



Chalice Chat

Sunday News from the Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church
December 16, 2018

Sharing Our Plate: Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry – December 16

Each month, half of the contributions in the collection plate, other than those specified for pledges, go to a designated social justice organization or local charity.

Loaves and Fishes is a food pantry in Ayer, MA whose mission it is to serve nutritious food in an atmosphere of kindness and respect to individuals in need who reside in Ayer, Devens, Groton, Harvard, Littleton and Shirley. More than 350 volunteers help over 900 client families who are food insecure. For more information about Loaves and Fishes, please go to loavesfishespantry.org. If you would like 100% of your donation to go to Loaves and Fishes, please make your check out to Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry, Inc.

December 16

Solstice Service & Mummings
Whole Congregation worship

December 23 *Get Some Sleep*

Rev. Jill Cowie

“We give this advice hoping that sleep will provide sanctuary and restoration. And yet, rest is often elusive and our dreams are perplexing. Sleep consumes roughly one-third of our lives, but how well do we understand it and how does it relate to our spiritual lives?” Youth start in the Sanctuary.

Monday December 24

5:30 A Christmas Eve Celebration for all ages. A choral and jazz preconcert will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary and a cookie decoration and cider party for all ages will start at 4:45 in the Fellowship Building. The ushers have promised to save the front row of the sanctuary for families.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

December 16: Whole congregation in the sanctuary.

December 23: Youth start in the sanctuary.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



UUSC

--SUPPORT THE GUEST AT YOUR

TABLE (GAYT) EFFORT

Have you picked up your GAYT box yet? Please take one and begin sharing your loose change and bills to support the UU Service Committee efforts for human rights and social justice around the globe. And remember that **all donations will be matched 100%** and gifts of \$125 or more will be quadrupled!! Boxes will be collected at the Christmas Eve service or the next Sunday.

CHECKS: make out to HUUC or UUSC with GAYT in the memo. Put in the collection plate, Elinor's office or mail to the church any time. Thank you for your support.

SOCIAL JUSTICE



For those who want to learn more about the founding of Black Lives Matter, consider watching the documentary "Stay Woke: The Black Lives Matter Movement Documentary." It is streaming for free on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eIoYtKOqxeU>.

-SJMC

BLACK. LIVES. MATTER. BANNER. RETURNS. SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16.

Next SJMC meeting: Sunday, January 6th, 2019 (All are welcome!)

The 2018 Mummers Play



Caught between rehearsals: The 2017 Mummers Play crew – image: Maddy Hill

A big part of recent Solstice services has been traditional sword dancing and mummers plays

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mummers_play) written and directed by our own Marc Vilain with production help from Helen Hill. This year the children will once again take over our sanctuary to bring you an updated play, as zany and full of antics and dancing as any that have gone before.

The Harvard UU Mummers plays come to us from an age-old British tradition. Roving bands of mummers would perform in the street or in pubs at the holidays, often passing the hat, or in our case, the offering plate.

These plays are quintessential street theater: broad, humorous, irreverent, and sometimes immensely poignant. They often feature characters of lesser means poking fun at authority, and the topsy-turvy of that dynamic is why we ask our children to be our mummers. This is a day where they are in charge, not the adults of the church.

Mummers plays often feature a death and resurrection. One interpretation aligns this rebirth with the turning of the year, and in particular with the solstice — as the old year dies, and the new year comes to life. In many traditional mummers plays, the deceased character is brought back to life by a quack doctor. Doctor Aflack, as we call him, never misses Harvard UU's mummers plays, but to us he really is utterly ineffective as a doctor, and we usually align the return to life with another common element of these plays, the Dragon.

Dragons appear in many British

mummers plays, usually as the foil to Saint George. Our Dragon has way broader aspirations. Harvard's Dragon is the annual source of some topical conflict, one year stealing all the books from the new library (the kids were too loud); or repossessing all the homes in Harvard during the financial crisis; or shutting down the Glean Team through copyright infringement laws (the case of Dragon Vs. Squash Soup Recipe); and so forth.

It is ultimately up to the communitarian spirit of the town to resolve this dragonly conflict. And it is through this resolution that the deceased character returns to life. At least, that's how it goes in our mummers plays. They are a living folk tradition, and ours is just one tendril on a theatrical vine whose roots stretch across the continents and the centuries.

So: Can the President have his climate-controlled golf courses? He wants to know and Dragon's newest invention may be just what he needs ... Come armed with sunglasses and umbrellas to maximize your enjoyment on Sunday morning when all will be revealed. -Marc and Helen

CHURCH CALENDAR

Sunday December 16

8:30 a.m. Mummers rehearsal

10:00 a.m. Solstice & Mummers

Black Lives Matter Banner Returns

4:30 p.m. Messiah Sing In

Tuesday December 18

10:00 a.m. Belfry Deadline

6-8pm Worship Team meeting

7-9pm Soul Matters

Wednesday December 19

7-8pm Meditation

Thursday December 20

9-11am Soul Matters

Sunday December 23

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Get Some Sleep

Rev. Jill Cowie

Monday December 24

4:45 p.m. Cookie decoration and cider party for all ages in Fellowship Bldg

5:00 p.m. Choral & Jazz Concert

5:30 A Christmas Eve Celebration all ages