



River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation

6301 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20817
301-229-0400 www.rruuc.org

eWeekly Newsletter: December 7 - 16, 2017

Our Vision: to grow and deepen in Fellowship, Spirit and Service for all ages

What's Happening This Sunday, December 10 two services - 9:15 and 11:15am

Beauty, Justice, and Grace

Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd, Senior Minister



This Sunday, Rev. Nancy will preach from the story of the Virgin of Guadalupe, who is said to have appeared in a shower of roses. How does beauty fuel the building of a better world? Could it be that appreciation of beauty is the very thing that makes us human?

Contemporary Issues Forum - CC&C, 10:25am, Fireside Rm *Insights on America's Political Past & Future*

Carlos Lozada - Washington Post's Book Reviewer

The writings of the late Harvard political scientist Samuel Huntington anticipated our political and intellectual battles - and point to the country we may become. Mr. Lozada will share insights from his comprehensive Outlook article reviewing Huntington's major works spanning the past six decades, including a nationalist wave that could elect a Donald Trump. In Huntington's writings, idealistic visions of America mingle with its basest impulses, and eloquent defenses of US values betray a fear of the pluralism at the nation's core. Which vision wins out will determine what country we become.



Newcomers want to know about . . . Building & Campus Tour Inquirers - 10:30-11:30am, Room 31



Did you know that you spend Sunday morning worship and fellowship in an award winning building? Take the tour! Learn about our congregation while learning your way around the building with long-time Member Joe Saliunas and Administrator Ana Lim. Drop in or sign up [here](#).

December's Social Justice focus is on Beacon House (BH) This Sunday is a Share-the-Plate service



You can give any way that works for you - cash/check in the basket, Text-to-Give, scan this QR code, or call Diana Chimes to charge to a credit card.

Also, our yearly holiday gift collection has begun.

Our holiday gifts are much appreciated by the children. Their list of suggestions is above the gift box in the hall near the Sanctuary entrance. The older children would love to have gift cards, for example, to Target, H&M, Walmart, or Amazon. They request \$50 cards but any amount would be welcome. Please put your gift cards

Learn about RRUUC's Covenant

A task force convened by the Board of Trustees has drafted a Covenant for RRUUC - a statement of how we freely choose to be together, bringing our best selves to our relationships, and work together as a spiritual community. Read [more here](#), including the proposed draft and a [FAQ sheet](#).

Listen to Rev. Louise's 11/19 sermon, *Covenants: A Promise We Keep With Ourselves*. On [YouTube](#). Or on RRUUC [website](#).

Discuss the covenant at an upcoming forum:

- Sunday, December 10, 10:30-11:15am & 12:30-2pm, Rm 25
- Sunday, January 7, 10:30-11:15am, & 12:30-2pm, Rm 25

Questions or comments, please send [email](#).

Board Buzz - November 2017 Board Meeting

The Retreat Committee

(Jan Elicker, Co-Chair, Andrea Abrams, Tom Helde, Hugh Abrams-Helde, and Mandy Wimmer-O'Brien) presented information on their thinking on the future of the RRUUC retreat. The Board supports their need for rethinking the



in the box marked for BH in the office. See the [BH website](#) for more information and volunteer opportunities.

Table in the Fellowship Hall during Fellowship Hours Leadership & Nominations - Have you ever wondered what L&N stands for? Or what it does? Have you wondered how the slates of candidates elected at the annual meeting come together? Members of the L&N Committee will be happy to answer your questions and will be grateful for your input. Join them at the L&N table in the Fellowship Hall between services. If you are interested but can't visit the table, please [email](#) Monika Blaumueller and Lara Akinbami, L&N Co-Chairs.

Congregational Care Notes



Wishing everyone well as the holiday energy builds! Consider all the ways to connect with community at RRUUC, as you tend your heart and spirit in the midst of the swirl. Three possibilities: **Field Trip to the DC Basilica** with Revs. Louise and Nancy this **Sunday, December 10**; **Winter Solstice lunch and ritual on December 23**; and the **Songs of Hope mini-retreat on January 6**. Find ways that you can experience some stillness, beauty, and winter wonder in this rich season.

We send our thoughts to our immigrant neighbors and congregants navigating complex systems and challenges. If you are feeling moved to contribute to sponsored congregants, you can make a holiday contribution payable to RRUUC, with *Refugee Assistance* in the subject line. Thank you for all generous actions you make on behalf of immigrants, in a time when so many feel discouraged and unwelcome. Let us be a place of radical welcome and hospitality.

Adult Religious Education

Approaching the Longest Night: A Writer's Advent

Sunday, December 10, 12:45-2pm

If you want to take an amazing class, grab a pen and sink down into this offering. We will be reading Jan Richardson and Rumi and writing about the winter and the chill and the warmth. A free gift from the universe this time . . . We still have spots . . . register [here](#).



Calling all humans! On **Sunday, December 24**, at the **7pm service**, Rev. Louise will direct a Movement Choir, to a three minute piano version of **The Shepherds Dance** by **Menotti**. All ages, all movement abilities including seated in a chair, all genders, are invited to participate. Not sure what this is? Come find out at the rehearsal, and have fun exploring.

NOTE: You don't need to be a mover or a dancer, have any experience at all. You will not wear anything special, other than clothing that allows you to make arm gestures. One rehearsal is mandatory: Saturday, December 16, 10-11:30am. [RSVP](#) to Louise ASAP.



retreat, based on the 2017 event, as well as lower attendance over the past 3 years. In 2017, not enough families signed up to go to Camp Tockwogh, so there was a one-day staycation retreat at RRUUC instead (which went very well). Over the next few months, the committee will evaluate options for 2018. As the event is an all congregation event, and requires renewed commitment, it may take the next year to reengage the RRUUC congregation. The Board has taken the Retreat Committee's points under advisement, and will revisit any potential response at the December meeting.

The L&N Committee, represented by Monika Blaumueller, asked for input on criteria for recruiting future board members in 2018.

Criteria were updated to reflect the Board's emphasis on diversity.

The Covenant Task Force, represented by Petrina Hollingsworth and Ben Croner, discussed the planned January 28, 2018 meeting to adopt a congregational covenant.

Louise Green addressed the topic in her November 19th sermon. The Board will provide support for the congregation meeting to adopt the covenant. The draft document has been posted on the RRUUC website.

The Board discussed the Racial Justice Task Force's September presentation. Julia and Matthew have reviewed responses, and will work with the Board to agree on a response to RJTF's presentation at RJTF on December 17.

The Board adjusted the Senior Minister's evaluation criteria for our 2017-18 year. **Reverend Nancy presented RRUUC attendance numbers** over the past two months. And announced that Mimi Mathis and Peter Engebretson will be co-chairing the Capital Campaign in 2018.

Deb Peck and Nancy Ferris provided an update on the RRUUC Safe Congregations Policy. Currently the Draft has

Holiday News and Announcements



What do you like about winter holidays at River Road? Tell the world in 100 words or less on the RRUUC website. Is it the Winter Music service? Or maybe Christmas Eve services? The Solstice Celebration? Maybe the feeling of family, peace, and hope? All the above?! Selected testimonials will be [posted on the site](#) (with your first name and your choice of with or without with your photo). Please [email](#) Sheri.

It's Pageant Sign Up Time - help us make sure we have enough costumes. Be here on December 24 at 10am and at the **rehearsal the day before for all K and older**. If you are between infant and a High School Senior, we want to include you in this storytelling. Read more and [sign up here](#) by December 17. Every year the Pageant is presented as a gift during the worship service, from children and youth of all ages. "Every night a child is born is a holy night" is reminder to all as we welcome and celebrate where the holy possibility is born into life.



Farewell to Louise - Shhh - Let's give Louise a great going away present. Share your love, remembrance, well wishes, prayers, drawings, song or whatever can fit on paper! We will be at a table on the bridge each **Sunday between services through January 7**. At the table we will have decorative note papers you could use, or tips on how make a full page submission. Either send something as an email attachment to ThanksLouise@rruuc.org or give us your handiwork directly. Do join in the goodbyes and memory making. We promise to wrap them up beautifully in a way that Louise will treasure.

Ministry of Action - Would you like to deepen your connections to the wonderful people in this community? The Ministry of Action provides a variety of ways to build relationships with one another. Might you be able to staff the greeting card table once a month? Or give a ride to a fellow congregant who can't drive right now? These are great opportunities for those who are free during the day. Please send an [email](#) to Alexa.

Who are all these wonderful people at church and how do I get to know them better? One answer is to master the use of the River Road website, where all our addresses and the church calendar are stored. If you have a smart phone, you could also get an app which has all that same information, right there in your hand. It is easier than you know. The Congregational Care Ministry of Action will be teaching people how to use these tools, and we even make house calls to set them up on your desktop computer. Stop by the table on the bridge to learn more!

Social Justice News



La Clinica Holiday Gift Collection

Once again, RRUUC will have the opportunity to donate gifts to La Clinica del Pueblo's holiday Posada, which will be held December 20. Gifts may be for children aged from infant to high school, and should be unwrapped. These may be placed in the marked box in RRUUC lobby from now through **December 17**. A share-the-plate

been updated to include vulnerable adults. RE staff have worked on the revised document. The Draft will be circulated in December to the Board. Art Slesinger (Building Committee) and Ana Lim (Congregational Administrator) are working on building security aspects of the policy.

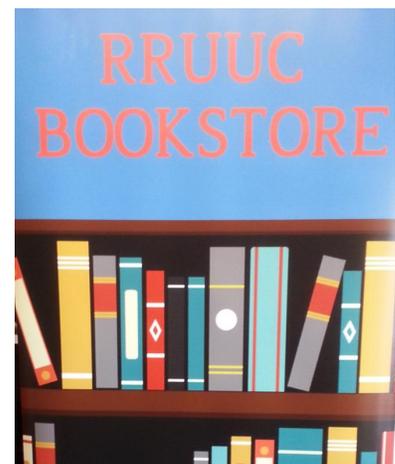
In closing, Matthew reflected on the success of the Bazaar, with Laura Piervincenzi and Karen Chopra overseeing the event. The date change to November worked, and over 400 volunteers were involved. Kudos, ladies and team!! **Our next Board Meeting will be December 12**, the second Tuesday of the month. Instead of the originally planned Board Chats for December 10, the Board Chats will be rescheduled so allow all to participate in the forums being held that day by the Covenant Task Force.

Check out the RRUUC Bookstore!

We have a few new books that highlight insights of Unitarian Universalists of color. Of note:

Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry, edited by Mitra Rahnema and the Committee for Antiracism, Anti-oppression, and Multiculturalism of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association.

Come browse for gift books also for adults and children.



collection to benefit La Clinica del Pueblo (in lieu of outreach pledges) is planned for **January 14**, when LCDP Exec Director will speak at CC&C. Contact Charlotte Jones Carroll with questions.

What part of the circle do you belong to? Which piece of the world can you help repair? On January 20, come find out the answer to the question "To me, as a member of the River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation, racial justice means....?" and in what directions you pointed RRUUC to. Save the date and [register here](#).



Latin American Task Network (LATN)

COTSA, Community of Transnational Salvadorans in America, is an organization of 17 Salvadoran Hometown Associations whose members live in the DC area. COTSA was established a few years ago with the support of the RRUUC LATN. This past Saturday, December 2, COTSA held its annual gala. Over 250 Salvadoran immigrants with a contingent of 9 members and **Ana Lim**, representing the staff from RRUUC enjoyed a tasty meal of chicken and salmon. **Rev. Ginger Luke** was invited to offer the blessing for the meal. This year, COTSA recognized **Don Chery and RRUUC** for 30 years of solidarity and support of the Salvadoran community. As part of the program, COTSA passed out over \$9,000 in scholarship funds to 10 Salvadoran communities. All throughout the event, slides were shown of university graduates who had benefited from previous scholarship support. Then many danced the night away to the music of Grupo Miel. COTSA is now starting to have an impact in the Salvadorian political life. Mr. Gerson Martinez, current candidate for the presidency addressed the group and acknowledged the support COTSA is given to communities in el Salvador.



Meet Our Ministers



Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd
Senior Minister



Rev. Louise Green
Minister for Congregational Life



Dr. Alexa Fraser
Ministerial Intern

Activity Groups

German Conversation Group, Sunday, December 10

The German Conversation Group (usually) meets on the first Sunday each month after the services. We are a group of people that want to practice their language skills and keep their brains supple. We discuss current events, church issues as well as our own lives. Approximately every other month, we watch and discuss a provocative German movie. Interested? Please contact Elke Jordan via email.

International Dinner Group begins again Wednesday, December 13 at 7pm, Tia Queta, 4399 Del Ray Av, Bethesda 301-654-4443

Please contact Chris Hager by noon on December 12 or call the restaurant on Wednesday. Bring small bills. ALL are welcome!

Partner Church & Mindful Knitters project-Some River Roaders are going to our Partner Church in Khasi Hills, India, in February, and will be taking some gifts from River Road. We are going to try to get some small items knit for the kids, like hats and scarves. If you are able and willing to knit or crochet a few, in any yarn, including wool, please put them in the Mindful Knitters box in the foyer during January. Contact Pat Kay with questions.

Visit our Sermon Library

We would hate to see you go, but if you wish to unsubscribe from the eWeekly Newsletter, please click the link below.



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Upcoming Events

Evening Forum: How to Be a Muslim with Haroon Moghul December 10, 7:30-9:30pm, Cedar Lane U U Church

This event is free and open to the public. There might be no religion we talk about as much as Islam, yet no religion we misunderstand more. Rather than talk about facts and figures, about rites and rituals, Haroon Moghul tells a very intimate story of what it is like to grow up Muslim, to struggle with Islam, to find meaning, beauty and pain in your religion. This is the story of losing yourself, falling to pieces, and trying to pick them back up and start all over again. More info [here](#).

Art Exhibit - by RRUUC member Walter Weiss *Mostly Family* through December 15, Fellowship Hall

For the last several years Walter has been painting people, mostly family. He says: "We respond to the smallest changes in faces, and this makes portrait painting both challenging and interesting." The six panel painting of the Frisbee player was inspired by a room-sized painting by Rubens, with a guard lunging to rescue a woman being carried away on horseback. Check it out!



How the Grunch Stole Hanukkah - Unexpected Stage Returns! One Show Only - Saturday, December 16, 7:30pm



It's that time if year again! Hanukkah is on its way. Whether you have never before seen a latke, or you whittle your own dreidel each year, Unexpected Stage's winter fundraiser has something for everyone. Join us for a boisterous reading of Unexpected Stage co-founder Christopher Goodrich's story of a misguided creature who tries to ruin this year's festival of lights-and reminds us of the deeper meaning of the holiday season in the process. Throw in haunting holiday melodies, wine, and goodies to nosh on, for an evening to remember! The cast will feature Richard Goemann telling the Grunch's tale, and Deborah Sternberg filling the room with song. More [here](#). Discount code: "RRUUC"!

Songs of Hope: A New Year's Retreat, Saturday, January 6, 2018

9:30am - 12:00pm Set your clear intention for 2018! Join Rev. Louise Green and guests to explore our January theme of Hope. Options include ritual, music, movement, nature walk, and/or dialogue with others. Open to all ages and genders. Begins with Continental Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall. Register [here](#).



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