



## Unitarian Universalist Church of Greeley

### December Unifax 2019

*Helping you grow spiritually, live meaningfully, and have the  
courage to help heal the world.*

Join us for Sunday Services at 10:00am  
Childcare for babies and toddlers will be provided  
every Sunday during services.

**Find out more at**  
[www.greeleyuuc.org](http://www.greeleyuuc.org)  
or  
Like us on Facebook

**Worship Liberally**

#### **December Theme: Balance**

The month of December our theme is Balance. December is certainly a time when it is easy to lose one's balance; a month where we often feel pulled in many different directions and often want the imperfections in our life to be perfect. We would be wise to remember the words of Reverend Susan Manker-Seale, interim minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Phoenix: "Out of our busy-ness, we are called back into balance, back into ourselves and the silence of present being. But it is not just back into ourselves to which we are called; it is also to the awareness of the continuous presence of the environment around us and within us. We are called to remember our relationships and our dependencies. We are called to once again feel the oneness which sustains our being in balance with creation, and to do so with wonder and appreciation." Our explorations on Sunday will help us define what balance means to a Unitarian Universalist community and what is so important about balance.

#### **Contacting UUCG Staff and Board**

Reverend Aaron Norris: [minister@greeleyuuc.org](mailto:minister@greeleyuuc.org)  
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Board Secretary, Josette Bond [josettebond@outlook.com](mailto:josettebond@outlook.com)

**December 1st:** Stone Soup Come have one final dish with us at UUCG this Thanksgiving weekend and tuck in for a little Stone Soup, our pageantry retelling of the old folk story of the magic of generosity and sharing. Participants of all ages are welcome to join Rev. Norris with props and costumes provided in this multi-generational services. Please bring a dish to share for the Potluck.

#### **December 8th: Music: The Hidden Messenger**

Julie Miller and Renee Racek will be leading us in an exploration of music in our worship services. We will examine a bit of the role of music in the service, explore a bit of history, as well as explore and sing a number of songs that were instrumental (pardon the pun) in bringing us to the present day hymnals we use.

**December 15th:** Happy Holiday and May the Force Be With You Rev. Aaron Norris

This one should be fun. With so many Religious Observances and Holidays coming up in December, of

course we can fit in one more. This December will see the final episode of the cultural phenomenon hit movie theaters. In a world where the fastest growing religious identity is “Spiritual But Not Religious”, these events take on an even greater role. Rev. Norris will explore with us what happens when we use popular culture for our meaning making schema and asks why those Jedi are so fixated on Balance in the Force.

**December 22nd:** The Longest Night- a Multi-gen Service Members of our Pagan group lead our Winter Solstice Service. We honor the sun’s return, and celebrate the death of the old solar year and the (re)birth of the new solar year.

**December 24th at 5:30 pm:** I Heard the Bells (Christmas Eve)  
The Unitarian poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s 1863 poem “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day” reminds us what Christmas can mean in difficult times and will serve as the touchstone for Rev. Norris’ exploration on this special evening service. Our multigenerational celebration will be highlighted by choir performances and our traditional candle lit final hymn.

**December 29th:** Annual Faith Review  
Julie Miller will lead our congregation in the final service of the year, our Annual Faith Review.

### Ministerial Musings

Friends,  
Well December is here, that month that has come to herald winter for those of us in the Northern Hemisphere. In the agricultural societies, it means that the summer harvest has been collected and put away and now is a time characterized by being indoors, resting from the labors of the year past and resting up for the season of planting to come. A time of cold evenings and warm time around the hearth.

And our world feels a little out of whack too, doesn’t it? Not just the natural seasonal change, with the constant news cycle spinning faster and faster, it’s hard to remember what normal is supposed to be. Especially at times like this I always think about the Unitarian Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and his poem “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day.” I won’t get too deeply into it here (among

other things, I’m thinking of it as inspiration for my thoughts on Christmas Eve), but Longfellow found himself overcome with sadness at this time of year in 1863 - he was disillusioned with the state of the world and had suffered personal tragedy because of it. The bells of Christmas seemed to be mocking and yet, the poem does answer with hope even in a difficult time.

Maybe that’s why balance is our theme this month. Why is it that topic tends to be on folks minds this time of year. The days grow so short, and the evening seem to begin early and stretch late. When our surroundings seem so tipped one way, how do we balance? Part of it all is perspective. The year itself needs to be balanced, all those long summer days that have already passed need to give way to these evenings if we are to maintain balance. But also, as individuals we are called to bring balance. We fill the dark nights with light from candles and holiday logs on the fire; we balance the cold with warm blankets and coats for our outside and warm beverages and hot food for our insides.

We are going to keep our balance at the church as well, not falling into a hibernative state but one of activity and excitement in the month of December to match some of where we slowed down this summer. Not only are we balancing activity, but we are balancing tradition here at UUCG. Our membership ministry has a brand new even planned by way of craft fair and children’s event during the month - hopefully you’ll find some way of being involved either as a participant or a host (or perhaps both); I’m sure Hollis Berendt or Kathy Vaughn would love to have your help. By way of more traditional, we will have the second year of our Stone Soup pageant service the Sunday after Thanksgiving. There is an opportunity for all to be able to participate in the play, put on a bit of a costume, or simply sit and enjoy the show after the bustle of holiday preparation earlier in the week.

Our traditions will balance this month as well. The winter solstice falls on Saturday the 21st of this year and on the following day, our pagan group will celebrate our Sunday service with us with a program called “The Longest Night.” Later that week, we’ll have a late afternoon Christmas Eve service with the choir singing (and a special children’s part for those who want to participate), a candle light version of Silent Night, and a blessing for the year.

I hope we get the chance to catch up a little as this busy holiday season starts. As always, my door is open and I'm in the offices at most times on Mondays and Tuesdays if just a brief chat after services won't be enough.

Yours in Faith and Fellowship,  
Rev. Aaron Norris

### Your Board At Work

It appears that the thermostat is up and working, just in time for our wintry season. There are a lot of activities planned for the holiday season, so please do join us for them for fellowship, fun, and connection. You will NOT want to miss the Stone Soup Pageant and our Holiday decorating potluck and party in December or our Candlelight Service on December 24th. December 14th will be a Children's Activity and Crafts Fair, too. All of these activities can also use an extra pair of hands at any time. Check out the other sections of the Unifax for updates. We are hoping that two BOT members will be able to attend the Leadership Experience in January with the Pacific Western Region in January in Golden, CO. The participants will examine a number of topics, including knowledge regarding mission-focused leadership, managing change, multicultural issues, conflict transformation, and a number of others. Their experience will also include pre and post conference work. Currently, Julie Miller and Janelle Helling have applied for scholarships for attendance. Hopefully, it will allow them to bring ideas back to our busy congregation that can be implemented as we carry our 50+ year legacy as a congregation forward. We have also spent time exploring marketing ideas to utilize some of our Match Funds to help our community discover their potential church home at UUCG. It's hard to believe we are nearing the end of yet another calendar year as we look forward to 2020 being a bigger and even better year of faith prosperity and growth for UUCG.

Julie Miller

### Treasurer's Report- October 2019

Income \$ 2,658.13  
Expenses \$ 5,398.50  
Checking balance \$ 7,403.94  
Savings balance \$ 33,078.93

### Grow in Spirit



### Youth Religious Education

We have been hearing the story of the beginning of the Universe, all the chaos and creativity. It

includes our Unitarian Universalist Creation Story, of how we are connected to everything on earth and were born 14 billion years ago. Teachers: Claire Metuselum and Kathy Vaughn

**We collected \$49.63 from our UNICEF boxes, money went to the Children's fund, helping children around the world. Thank you children and families for participating.**

### December Dates

**December 1-** Multi-gen Stone Soup Pageant

**December 8 -** Class # 4 Ozzie the Snortlefish

**December 15-** Class #5 We Are Made of Stardust

**December 22-** Multi-gen Winter Solstice

**December 29-** NO RE Christmas break

### Caring Community

### December and January Special Activities

**Dec. 1st** - Sunday, Stone Soup Pageant, Congregational Potluck, & Holiday Decorating

**Dec. 14th** - Saturday, Holiday Express- Children & Crafts Event – 12-4 –Make holiday crafts, sing holiday songs and watch the movie Polar Express.

**Dec. 22nd** - Sunday, Pagan Group Service

**Dec. 24th** - Tuesday, Christmas Eve & Cookies – Service will be at 5:30 PM Please bring cookies or goodies to share

**Dec. 29th** - Sunday - "Annual Faith Review" - informal service

**Jan. 5th** - One Word for the New Year as we begin 2020

### Service Auction

Kathy and Jim Vaughn are offering \$30 of beeswax candles made especially for you, you choose the design. Call the office to bid on this item. 970 351-6751

## **Choir Announcements**

Choir will be singing at the Christmas Eve service! Please join us from December 8th if you are interested in singing with the choir. We will be rehearsing after every Sunday service. If you cannot make the rehearsal times and wish to join choir, please contact Renee Racek.

UNC has their annual Holiday Concert on December 8th at 7:30pm at the Campus Commons Performance Hall. I will be performing as a choir member and soloist.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**



**Rosemary Edmiston-4**  
**Dianne Culver-5**  
**Michele Masters-20**  
**Josette Bond-28**  
**Sarah Vaughn-31**  
**Karen Clugston-31**

If we forgot your December Birthday, please let us know- we would love to add yours to the list! Send an email to [office\\_manager@greeleyuuc.org](mailto:office_manager@greeleyuuc.org)

**Searching Community**



### **Pathways to Membership**

This class is designed to go over some of the basic history of Unitarian Universalism. It also helps you to better understand our congregation and see how you may deepen your involvement. It

also is a great opportunity to meet others who are new to our church as well, but also have an interest in becoming more involved. While it is not required for membership, I highly recommend that you participate in this class as a first step to considering membership. The class is offered about once every six weeks or so and taught by our minister, Reverend Aaron Norris. The class takes about 90 minutes and follows a service. Whether you're a lifelong Unitarian Universalist or this is the first time you have ever walked into a UU Church, this is a great class to get acquainted with the Unitarian Universalist church of Greeley. The next class date is December 15. Please follow copy this link and paste to your browser to sign up:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeXqa2DAtlYtGhhM4iFJIG8rzi-m3XqjMlyA7kvSQA\\_azCBQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeXqa2DAtlYtGhhM4iFJIG8rzi-m3XqjMlyA7kvSQA_azCBQ/viewform)

## **Walk and Talks**

Theological Walks with Rev. Norris will continue weather permitting. All are welcome to join Rev. Norris on monthly theological walks the fourth Monday of every month at 12:00 p.m. on site. The walks will be a combination of historical tour, Socratic dialogue, walking meditation, and community building. Each walk will be about an hour. The topic of the walk will take into account the route chosen. Contact Rev. Norris if you are interested or arrive at the church at 11:40 to join him before he leaves for the walk.

In the month of December 23rd, Rev. Norris will lead a walk around and in the Greeley Mall and discussing Balance.

**Upcoming Events**



### **Holiday Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve**

December 24th starting at 5:30 PM. Our choir and other special music will perform (including a part for children) Please bring cookies or goodies to share with our wassail and hot beverages.



**PARADE OF LIGHTS**

### **Parade of Lights**

The Parade of Lights will be staged in the UUC parking lot starting November 30th, at 4:30pm-6:30pm. All are welcome to join.

### **Holiday Express- Craft Day December 14 from Noon- 4pm**

Craft Fair and Children's Craft Activities.



The UUCG Membership ministry is hosting an event for the public. We will make holiday crafts, decorate cookies, sing holiday songs, watch The Polar Express, eat popcorn and cookies, drink cider. Parents will have time to leave to shop while children stay. We are looking for people who want to sell crafts for this event. And we need volunteers as floaters. Contact Hollis 970 590-3289 or Kathy 970 371-1522 to help.

PLEASE INVITE YOUR FRIENDS.

### Giving in Gratitude



The change in King Soopers donations has just delivered over \$100.00 into our account! On January 5th, after the service, Josette will be glad to help anyone set up a King Soopers account. This will benefit our

church any time you shop at King Soopers (excluding gas and pharmacy). Also, the next Scrip order will be due on January 5th. Thanks for participating in this easy, painless way to contribute to UU Church of Greeley!

### Fermenting Theology:

After a busy summer, it was refreshing to finally get to attend the November session. I met some new people and we had a thought-provoking discussion about compassion. I am looking forward to our discussion in December. I hope you can join us. Josette

**December 9th at 6pm.** Our monthly drop-in spiritual symposium will focus on our monthly theme of balance. We will meet at High Brau Tap House, 915 16th St., a couple of blocks from the Church. The discussion usually lasts about 90 minutes. Bring a friend.

### Thank You

Thank you to the Social Justice Committee for their continued efforts in supporting our community agencies with their collection of items. They are a force with which to be reckoned. It can be very time consuming to gather and deliver the items, but each contribution makes our community a little bit better and helps those in need.

Thank you to Tim Berendt for taking the food donations to the Weld County Food bank each week.

Thank you to our dedicated Worship Staff, including our outstanding staff - Minister, Music Director, Worship Associates, Hosts, Worship Assistants, Office Manager, and AV staff that make sure each Sunday we and our families, friends, and visitors are provided with a quality service and message. They continue to astound and serve with amazing grace, time, and talents.

Thanks go out to Jim and Kathy Vaughn for their many hours dedicated to keeping the church furnace and many other issues related to building operations of the church up and running.

A big thank you to Tim Berendt for his behind-the-scenes help with our congregation!

Thank you to all who helped put on the storm windows, including Jim, Brian, Bill and Phillip.

### Memories This Month



Julie Miller and Anna Schultz at our Day of the Dead Art Show earlier in November.



Sharlene Meydell, Atulya Johnson, Karen Clugston, and Hollis Berendt

