



Westminster Chimes

Volume 2009 #22

December 2, 2009

Editor: Renée Bucklin

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT 9 AM & 11 AM Preschool through 8th Grade

DECEMBER 6 10 AM

Celebration Sunday Reverend Barbara & Friends

Come Celebrate in the Sanctuary & Fellowship Hall. Share the gratitude as we complete the Capital campaign and commence building our future.

DECEMBER 12 4PM

Remembrance Service

A simple service of beautiful music and readings for those who are grieving this season.

DECEMBER 13 9 & 11AM

Advent Adventure

What does this season of expectation expect of us? How do we prepare, or can we really prepare to receive what is surprising and unexpected into our lives?

DECEMBER 20 9 AM "A Tree for Us"

Multigenerational service for all ages. Celebrate the Season in Unitarian Universalist style! Service led by the Religious Education Committee.

11AM A Child's Christmas in Wales

Rev. Barbara will tell the classic story and we will sing Christmas carols.

DEC 24

4:30PM Christmas Pageant
7PM Candlelight Service with soloists
9PM Candlelight service with the Choir

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Hope your Thanksgiving was deliciously, delightfully full of family and friends.

For those of you who are following the monopole trail, here's a brief update. As you requested, I spoke with the neighbors with whom we share the driveway about the prospect of placing a monopole on the back of our property. They in turn spoke with other neighbors. Not surprisingly, they were all unexcited, and in fact absolutely opposed, to having an industrial looking pole going up so close to their back yard and in a residential, historical neighborhood. In fact, they wanted to be sure I would let them know when a hearing might take place so they could be present to express their displeasure.

We have always been good neighbors. Given our future plans for building, our need to maintain good relationships with our neighbors and the town zoning board – who would undoubtedly uphold the wishes of the neighborhood - the Board recommends that we not move forward. I have informed the company of the neighbors' sentiments and told them that our congregation will vote at a congregational meeting on December 20th.

With winter approaching, and the prospects of snow, I was reminded that the signage and spaces reserved for people requiring easy access to ramps needed attention. The Board had decided to reserve all the spaces between the round room door and the ramp for those requiring assistance. Thanks to Bill Sweet the spaces will be appropriately marked with new signs and new lines.

Speaking of wintertime fun, have your children signed up to participate in the Holiday play? Don't miss out!

Faithfully,
Jan Searles,
President of the Board of Trustees

Dear Friends,

November 30, 2009

How was your Holiday time? Mine began with picking up one son from the home of a college friend, finding time for playing with grandchildren and ending at a memorial service for a dear friend.

Thanksgiving morning, after watching the Parade on TV, I sat on a rug with my grandson, picked Lego pieces out of a Ziploc bag, connected them into new constructions, concocted space adventures, and navigated impossible challenges while making friends with alien life forms. I listened as he, the creator, imagined. He mused about how much he enjoyed a freely playful building of story with his friends. We talked about being surprised by the new and unexpected in an ordinary day. His eyes lit up and he proclaimed. *“That is the best Thanksgiving day! When you have fun with family and friends.”*

Such a moment would not be newsworthy in any other place but here. I drove several hours to reach my Thanksgiving destination during which I listened to the “News”. There was talk about Time Magazine’s cover summing up the first decade of this millennium as *The Decade From Hell*. I thought, *“OK, 2009 isn’t even over yet and they have started stuffing the decade into a sound bite box”*. For me, such hyperbole was as wrong as reducing an entire lifetime to the worst moments of suffering, loss, and pain. Yes, there is great suffering, and yes, trouble, but there are also infinite moments of light, life and love. I seek to live a life where the love overcomes and outlasts the fear.

I know even as I play with my grandson, as the adult, I am the responsible one. We can play childhood games but we must play no games when it comes to human rights, health care and the Earth’s future environment. One in eight Americans are now using food stamps. Many more are eligible for the (renamed) SNAP program. There is the personal and there is the political and this is a time to attend to both, to keep building the world we seek for the lives of our children. For me that means weighing in on health care and the Stupak amendment as a concerned citizen.

It also means participating in activities that build institutions like Westminster. Such institutions grow our spiritual health, hope and love. So *come* this Sunday to celebrate the conclusion of the Capital Campaign and appreciate all you have accomplished! *Come* enjoy the simple delight of Caroling in the neighborhood Sunday afternoon Dec 13th, and a potluck party. *Come* or call to *sign up* a child for the *Pageant*. *Come* rehearse with the choir and sing Christmas Eve! And if this is a season of sorrow, *come* for comfort and company to our Saturday Service of Remembrance Dec. 12th.

Whatever else you plan to do this season, make time to do nothing and just be. Leave time to enjoy ordinary days. Time to appreciate all you have been and are. Maybe even time to *play*. Who knows? *You might pick up what appears to be a little bit of ordinary out of a Ziploc bag and discover that you are holding, for a moment, the joy of a time with family or friends.*

Such moments are such blessings. Our true *good news*. *Happy holidays and holy days to you.*

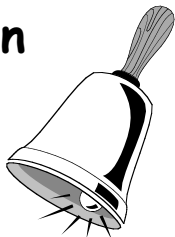
In good faith and with love,

Rev. Barbara



Religious Education Program

Renee Pierre
Director of Religious Education



Office hours: Tuesday 9-3 & by appt.

Sunday Services Calendar:

December 6: 10 am Service; Children begin in Children's Chapel; OWL class meets upstairs.

December 13: 9 am RE begins in Chapel & OWL class meets upstairs; 11 am RE begins in the Sanctuary with children's chapel to follow.

December 20: 9 am Multigenerational Service led by the RE Committee, no RE Classes & no OWL classes; 11 am RE begins in the Sanctuary with children's chapel to follow.

December 27: 10 am Service; no RE Classes & no OWL classes.

BOOK FAIR UPDATE: Many thanks to all of our Book Fair Shoppers! We raised nearly \$500 for the RE Program. We also added books to our RE and OWL library thanks to folks who adopted books for the program as well. The RE Committee is deeply grateful for everyone's support. The Book Fair books will be distributed on Sunday December 6th during coffee hour. Books will be available in the Sun Room/Round Room in the front of the Church House. Please contact Natalie Aubin if you have any questions.

CHRISTMAS EVE PAGEANT SIGN-UPS: Our Christmas Eve 4:30 pm Family Service will include a Christmas Pageant. Children ages 4+ are invited to participate. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall for Soloists and chorus members. Soloists will audition this coming Wednesday, 12/2/09, at 6:45 pm in the Sanctuary with Nonetta. Chorus members will practice with Lauren Kalian. See the rehearsal schedule in Fellowship Hall. Please contact Renee if you have any questions.

SAVE THE DATE! Our Family Holiday Potluck Party will be held on Sunday, December 13th from 4-7 pm. We will begin the festivities by caroling right here in our Kenyon Avenue neighborhood so dress for the weather and bring a main dish to share that serves 8-10. Grandma Rosie will entertain us with a Christmas story and it is rumored that Santa will even stop by to say hello! (Parents are reminded to bring a small, wrapped and tagged inexpensive gift for your child/children. Gifts are to be placed in "santa's bag" in the kitchen before we head out for caroling. Santa will hand these out to the children at the end of the party. If you have any questions, please contact Renee.)

DECEMBER 20TH 9 AM SERVICE: Families are invited to join the RE Committee for a special Multigenerational Service which celebrates our Unitarian Universalist faith tradition mingled with a little bit of UU history, singing, and surprises! Don't miss this special service for all ages and stages!

Renee

WOMEN OF WESTMINSTER ALL WOMEN WELCOME

We meet every Thursday evening.

Setup/Meeting: 7:00 to 7:15 PM
Announcements: 7:15 to 7:30PM
Program: 7:30 to 8:45 PM
Place: Fellowship Hall

Our Mission/Statement of Purpose is to enhance and encourage:

* Spirituality * Support of each other

Dec. 13 – Craft Sale

Dec. 17 – Winter Solstice

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve (no meeting)

Dec. 31 – New Year's Eve (no meeting)

CHARITY OF THE MONTH – INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RI

Westminster shares unrestricted cash placed in our collection basket 50/50 with a different charity each month. With approval from our minister and Board of Trustees, the Share the Plate Committee has selected *Westminster Sharing Locker* for the month of December.

In February 2010, the Caring Circle's Sharing Locker opens to the East Greenwich community. Needy individuals can obtain food from the East Greenwich food pantry. But personal care items, laundry detergent, cleaning solutions, paper products and pet food, etc. are not available from food pantries. The Sharing Locker helps fill a need for these items, and most of the items provided are not covered by food stamps.

The mission of a "Corner Cupboard" is "to assist members of the community by providing non-food essentials in a dignified and a non-discriminatory manner." A UU congregation in Maine opened their Corner Cupboard in February 2006 on the 3rd Saturday of the month from 10am-2pm. The end of the month is when people begin to run out of money for necessities. About 34 people lined up on that Saturday to receive 4 items/person.

For questions about Sharing the Plate, please contact a member of the Committee: Kristen Morelli, Bill Stone, Celia Humphreys or Nathan DeSisto. To make a charitable organization suggestion, please fill out a Nomination Form located in our mailbox, and available on our website.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

Westminster will hold a service of remembrance on Saturday, Dec. 12 at 4pm for all those who wish to honor and remember a loved one or a pet. Everyone in East Greenwich and the surrounding area is invited to attend.



CHURCH INCLEMENT WEATHER/CLOSING POLICY

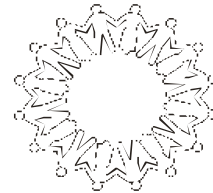
Your safety is our greatest concern. When snow or other conditions make it likely that travel will be difficult and unsafe, Rev. Barbara and Janet Searles, our Board Chair will consult to decide if it is in the best interests of the congregation to cancel Sunday Services. When services are cancelled we will notify you no later than 7AM in these ways:

1. CHIMES e mail list serve.
2. Local RI Radio and TV stations.
3. On the office answering machine.

HOLIDAY SALE ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13 (Fellowship Hall)

Beginning after the 9 a.m. service and continuing after the 11 a.m. service. Buy art, crafts, edibles or other items offered by our talented people. It's the perfect opportunity to shop for gifts-- or for yourself.

If you would like to reserve a table or half-table to participate by selling, please contact Dorothy Swift by e-mail (preferred method) or telephone. You are expected to donate at least 10% of total sales to Westminster.



A memorial service for Corrinne Wiseman will be celebrated December 17th at 2 PM

**MEMBERSHIP
OUTREACH/MEMBERS GREET
VISITORS**

Help connect Westminster attendees to their name tags! There are still many name tags in the box in the Sanctuary that have not been connected to their owner's shirts. Let's remind one another to pick up our name tag in the Sanctuary and then wear (!) it . Once picked up, the tag should be returned to the racks in Fellowship Hall. Let's be more welcoming in spirit and practice: reach out to members you don't usually talk to, as well as visitors. Introduce yourself and learn their names.

Cecile Mark & Laurie Tyce

**THE WOMEN'S ALLIANCE OF THE
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH**

The Women's Alliance of the First Unitarian Church in Providence has begun its yearly activities, which include a monthly program and luncheon on the first Monday of the month. We wanted to be sure that any woman in your congregation that might be interested was aware of it.

Membership in our church is not a requirement to participate or belong to the Women's Alliance (which began in 1882 - we became incorporated in 1904). Our meetings are open to anyone that is interested and can attend during the day. If you have any questions, please contact me either by phone or e-mail.

We have a published directory/calendar, which lists our purpose, monthly programs, activities, etc. It will be available to you in The Round Room at Westminster Unitarian Church.

Nancy Libby Fisher, President Women's Alliance
First Unitarian Church of Providence

**HOW WESTMINSTER SAVED
CHRISTMAS EVE FELLOWSHIP**

Traditionally after the 7pm and 9pm services on Christmas Eve we share refreshments. Eggnog and non-alcoholic punch have been provided by the Worship Committee and congregants bring cookies to share. In order to continue this festive fellowship time, we need volunteers to coordinate set-up and clean-up. (The Worship Committee will purchase beverage supplies.) We have detailed instructions on what needs doing. It is a short list which consists of ensuring tables are set-up, votive candles are lit and extinguished in the fireplace (we will not have a fire in the fireplace), punch is made, beverages are replenished and Fellowship Hall is tidied.

If you / your group can take on this task please contact Mary-Ann Connor .



PROPERTY

Thank you, thank you, Tom Townsend, for all the unseen work you do and your help raking leaves; Jerry Tisser for the loan of your powerful leaf blower and time spent blowing leaves; Bob Tyce for your tractor and leaf crusher and your time spent blowing leaves; Chris Lewis and Maddy for raking on Sunday.

Cecile Mark, Property
Coordinator

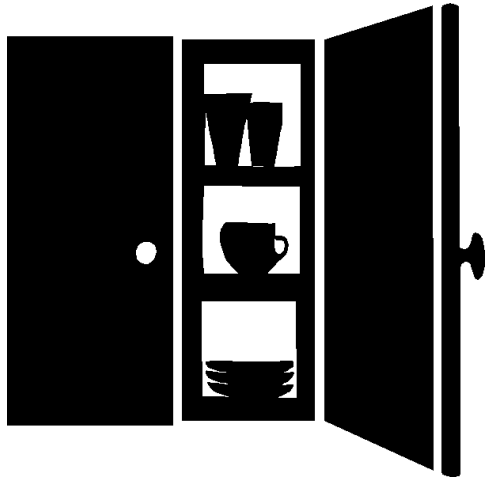


**DOUBLE FEATURE
FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT
DECEMBER 11**

6pm –BOLT - Rated PG

8pm - AUGUST RUSH - Rated PG





THE WHY'S AND HOW'S OF THE "SHARING LOCKER"

Sharing Locker Mission: To support community members with dignity and without discrimination by supplying non-food provisions.

Sharing Locker History: While at the UUA General Assembly in 2008, Nancy Rieser attended a presentation by the Sanford Unitarian Universalist Church in Sanford, ME. In December of 2006 that congregation had a vision to raise \$1000 to purchase items to stock a non-food pantry. The Sanford UU Church's "Corner Cupboard" opened in February of 2007, first serving 35 people per month but now serving about 200 people per month.

Nancy was inspired to start a non-food pantry at Westminster. In early 2009 Nancy, Donna Poland and Sue Ross, all members of Westminster's Caring Circle visited the Sanford UU Church on a third Saturday to see how the Corner Cupboard works. They came back with enthusiasm for starting a non-food pantry at Westminster.

In June 2009 a Caring Circle subcommittee met for the first time and then over the summer and into the fall for six 2-hour sessions to hammer out the details for a non-food pantry at Westminster. Soon the non-food pantry had a name, the Sharing Locker, followed by a brochure, and a storage area on the 2nd floor of the Church House. Members of the subcommittee, in addition to Nancy, Sue and Donna, are Natalie Aubin, Essjay Foulkrod, Donna Schmader and Ingela Williamson.

The purpose of the Sharing Locker (or any non-food pantry) is to provide items that are not covered by SNAP (formerly Food Stamps), such as detergents, paper products, and toiletries. Anyone who has worked

at an animal shelter can attest to the many people who can no longer afford to care for their pets. So the Sharing Locker also supplies dry cat and dog food, just what some folks need to keep their beloved animal companions at home.

As news of the Sharing Locker spread, we found people eager to help. The RE coming of age students, with help from the RE and Green Sanctuary committees, mixed batches of cleaning solutions and dry laundry detergent. Many people have brought in donations of various needed items. Katrina Johnson organized a contest at the Orchard Farm Elementary School in Cranston, promising the winner an Allie's Donut Cake (she had to supply two because two classrooms tied for 1st place with the same number of donations). In all, Katrina delivered three carloads of goods, which are now stashed away in the Sharing Locker storage room. In addition, individuals on the subcommittee (and others) have donated time, money, computer supplies and printer ink.

Sharing Locker now: The Sharing Locker will be open the third Saturday of the month, from 10 AM to 2 PM, starting on February 20, 2010, for East Greenwich residents and any members in need from East Greenwich churches. As time goes by, it may be possible to help folks from other local communities. An anticipated outcome of the Sharing Locker is to bring Westminster deeper into the community.

The Westminster Share the Plate committee has chosen the Sharing Locker as this December's charity. Money collected for the Sharing Locker from Share the Plate will be used exclusively to purchase items for distribution by the Sharing Locker. Designation as a 501(c)(3) organization is in progress. In the meantime, individuals wishing to make a tax deductible contribution to the Sharing Locker should make checks payable to Westminster Unitarian Church and write "Sharing Locker" in the memo line.

New Member Recognition

Anyone interested in signing the membership book at the worship service

Contact Rev. Barbara by December 10th

Phone 401- 884-3561

WESTMINSTER CALENDAR

12/3 7:30 PM Men's Group (W)
12/3 7:00 PM WOW (FH)
12/5 9:00 AM Ethical Eating
12/6 10:00 AM Worship Capital Campaign
12/6 11:00 AM Celebration
12/6 10:00 AM RE
12/6 6:30 PM RE Youth Group (FH)
12/7 6:30 PM Capital Campaign Comm. (FH)
12/8 6:30 PM Yoga (FH)
12/8 7:00 PM Board of Trustees (W)
12/9 6:00 PM Buddhist Meditation (FH)
12/9 7:15 PM Sr. Choir (CH)
12/10 7:00 PM WOW (FH)
12/10 Chimes Deadline
12/11 6:00 PM Young Adult Movie (FH)
12/12 4:00 PM Remembrance Service (CH)
12/13 9/11 AM Worship
12/13 9/11 AM RE
12/13 10:15 AM Craft Sale (FH)
12/13 12:15 AM Craft Sale (FH)
12/14 7:00 PM SGM w/Sandy Hopkins (H)
12/15 6:30 PM Yoga (FH)
12/15 7:00 PM COM (W)
12/16 9:30 AM Chimes Mailing (RR)
12/16 6:00 PM Buddhist Meditation (FH)
12/16 7:15 PM Sr. Choir (CH)

The Caring Circle is Here to Help You

If you have experienced a setback that has left you or a family member ill, or in need of meals, visits, rides or other help, please contact Nancy Rieser or Rev. Barbara Fast (phone 401-884-3561).



CHIMES DEADLINES

DEADLINE: December 10th
MAILING: December 16th

WESTMINSTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Westminster Unitarian Church welcomes all individuals without regard to race, color, physical challenge, sexual orientation, age, or national origin.

Church Office: 401-884-5933
Fax Number: 401-885-2710
Minister: Barbara Fast
minister's study: 401-884-3561
Religious Ed Coordinator: Renee Pierre
Music Director: Nonetta Shatakhtsian
Office Administrator: Judy Brown
E-mail: westminsteruu@verizon.net
Website: www.westminsteruu.org
Office Hours: 9AM to 1 PM Monday - Friday

WESTMINSTER WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

December 6

Ushers: 10:00 AM Ruth McIntosh
Flowers: Nick & Donna Schmader

December 13

Ushers: 9:00 AM Al Jefferies
11:00 AM Pat Fontana
Flowers: **Volunteer needed**

To volunteer, write your name on the schedule in Fellowship Hall, or contact Judy Brown, the Office Administrator.

If you prefer to have the Chimes e-mailed to you, please contact Judy Brown in the Church office weekdays between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.