

# EAST BREEZE

Newsletter of the James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Madison, Wisconsin

Volume 22, Number 12 — December 2013

## In The Interim

“When love is felt or fear is known  
When holidays and holydays and such times come  
When anniversaries arrive by calendar or  
consciousness  
When seasons come, as seasons do, old and known,  
yet somehow new  
When lives are born or people die  
When something sacred is sensed in soil or sky  
Mark the time  
Respond with thought or prayer or smile or grief  
Let nothing slip between the fingers of the mind  
For these are holy things we will not, cannot, find  
again.”

Rev. Max Coots

This quote from my sermon on Thanksgiving Sunday is one I wish us all to hold close as we head into this season of busyness, thingness, hope, joy and waiting for the wheel of life to turn and the sun to return again. We will of course mark all of that here at James Reeb with our various seasonal special services of Solstice, Las Posadas, Christmas Eve, Kwanzaa, and most especially with our exciting Charter Sunday celebration on Sunday December 8th.

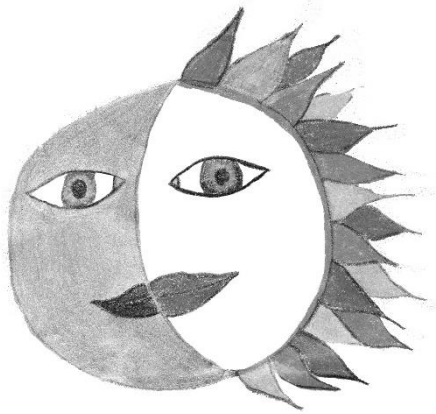
This is indeed a time when something sacred is sensed in soil or sky and in our own hearts. May we all, in our busyness and too much to do-ness of this season, make spaces in our hearts to respond with prayer and thought, smiles and even grief. Let's slow the season down a bit, catch our breaths and dwell in the miracles of this time. The wheel will turn; it always does. The New Year will begin and we can pick up the tasks and get on with the work ahead. They will all still be there. In this season of love may we remember that love, the people around us and the magic of this season are holy things we will not, cannot, find again. Let us mark them well.

Blessings,  
Marlene

## Sunday December Services

10 am

- 12/1 “Guest At Your Table”**  
**Caroline Hardin and the RE Committee**
- 12/8 “Looking Back: Taking Flight”**  
**Charter Sunday Celebration**  
**The Rev. Dr. Marlene Walker**  
**Interim Minister**  
Twenty years ago today -- or close to -- James Reeb UU held its first Charter Sunday Service. As we close our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations we will celebrate that day and the past 20 years; as we also take flight into the next 20. There will be lots of music, the creation and burial of time capsule (see Page 2), greetings from some of our neighbors and folks who were there when, and a general all around celebration. This is the big party folks! Don't miss it.
- 12/15 “Intention”**  
**The Rev. Dr. Marlene Walker**  
**Interim Minister**  
In this season of Advent, anticipation, the run up to the all-consuming busyness and weariness of this season what intentions do we -- or might we - hold for ourselves and our community. Chuck Philyaw will provide the music.
- 12/22 “No Room At The Inn”**  
**The Rev. Dr. Marlene Walker**  
**Interim Minister**  
This multigenerational service will combine the JRUUC tradition of Las Posadas and music from the Solstice ritual. Come prepared to participate in Las Posadas and to sing!
- 12/29 “Kwanzaa”**  
**Peggy Haack**



**Winter Solstice Singing Ritual  
6pm Saturday, December 21st**

**Presented by Chuck Philyaw,  
The JRUUC Choir and  
The Rev. Marlene Walker**

**Join us for our annual journey  
Deep into the heart of Winter  
And back again – using songs, readings,  
silence, and candlelight as our guides**

Drawing by Erika Gotcher



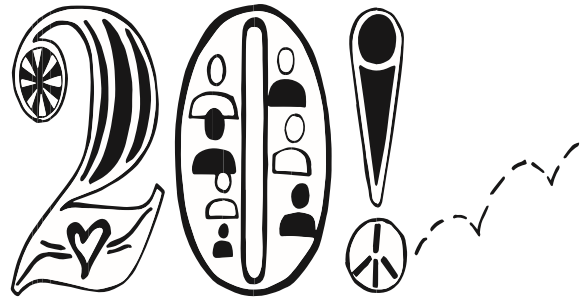
**Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols**

**6 pm Tuesday December 24th**

**The Rev. Dr. Marlene Walker  
Interim Minister**

**Come join us Christmas Eve for a  
Traditional singing of carols,  
Christmas readings – both traditional and  
contemporary –  
and the lighting of candles**

**This family-friendly service will include  
the telling of a story or two as well**



**20th Anniversary Celebration  
20 Years of Love & Justice!**

**Come one, Come all!  
Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>  
Charter Sunday Recognition**

Charter Sunday is meant to recognize the four Sundays in December 1993 during which more than 70 people signed the membership book as charter members and the UUA welcomed JRUUC as a formal member.

We have celebrated our 20th Anniversary at JRUUC in many ways... being inspired by Rev. Joe Ellwanger's "Bending Towards Justice" sermon, serving in our community on Service Sunday, and rocking with the James Reeb UU Congregation Band at the Reeb Rave!

Now our community will come together again in honor of our 20 years on **Sunday, December 8!** The choir and the James Reeb UU Congregation Band will present music during our 10 am worship service where we will recognize and honor the work of our founders who began the beloved community of JRUUC.

We'll also be creating a **time capsule** during the service. Please bring something no larger than can fit in one hand and that will say something to those who will open it 20 years from now. A **community potluck** will follow the worship service. Please join us as we celebrate our founding and look forward to our next 20 Years of Love and Justice.

Finally, our grades 6+ continue to work on creating a **video** to capture the JRUUC stories of yesterday and today. Please contact Charlie McNulty ([charlesmcnulty@gmail.com](mailto:charlesmcnulty@gmail.com)) if you have memories that you'd like to share in this project. And thank you to Charlie McNulty and Carin Bringelson for their work on updating the history of JRUUC on our website <http://www.jruuc.org/history-jruuc>.

## **President's Note: Sarah's Solstice**

December brings us to the turning of the year, when nights grow long and then light begins to return. We will celebrate this turning in Reeb's annual Winter Solstice Singing Ritual and in countless other rituals and traditions, public and private, to embrace the rebirth of hope in the darkness.

This is a time of turning in other ways, too. After a marvelous series of activities toasting Reeb's first twenty years of existence, we prepare to "take flight" into our hopes and dreams for the future. The Ministerial Search Committee has posted materials online and will soon start a new phase of their work, hearing from interested ministers. As a congregation we are halfway through our second year of a very fruitful interim, the turning between one settled ministry and the next.

We each have our own ways of turning at this season. Some fend off the darkness with candles, bonfires, or colored lights. Some relish a quiet time to turn inward; some gather to share songs and stories, laughter and tears. The turning of the year brings an invitation to renewal. To each and every one of you, may this month be filled with whatever renews your spirit as we await, and then welcome, the returning of the light.

Sarah Cook, president



### **October 2013 Financial Details**

	<b>October</b>	<b>July 2013 to the present</b>
<b>Income</b>	\$8,884	\$59,932
<b>Expenses</b>	\$15,125	\$59,697

Income for the month was only \$8,884 against expenses of \$15,125 giving us a loss for the month of about \$6,000. This means that we no longer have a cushion. Luckily, November will bring in the Reeb Rave money, which we think will be close to \$5,000. Also, we usually receive a number of year-end gifts over and above regular pledge payments. Please

consider JRUUC in your year-end giving, especially if you itemize your taxes.

Art Hackett, Treasurer

### **Safe Congregations & Facilities Planning**

#### **Many Hands Coalition**

Save the date: Saturday December 14<sup>th</sup> 9 am - 1 pm. Stewardship takes many forms. Please join the fun to help tend the building, clean the nooks and crannies, and honor the work that has brought us to this point.

#### **Let There Be Light**

With many thanks to the BoT and the Safety and Facilities Planning group, we now have exterior night-time lighting! Midwest Electric was hired to install energy efficient, photocel-driven LED lighting to the front, side, and rear of the building. The purpose was to increase safety for all. This major improvement was paid for using funds set aside for capital expenditures accumulated from Big Oak Rental payments.

Mark Lydon, Chair

### **Holiday Craft & Bake Sale** **Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup>** **beginning at 9:30 am**

Purchase yummy baked goods &  
Craft items created by  
Congregation members

**Are you an artist or  
craftsperson?**

**Please donate a few items**

OR

**Set up your own table and  
Donate a portion of your proceeds!**

If you like to make cookies or  
candies for the holidays consider  
Donating some of them!

Contact Cindy Rudd at 244-8428 or  
[ruddhaack@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ruddhaack@sbcglobal.net)



## Religious Education

This year we start our Guest at your Table tradition December 1st during a special dedicated service. Through the holiday season, the Stories of Hope and collection boxes will help us feel connected to a community of generosity, gratitude, and ordinary people's bravery in the face of some of the worst social justice issues. Giving a few coins at meal times can help children feel part of the solution in their own small but deeply meaningful way. We invite your family to pick up Guest at your Table materials in the Reeb Narthex (lobby), or check out the website <http://www.uusc.org/guest/2013-2014/myguests> Boxes and other contributions should be returned by the Kid Re-Konnection January 5, 2014.

January 12th will be the first day of regular RE, so add to your calendars now: **Teacher Refresher Brunch!** We say Thank You to our fall RE volunteers and welcome new Spring RE volunteers with a special meal following service. Classroom teams will have time to meet and plan the Spring semester, and new volunteers will get oriented to the RE program. Give a special holiday gift to our children by joining us, in whatever volunteer capacity is comfortable to you: <http://bit.ly/revolunteer> .

Also in January 2014 we plan to refresh our RE rooms after Big Oak returns to their newly renovated building. We are looking at a variety of new books, toys and classroom furniture -- take a look at some of the items we are considering on our Wishlist. Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome, and a huge Thank-You to Peggy and Cindy for their in-kind donation!

Caroline Hardin, Director of Religions Education  
[re@jruuc.org](mailto:re@jruuc.org) 608-469-1294



## **Are You a Fair-share Giver?**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Appreciation Reception for  
Fair Share Givers

**7 pm Friday, February 7th**

See more information in the  
Stewardship Stirrings article

## Social Justice Council

### **Recent Share the Plate totals**

350.org	\$127.50
The Boys and Girls Club	\$158.00
Tenant Resource Center	\$183.50
Madison-Area Urban Ministry	\$181.00
Goodman Center Thanksgiving	\$136.00
Mining Alternatives (MAMA)	\$ 97.00

### **Giving Tree**

Each year we have a Giving Tree as an opportunity for us to share the holiday season with the community. This year the Peace, Justice and Sustainability group has chosen two families as recipients of our gifts. There will be a tree in the Narthex, along with a basket of ornaments and a list of suggested gifts. Identify what you plan to donate, sign your name and put the ornament on the tree.

### **The Peace, Justice, & Sustainability Group** (PJS: Pronounced "P-jays")

Meets at 7 pm the 4rd Monday each month.  
Our next meeting is January 28<sup>th</sup> at JRUUC.  
Come and join in on the fun if you have the time. If you can't make the meetings but would like to be informed, you can get on the email list. Contact Barbara Whitney, [bwhitney@chi-squared.org](mailto:bwhitney@chi-squared.org).



## An Update from MOSES

JRUUC is a congregational member of MOSES -- an interfaith coalition working to increase justice in our state. From four angles we are working to decrease the Wisconsin prison population:

- 1) **Sentencing reform**, like when/if 17 year olds are charged as adults
- 2) **Reforming in-prison experiences**, like solitary confinement, compassionate release, and rules for "old-time" prisoners
- 3) **Post-release reform**, like changing the use around Consolidated Court Automation Programs (CCAP), and increasing "ban-the-box" efforts
- 4) Increasing funding for **Treatment Alternative and Diversion** (TAD) programs

The First Annual MOSES Celebration on November 16th was a *huge success with at least 11 Reebers in attendance!* Yearbooks from the event are in the JRUUC lobby and include an ad for our congregation!

The next upcoming MOSES event will be **Saturday December 7th**: Monthly MOSES meeting, 10 am - 12 noon at First Congregational Church

To carpool or ask questions, contact Carin B. at [cmbringe@gmail.com](mailto:cmbringe@gmail.com) or see <http://mosesmadison.org/>

### Reminder:

Please check your calendar for  
Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>  
Town Hall Meeting  
after the service

### Appreciative Inquiry

<http://www.jruuc.org/congregational-wide-appreciative-inquiry-has-begun>

## Stewardship Stirrings Thanks for Fair Share

Fair Share Givers are those JRUUC members who pledge to give 2-10% of their income to the congregation. For more details, see: <http://www.uua.org/finance/fundraising/budget/151840.shtml>

Last spring we asked JRUUC members and friends to indicate on their Financial Commitment Forms if they considered themselves to be Fair Share Givers. And now we'd like to formally thank those Fair Share folks with an evening **Appreciation Reception on Friday, February 7th**.

So, if you consider yourself a Fair Share Giver, look for an email in late December with the details. (If you can't remember what box you checked, contact Elizabeth at [office@jruuc.org](mailto:office@jruuc.org) who can confirm for you!)

Beth Esser



### From the Office

It is snowing while I write this. As a few of you know, snow always brings a smile to my face because my first thought is, "How beautiful!" This has been the case since I was five years old and had a yellow toboggan (really just a sheet of plastic with a handle at one end). I'm looking forward to more snow this winter since I purchased cross-country skis at the April 2013 rummage sale.

At home, my wall oven is broken. My spouse and I ordered a new one October 27<sup>th</sup>, but it was sent to Chicago and then disappeared! Because we're hosting Thanksgiving, I borrowed the 18-quart roaster from the Reeb kitchen. I'm thankful that this option is available! Gee, what if one of you planned to use it but didn't tell me? If so, you are too late. According to the online manual, the roaster can even be used to bake brownies. Hooray! Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Yours in growing faith,  
Elizabeth

## Music Notes



### Do You Hear What I Hear?

At this time of year we begin hearing songs about the cold winter season, the warmth of a fire, bells ringing, and choirs

singing and such.

Music is typically a gift received with glee but during the holiday season songs can be played over and over until the words become stale and the melodies sour. What was once joyful is now heard with a Grinch-like ear. Is there a way to revive the musical merriment?

Instead of letting the music slip away into the din of our coming and going we might try to actively listen to the music.

Music has the power to transport us to a particular place, time or event in our lives. So allow it to take hold of you in a special way; make a connection so that it holds real meaning and may become for you as T.S. Eliot expresses, "music heard so deeply that it is not heard at all, for you are the music while the music lasts."

Until next year, best wishes.  
Chuck Philyaw

### **Spiritual Hospitality in our Congregations**

*by Dori Thexton, MidAmerica  
Congregational Life Consultant*



The leaders of almost every congregation I visit tell me they want to grow. Many of them are quite sincere and willing to do the work necessary to actually attract and retain new members. However, there is often a disconnect between what the leadership is willing to do and what actually exists in congregational culture.

About 10 years ago, I wrote a newsletter column about hospitality on Sunday mornings and urged folks to stop conducting church business during coffee hour -- rather, focus on truly welcoming newcomers or getting to know those you don't know well. That

column generated more reaction than any I've written before or after. Irate responses from people saying it was their only chance to wrangle committee members or check off items on their "to do" lists.

I think much has changed since then. Many of our congregations are truly more welcoming than the days when holding the visitor's mug during coffee hour was the "kiss of death," as one Unitarian Universalist minister put it. And...There is still a long way to go to creating a culture where each member feels the responsibility of being welcoming and radically hospitable.

This often involves stepping outside of our comfort zone. Going up to someone new and starting a conversation is not easy, especially if that person appears to be somehow different -- older, younger, another race or ethnicity, differently abled. And yet, membership in a faith community carries a responsibility to participate. Participation means more than showing up at services or joining a committee. It means putting ourselves out there to help create the beloved community we desire.

Rev. Victoria Weinstein, a UU minister who blogs under the moniker "Peacebang," wrote about this in her inimitable, direct style recently. She states, "The moral virtue of hospitality asks that we provide food, drink and shelter to the stranger, even at a sacrifice to us and our kin."

Another issue that sometimes crops up is a lack of respect shown when discussing other faith traditions. Weinstein calls that a form of spiritual violence.

She raises many important points in this article -- concepts about inclusivity that are crucial to the future of Unitarian Universalism if we are to grow and have relevant, meaningful faith communities in the coming years. The article can be found here: <http://www.peacebang.com/2012/02/18/on-hospitality/>

If your congregation is interested in learning more about welcoming processes and integrating newcomers, the Unitarian Universalist Association of Membership Professionals has lots of resources on their website - [www.uuamp.org](http://www.uuamp.org).

And if your congregation has a truly welcoming, spiritually inclusive culture...share your story with us!  
<http://www.midamericauua.org/>



**James Reeb Unitarian Universalist  
Congregation**

2146 E. Johnson St.  
Madison, WI 53704-4727  
(608)242-8887  
office@jruuc.org  
www.jruuc.org

Minister Rev. Marlene Walker  
(970) 640-5444 revmwalker@mac.com  
The Rev. Dr. Marlene Walker takes Mondays off.

Director of Religious Education  
Caroline Hardin  
(608) 469-1294 re@jruuc.org

Office Administrator Elizabeth J. Barrett  
(608) 242-8887 office@jruuc.org

Choir Director Chuck Philyaw  
(608) 516-6085 music@jruuc.org

Religious Education (RE) & Childcare are available  
for most worship services. We have a number of  
multi-generational services throughout the year.

President Sarah Cook  
(608) 846-2812 sarah\_cook@charter.net

President-elect Kim Reain  
(608) 243-8621 kim@reain.net

Secretary Rachel Avery  
(608) 663-2912 rlave@hotmail.com

Treasurer Art Hackett  
(608) 244-0627 treasurer@jruuc.org

Assistant Treasurer Derek Peterson  
(608) 239-135 peterson.derek.d@gmail.com

*East Breeze* is published monthly by James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation. To subscribe, unsubscribe, or change your mailing address, contact the newsletter editor (Office Administrator Elizabeth J. Barrett).

Newsletter submissions may be emailed to office@jruuc.org. The deadline for submissions is the 20th of the month at 5 pm. Please limit articles to 200 words. Please be careful not to include sensitive information.

