind the observances, however, are accessible to non Pagan-UU's and others who don't identify as Pagan.

Samhain is a high holy day—for some Wiccan Pagans the holiest night of the year—and I try to celebrate it with the solemnity and glory it merits.

In its most common form, Samhain is about honoring our dead, the Mighty Dead who are more intimate with us because the Veils of Seeing are at their thinnest at this time of year.

Samhain expanded is all about the ethic of responsibility, expressed through calling out to ancestors *and* descendants, those who live in the shadows beyond the Veil of Life-and-Death.

The celebrations, memorials, and communions of Samhain are both about acknowledging what the Mighty Dead leave for us, *as well as* what we leave for our Descendants unto the thousandth generation. The commemorations and devotions must come from a place of acknowledging that ancestor veneration is a complicated thing we do.

I do not give praise for the violence some among my Mighty Dead wreaked upon others among my ancestors. I do not give praise for the alcoholism that comes down through the generations.

So how might we offer thanks and praise for our Dead when we have had complicated relationships with them in life? Or when we know of actions we consider shameful or oppressive?

Some traditions get around this conundrum by saying that the dead are wiser than they were in life. That the Veil they pass through changes them, changes personality into Essence and creates them somewhat anew. While I am not opposed to this idea, I also believe that it could be a hard one for many of my UU siblings and friends to swallow.

Another Way

The key here, the key in the ethic of responsibility, is to acknowledge that we are built of countless generations. I am built, in part, of shame and oppression, as well as of usefulness and glory. I am built of what my Mighty Dead have given, and what they have given is complicated.

And so in part, Samhain is an expression of self-love. It is an expression of recognizing that life is a mixed bag, and yet it is what we have, at least for now. Samhain commemorations and devotions recognize that life is good and short and we owe our thanks and praise to those who came before us.

The flip side of all this, of course, is that we must be mindful of what we leave when we shuffle off this mortal coil. We too will die. And we will be Mighty. And we will be Dead. And we will leave, for Earth, for Descendants both of our body and not, for our legacy, whoever it is we have been and whatever it is we have done.

We are between the Ancestors and the Descendants. We are in a holy place.

THE GREEN CORNER

The first killing frost of the year is predicted for the end of this week, so except for the collards, it is time to put the garden to bed for another season.

This year we grew tomatoes, onions, sweet and hot peppers, eggplant and beans (lots of beans). We grow lots of beans because that is a vegetable that I rarely see being brought into Caritas. I guess most people think it is too labor intensive to grow for a pantry.

Below is an accounting of what we produced:

Green Beans	141 pounds
Onions	175 poun
Sweet peppers	62
Hot peppers	150

Collards	33 punches (7 leaves
per	bunch)
Egg plant	18 from 3 plants
Regular tomatoes	30 pounds (4 plants)
Cherry tomatoes	8 pounds

We also grew spinach and raspberries for sale to church members.

We had a problem with the Sun Gold cherry tomatoes splitting, so next year we will try a variety called Sweet 100 which is very sweet and more resistant to splitting.

My thanks to all adults and kids who helped with the weeding, planting, harvesting and cleanup.

Ray Herzer

November 8: WELCOMING ALL PEOPLE

Lynda Johnson, member, will give a report from the Welcoming Congregation Task Force. Please come and hear what we have been learning about LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and Queer) people. Members of the committee will also give brief descriptions about what each have learned.

The main thing we've learned is that gender-identity issues are more widespread, and complicated, than we thought. And that there are far more people than any of us imagined, who are feeling lonely, vulnerable, and out-of-place. How will we, as a congregation – as thoughtful and loving people – be more welcoming to people who identify as LGBTQ? The Task Force hopes to continue to learn and continue to share how we can open ourselves to people seeking community among accepting and caring people.

Laurel Burke, (email theBurkes@hotmail.com), is the chairman. Feel free to contact her with questions.

(for back of Bulletins: Oct. 25, Nov. 1 & Nov. 8 under Announcements)

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welcoming LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender) people and offering our acceptance and love.

Holiday Chorus

Our first rehearsal is scheduled for the morning of November 8th, at 9:00. (We will start warm up scales at that time.)

If you would like to participate, and have not made the commitment, contact Nancy Esterl (pianist) as soon as possible to ensure enough copies of the music for everyone.

Musically yours, Wendy Edgington

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The children's Religious Education theme for November is Kindness and Generosity, and we will try to emphasize these themes in our lessons. Also, the children have been doing church chores to earn poker chips which will (hopefully) be converted to cash by the congregation in order to buy a farm animal for a third world family sponsored by Heifer International. Last year the children made and sold Christmas ornaments to raise money to buy a goat.

The November teaching schedule is as follows:

November 1 - Pam Lund-Drew

November 8 - Beth Ingle

November 15 - Judy Petree - "Ruth"

November 22 - Ray and Nina - "Getting to Know You", an intergenerational service
November 29 - Alicia Jenski

Ray Herzer, Chairperson

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 - Paulette Lucas
8 - Judy Pickle
15 - Emma Clark
Anders Jenski
28 - Pam Rund-Drew



2015-16 Officers

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