

The BUC Big Picture

December 2024



December Worship

December 15: Music Sunday

The Red Priest, also known as Antonio Vivaldi, wrote his dynamic “Gloria” for his all-female chorus from an orphanage in Venice around 1715. Intrigued? Come hear your BUC Chalice Choir accompanied by Pianist Mira Walker and a chamber orchestra of professional instrumentalists play this beautiful Baroque masterpiece woven with spoken word and congregational singing.

December 22, 10:30 am: “Participatory Pageant for All”

Have you always wanted to be a star? Or maybe an angel, a wise person, or a shepherd? This is your chance! We’ll enact the Christmas story and reflect on its meaning. No advance preparation is required: costumes, props, and stage directions will be provided on the spot. A worship service for all ages.

December 22, 5:00 pm: Solstice Celebration (outdoors)

Join us as we celebrate the Winter Solstice at BUC! The Pulver Family will be hosting the event again this year, which will include a hearty feast (prepared by Chef Ben), warm drinks and plenty of singing, dancing, and even some rituals around a roaring fire to help encourage the Sun to return to us again. Dress warmly as this event is held outside regardless of the weather.

Tuesday, December 24: Christmas Eve – “The Gifts of Christmas”

What are the presents that matter? A traditional Unitarian Universalist Christmas Eve service, with stories, music, carols, and candle lighting.

December 29: “Joy”

Joy seems to be elusive these days, but this service will bring out the joy that exists in all our hearts now and forever. Please come to church dressed in whatever brings you the most joy; it could be pajamas or a tuxedo! Wear that hat you love, break out those cool boots, dust off that funny shirt, or come in a full costume if you want to!

Whatever you choose will be correct for this Sunday. We will find our joy and even throw some around the sanctuary with an indoor “snowball” fight. This is a service not to be missed! All ages welcome.

December Plate Sharing

The recipient of our plate sharing in December is the [Welcome Inn](#). Operated by South Oakland Citizens for the Homeless (SOCH), Welcome Inn is the only daytime warming center in Oakland County. On any given day between December and March, up to 45 guests use the facility between 7am and 7pm. Everyone gets a hot dinner, clothing from the clothing closet, social services, haircuts, medical treatment and, most important of all, friendly companionship.

In addition to our plate support, BUCers have volunteered at the Welcome Inn (located at Starr Presbyterian Church on the corner of 13 Mile and Crooks) for many years. There are a number of ways to help, including short or one-time opportunities: working in the clothing closet, bringing in food supplies, serving lunch, and making purchases of emergent needs (for which BUC can cover expenses) and delivering to the center or to Annis Pratt at BUC on Sundays. A favorite BUC activity is to prepare casseroles in your own kitchen from assigned recipes (a great small group or neighborhood project). For further information about Welcome Inn volunteering, you may contact Annis at avpratt@aol.com.

Plate donations can be made via cash or check during worship services or at any time via our [online giving portal](#) (choose “Plate Collection” from the Fund drop-down) or [Venmo](#) (send payment to @BUCMI and note “Plate Collection”).

Minister's Message

Rev. Connie Grant

“Committed to Thrive”

I don't have a crystal ball. But I have faith and hope that you are—and will continue to be—a thriving congregation.

I base my faith and hope in the fact of your love for this place that is not just a place, and for the people and the values and principles that are represented here.

I see you on Sunday mornings and during the week, showing up with and for each other, whether you are in the Sanctuary or on Zoom. I see you stepping up to do what needs to be done, to the best of your abilities. I see you enjoying each other's company and welcoming newcomers—getting to know them and eager to tell them about this place that is not just a place. I see young families with children who occasionally make noise during moments of “silence” and elders who occasionally do the same; I see you helpfully pointing out the Family Room or showing how to silence a phone.

You are a living church! Rev. Steve Crump, Minister Emeritus of the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, wrote:

Living churches have problems; dying churches don't.

Living churches make lots of noise; dying churches are peaceful as tombs.

Living churches look to the future for new ways to serve; dying churches look to the past for old ways to be secure.

Living churches are full of unfamiliar faces; in dying churches everyone has known everyone for years.

Living churches say, “We'll find a way;” dying churches say, “We can't do that.”

Living churches talk about money, life, death, love, birth, anger and the weather; dying churches talk about the weather.

These days, you may be talking about social, economic, and political issues more than ever. In an [op-ed piece](#) in the *Washington Post* by columnist Perry Bacon Jr., the second item on his list of five ways to advance progressive policies is to join a Unitarian Universalist congregation. Bacon writes, “Post-election, I was relieved to be in a space where we openly discussed shared values and ideals we felt had been rejected by America..., such as support of immigrants and LGBTQ+ people.”

This is your church. I have faith and hope that you will participate in ways that are meaningful to you, bringing your gifts and needs to this congregation. I have faith and hope that you as a congregation are committed to thrive.

“Who to Contact” list

Do you have an idea, question, or concern and need to know where to direct it? Check out our [“Who to Contact”](#) list, also linked on our [home page](#) in the “Learn About Us” box in the middle of the page.

Volunteer Opportunities

Check out the buttons at the bottom of our [home page](#) to sign up to be a [Sunday greeter](#), [usher](#), or [Zoom host](#) or bring [Sunday doughnuts](#) or [chancel flowers](#)

Religious Education Musings

Shannon Snideman, Director of Religious Education

As we are entering a season of celebration and light, I wanted to share a bit about some of the different winter holidays and holy days that are observed around the world, and even among some of our UU friends and neighbors. I created a calendar to help you visualize when these observances occur.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
ADVENT BEGINS						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BODHI DAY						
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
LAS POSADAS						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
YULE						
SOLSTICE						
CHRISTMAS						
CHRISTMASTIDE						
HANUKKAH						
KWANZAA						
SOYAL						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

Advent and the Twelve Days of Christmas – December 1 - January 5

In Christian faith traditions, Christmas is one of the major holy days. Celebrated on December 25, it commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. In some Christian traditions, the weeks leading up to and following Christmas are also observed. Advent, celebrated from the beginning of December up to Christmas Eve, recognizes the nativity of Jesus. An Advent wreath symbolizes the values of hope, peace, joy, and love, and a candle is lit on each of the four Sundays leading up to Christmas Eve, one for each value.



The period of twelve days following Christmas Eve is the season known as Christmastide. There are several celebrations leading up to the Twelfth Night, which commemorates the visit of the three magi (Melchior, Caspar, and Balthazar) who present their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, as well as the baptism of Jesus. It's also a tradition for Christmas decorations to be taken down on the Twelfth Night.

As Unitarian Universalism has Christian roots, many UUs also celebrate Christmas and hold services on Christmas Eve as both a celebration of the birth of Jesus and a symbolic observance of peace, love, and renewal. Often candles are lit as a way to honor the hope and light in community. We hope you will join us for our candlelight Christmas Eve service!

I also wanted to share this [Unitarian Universalist Advent Calendar](#) with you. It was originally created by Rev. Ralph Yeager Roberts and includes lots of information about the history of our faith tradition.

Las Posadas – December 16 - 24

Las Posadas commemorates Mary and Joseph's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus in the manger. *Posadas* is a Spanish word that translates to "inns." Las Posadas is celebrated for nine days because Mary was pregnant for nine months. It began as a tradition in Mexico over 400 years ago when Catholic friars wanted to teach the indigenous people of Mesoamerica about Christmas.

Traditionally, the journey of María (Mary) and José (Joseph) is celebrated as a procession, where María and José ask for lodging, but are turned away until they are offered to stay in the manger. Here is a modern representation of Las Posadas by artist Everett Patterson, titled *José y Maria*. Can you find all of the references to the original biblical story?





Bodhi Day – December 8

In Buddhist faith traditions, Bodhi Day commemorates the day that Siddhartha Gautama achieves Enlightenment, or nirvana. After 49 days of deep meditation under the bodhi tree, Gautama Buddha discovers the ways through which we can liberate ourselves from suffering. He resolves to teach others about how they can also find nirvana by understanding the Four

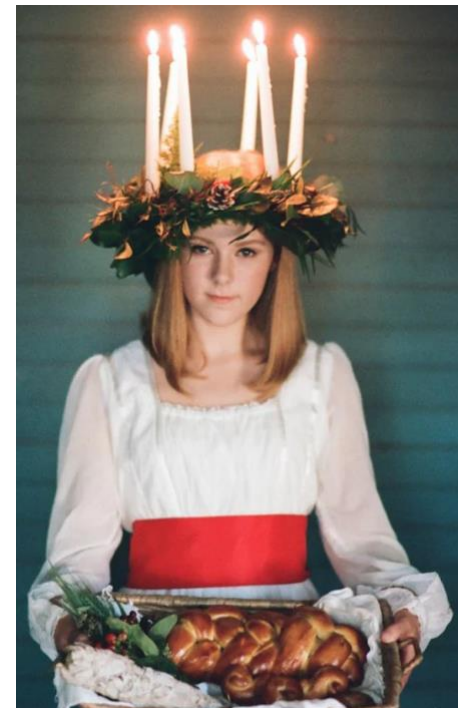
Noble Truths and following the Noble Eightfold Path. Thus is the origin of the Buddhist faith tradition. Bodhi Day is often celebrated by meditating or practicing dharma, often through acts of kindness.

Saint Lucia Day – December 13

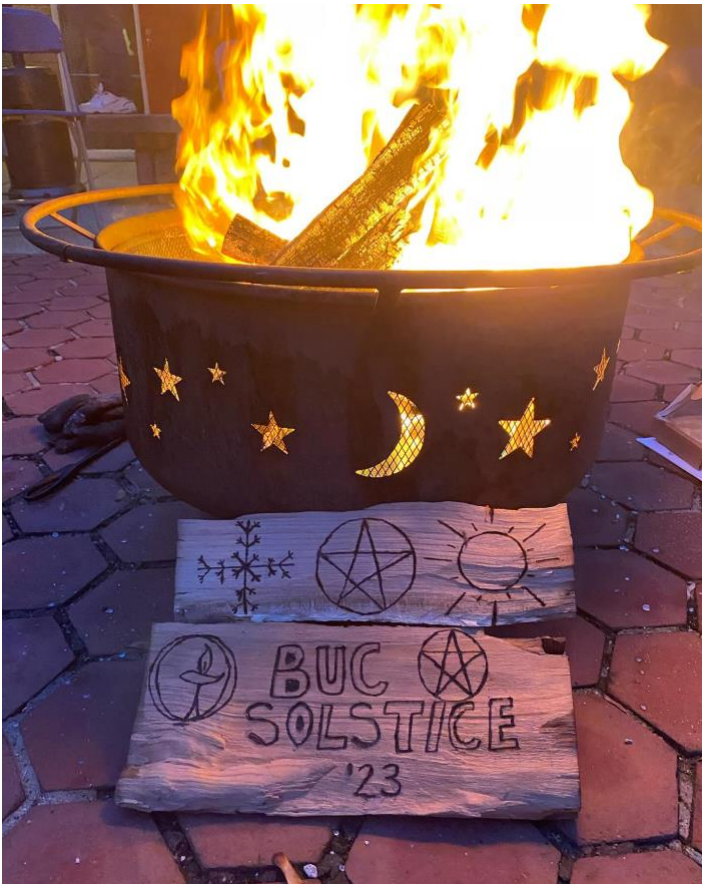
Saint Lucia Day, or the Feast of Saint Lucy, is an important observance in Nordic traditions. It honors the Christian martyr Lucia of Syracuse, the patron saint of vision and light. She is said to have brought food to the Christians hiding in Roman catacombs. She is depicted as having worn a wreath crown of candles to light her way while using her hands to carry supplies. With the solstice being the longest night of the year, Saint Lucia symbolizes the return of the light.

The Feast of Saint Lucia was traditionally a festival of the winter solstice. Years ago, the solstice was celebrated on December 13, according to the Julian calendar.

To commemorate the holiday, young people wear white gowns with a red sash, and a wreath with candles on their heads. They often carry treats called *lussekatter* through town, delivering them to schools, churches, and hospitals.



Yule and the Winter Solstice – December 20 - 23



Yule is a celebration of the Winter Solstice, though they are often synonymous with one another. Scientifically, the Winter Solstice marks the time in Earth's orbit when the northern hemisphere receives the least amount of sunlight because Earth's axis is tilted away from the Sun. The Sun appears to take a shorter path across the sky, staying low to the horizon. From where we are on the Earth, we experience this as the shortest day of the year. Further north in the Arctic circle, the Sun never appears above the horizon. People in this part of the world experience the longest night of the year with more than 24 hours of darkness.

Though historically celebrated by the Germanic peoples to honor the god Odin, Yule continues to be celebrated by pagans and Wiccans today. It marks the rebirth of the Sun, symbolizing hope, renewal, and the promise of returning light. While traditions vary, many pagans and Wiccans incorporate rituals, symbols, and customs drawn from ancient solstice celebrations and adapt them to their spiritual practices. We will be holding our yearly Winter Solstice celebration on December 22, where we will gather around the fire to celebrate the light amid the darkness and the promise of hope for the new year.

Soyal – December 22

Many Indigenous communities, Native American tribes, and First Nations peoples hold celebrations near or after the winter solstice. Soyal is a winter solstice celebration of the Hopi, Zuni, and Pueblo peoples. During the solstice, spirit messengers known as Katsinam, or Kachinas, descend from the mountains to live amongst the people for the first half of the year. In doing so, they bring the Sun with them.

Several ceremonies and rites occur in kivas, which are worship spaces built underground. Prayer sticks called pahos are made from feathers and pinyon needles and used to bless the community. Miniatures of the Katsinam are carved for children to learn and recognize them.



Hanukkah – December 25 - January 2

Considered a minor holiday in Judaism, Hanukkah commemorates the miracle of the oil that lasted eight days and the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem. After



the temple was defiled by the Greeks, the Jews wanted to resanctify it. They started by lighting the menorah, a seven-branched candelabra, from cruses of pure olive oil that had been sealed by the High Priests. However, the cruses (containers) of oil had also been defiled, and only one

remained untouched. There was not enough oil for the menorah to stay lit long enough for them to get more oil. Miraculously, a small quantity of oil that was sufficient only for one day continued to burn for eight days.

The week that Hanukkah is celebrated tends to move around since it is based on the movements of the moon and sun. It always begins on the 25th day of the ninth

month in the Hebrew calendar. Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah by lighting the eight candles of the hanukkah, which is a nine-branched menorah; exchanging gifts; and playing dreidel. However, gift giving and receiving is not meant to be a major focus of the holiday.

Kwanzaa – December 26 - January 1

Kwanzaa is a more recent holiday. Maulana Karenga, Professor and Chair of Black Studies at California State University, was the first to create and observe this holiday in 1966. Derived from ancient African harvest festivals, the holiday aims to bring the African-American community together. Kwanzaa is meant to honor family, community, and culture. It combines multiple historic harvest celebrations from African culture.



Kwanzaa has seven principles and symbols to follow, and some African Americans dress in traditional costumes during the festivities. To some people, Kwanzaa is an alternative to Christmas, but it does not have to be a spiritual holiday. Anyone of any faith can appreciate this cultural celebration.

Music Memos

Swahili. German. Cherokee. Ladino. French. Italian. Spanish. Arabic. Shall I go on? Pop, Baroque, Contemporary, Soul, Romantic, Klezmer, Classical, Funk, Jazz, Musical Theatre. Can you add any more? Woodwinds, djembe, drum kit, strings, organ, piano, lyrical dance, “choralography,” and plenty others. This is music at BUC. This is unity in diversity. And this is just the music in the services!

When we are exposed to new ideas and cultures, we connect to other humans and feel with them. This is YOUR music program, intentionally learned and made by

the BUC Chalice Choir and Sound Messengers house band and our staff Pianist Mira Walker, with accompaniment from various sources. This is artistry and world-community. This is opening our hearts to the sounds and experiences of other people in other times, places, and stories so that we can more deeply know one another. This variety of music is more than that—it is incumbent upon us to have openness so we can grow. BUC Music is the gateway to an open heart. Our choices are purposeful, and our goal singular: to create community.

--Abha Dearing, Co-Director of Music Ministry

As UUs, we know that we draw upon wisdom from religions around the world that inspire us. It is written right at the beginning of our *Singing the Living Tradition* hymnal. So it only makes sense to be sure that my part in programming allows us to deepen the message of any given Sunday by including genres that are not in our immediate realm.

On November 24, BUC's house band, the Sound Messengers—a motley group made up of two volunteers (who happen to be Board members), a professional bassist/sound engineer who plays by ear, and Abha and myself who both have Master of Music degrees and split our hours here as Co-Directors of Music Ministry—provided music for the service. The genres included our traditional hymnody plus jazz, film music, funk, and folk rock. All of the pieces centered on the theme of “gratitude,” but they all were different from one another.

I know well that not everyone “likes” all the music we program. But I also know well that lots of you “love” music at BUC. Isn't that what UUism is? A collective group of unique people who are seeking a better, more loving world with justice and peace at the centre. We see through our differences to come to the same place. Together, in spirit, making the world a better place through our diversity.

Music at BUC exemplifies that.

--Steven Dearing, Co-Director of Music Ministry

Membership Matters

Sara Constantakis, Director of Congregational Life

When we talk about involvement in UU congregations, we often call it the “path to membership.” This metaphor evokes helpful patterns, such as membership as a journey in the same way that life is a journey; but it can also evoke unhelpful patterns, such as there being an endpoint or destination to the membership journey and once you “arrive,” the journey is complete. So it can be illuminating to look at some other ways of thinking about belonging in a congregation. These less-linear models reflect the fact that people interact with faith communities in dozens of different ways beyond the traditional notion of membership, often both deepening and stepping back over the course of their lives. One non-linear model looks at the membership journey as a spiral. In this paradigm, people in religious communities go deeper into faith development and relationship, but might also revisit other stages of involvement with more complexity (with the understanding that not everyone experiences all stages). The stages along the spiral are expanded upon below. Descriptions of this model come from “Tending Congregational Life: Guiding the Membership Journey,” a [UU Institute](#) course I am currently taking.

Curious

It may feel natural to talk about interacting with newcomers in a posture of curiosity, learning about their history and their hopes for the future. But all of us, newcomers and long-timers alike, have stories to tell and hopes to share. How do we create opportunities for curiosity among all our community members, including youth and elders, as well as our visitors?

Invited/Visitor/Welcomed

When we create a culture of hospitality, it doesn't have to be just for visitors. This can look like being mindful about how we make each other feel welcome in all of our programs and ministries, whether a book group, Choir, the Budget and Finance



Committee, or Worship Associates. Making sure invitations are clear and detailed, having micro-rituals of welcome, and getting feedback about how welcomed people actually feel can help make hospitality an integral part of our culture.

Regular/Connected/Friend

How many of us describe an early experience at BUC as “I found my people?” That can be the first step in the feeling of belonging, but it’s not until there is a network of relationships that the feeling of belonging endures. As people come and go, life stages evolve, and relationships wax and wane, it’s also important to make sure there are connection opportunities for everyone in the community.

Engaged/Steward/Integrated

Along with a sense of belonging, congregations offer a connection to something that is greater than ourselves. The faith development dimension of congregational life is what transforms the interconnected community into the Beloved Community, a people of faith creating the world of our deepest longings. People at the outer edges of the spiral may also experience this, but as a person goes deeper in their own faith development, their understanding of Unitarian Universalism becomes more nuanced and complex.

Leader/Elder

For the purposes of this model, a leader is someone who is trusted to provide direction and encouragement for others to live into the mission and vision of the congregation. An elder is someone who has lived an examined life and has wisdom to share—no matter what their age.

I hope this model of the membership journey as a spiral provides a useful lens and some food for thought when considering the complexity and nuance surrounding membership in faith communities, both here at BUC and out in the world.

New Members

Please welcome those signed the membership book and participated in our new member covenanting on Sunday, November 17!

Andrew Lorenz (he/him) and **Edna Lorenz** (she/her)

Andrew and Edna are parents to **Joe** (age 8) and **Sam** (age 4) and have been involved at BUC since the beginning of the calendar year. Edna is a sustainability expert at Wayne State University and is consulting with BUC Building and Grounds on opportunities for government funding and saving energy costs. Joe and Sam are regulars in our REmix and Nursery programs, and Andrew and Edna are involved in our up-and-coming parents & families social group.

Terry Mihlbauer (she/her)

Terry has been attending BUC since July. She was active in a UU congregation in California before moving to Michigan, and her involvement includes membership in a small group.

Jessica Casolari (she/her) and **James Casolari** (he/him)

Jess and James have been attending since September with their 1-year-old **Enzo**, whose smile and happy babbles enliven our Sanctuary on Sundays. Jess and James came to BUC looking for a village in which to raise Enzo and have expressed feeling a particular sense of belonging post-election. They are also involved in our parents & families social group.

Nurturing belonging at BUC involves our staff, minister, and the entire congregation. Thank you to Director of Religious Education Shannon Snideman for leading the RE programming that engages BUC families. Thank you to Co-Directors of Music Ministry Abha and Steven Dearing for leading the music programming that is an integral part of spiritual life at BUC. Thank you to our Membership and greeter teams for the welcome you've helped extend to all of our friends, old and new. And thank you to every BUC congregant who welcomes newcomers to our community by sitting next to them in service, chatting with them

during coffee hour, and inviting them our events. This is how we build beloved community, one relationship at a time.

Board Minutes

Hello from the BUC Board!

It's been wonderful to see so many people in church and on Zoom the past few weeks. Being together deepens our connections and strengthens our beloved community. Supportive community means everything, and we're glad you're all here.

As announced in the December 8 Town Hall, we now have a signed agreement with Birmingham-Bloomfield Montessori! We are grateful to the Facilities Task Force and the Montessori Negotiating Team for their efforts over the past ten months to bring this to fruition. Special thanks to Randy Safford for donating his legal services to write our lease agreement. The Board continues its work on Building a New way to shift our use of space, which is progressing well. For more details, please see the separate Building a New Way article in this newsletter.

The Board has also been working hard on getting to a balanced operating budget. A balanced budget will help us set our goals for Stewardship for the 2025-26 church year. This is the second phase of efforts begun last year to be good financial stewards of BUC's present and future. We will provide more updates here and in town halls as the work progresses.

We look forward to seeing you at the next Town Hall in January. Happy Holidays!

In Faith,

Your Board of Trustees

Building a New Way

Update from the BUC Board of Trustees

We are pleased to announce that as of December 5, we have a signed agreement with Birmingham-Bloomfield Montessori to share our facility for at least the next five years, starting January 1, 2025. This endeavor began in February with work by the Facilities Task Force. After investigating alternatives to finance the backlog of repairs and maintenance, in May we contracted with Signature Associates to help find potential leasing tenants. In July they connected us with Joe and Amanda Pullukat who were seeking a good location to start their second Montessori school. Thank you to Dick Cantley, Keith Ensroth, Jane O'Neil, Dick Rappleye, and board representative Brian Schandavel for their work on the task force.

In July, the BUC Board approved a motion to pursue negotiations on a potential lease with the Montessori school, which would generate revenue to fund our needed facility repair and maintenance work over the next three years. In August, a Montessori Negotiating Team composed of Dick Cantley, Keith Ensroth, and Bette Moen was formed. After our September town hall, Randy Safford offered his legal services pro bono to craft a lease agreement. Thank you to this team for working through the many details of the lease agreement to the satisfaction of both parties! The Lower Level, Blue Door, and Green Door rooms are designated for the Montessori pre-school effective on January 1.

Meanwhile, a project management (PM) team of Kasey Alderete, Mary Jo Ebert, and Kym Worth formed to help BUC prepare for the anticipated implementation of a signed lease. This includes defining roles and requirements for lease management, re-locating or removing materials from rooms to be used by the school, re-assigning our current use of to-be-leased spaces to other areas in the building and the same for current renters, and keeping our congregation informed about this project. Thank you to the PM team and the following contributors:

- BUC staff - Valerie, Sara, Shannon, Abha, and Steven - for participating in the planning
- Aletha Craig for the assessment of space use

- Bette Moen and helpers who are organizing items in storage areas, including Joe Shermetaro and Brian Johnson who moved the refrigerator from the lower level to the Hodas Hall kitchen storage room and arranged pickup of the old refrigerator
- Rummage team for initiating planning for the sale next Spring with alternative uses of space.

The Building and Grounds Committee, composed of Jimmy Vogel, Dick Cantley, Jane O'Neil, Brian Schandavel, and Jordan Schwarz, reviewed and approved architectural drawings of proposed improvements to the facility, which Joe Pullukat then sent to the state as part of the certification process. There is always a risk that the state certification process could slow down our mutual timelines.

THANK YOU to all church members and staff who are engaged in planning and preparation and to Rev. Connie for her involvement and support in many areas of the project. If you have questions, ideas, or concerns about the project, please email the Board at buc.board@bucmi.org.

BUC Nominating Committee

Building congregational leadership

The Nominating Committee at BUC is a group of ten people who identify and promote leadership on the church's Board of Trustees, Stewardship Committee, and Nominating Committee in the following year. We accomplish this by being part of church life, observing the talents and commitment of fellow members, and identifying a slate of candidates for congregational ratification at the spring Annual Meeting. A slate of nine candidates is offered for the Nominating Committee itself, with the congregation electing five of them for the following year. Members of the Nominating Committee serve staggered terms of two years, so there is always a base of five people to welcome the new members to the committee.

The committee meets monthly throughout the fall, then twice monthly starting in January. We review all members of BUC's community for potential leaders, and then in the spring, begin to actively recruit. This timeline ensures that BUC's voting membership has ample time to reflect on candidates before voting on their approval or, in the case of the Nominating Committee, selecting whom they will vote for.

If you are member of BUC and are interested in a leadership position, let us know by filling out [this application](#). The Nominating Committee will consider all applications and select the nominees from among the applications submitted as well as the eligible membership.

See the [Elected Leaders page](#) on the BUC website for a short description of the positions involved, or ask a member of the Nominating Committee (Janet Brown, Tom Cranston, Walter Dean, Bill Fox, Heidi Kapsokavathis, Marilyn Kelly, Marilyn Mast, Paula Olson, Julia Pulver, Harper West) for more details.

Please complete the application and press submit at the bottom of the form no later than FEBRUARY 21, 2025. You will receive a reply by MARCH 31, 2025.

Program Events & Info

A rectangular graphic with a white background and a thin black border. It features several red and white striped candy canes arranged vertically on both the left and right sides. In the center, the text is as follows:

Candy Cane Sunday
December 15
Hodas Hall
Holiday cookies & crafts
for children, youth, & adults

On December 15, we will celebrate Candy Cane Sunday. This is a tradition at BUC that has taken many forms, though a common theme is the opportunity to create different holiday crafts. Children and youth will bake and decorate sugar cookies during the service, and then everyone (adults included!) is invited to visit the different craft tables during coffee hour. The craft tables will be led by Rev. Connie, who is excited to share with us how to make bead people, and members of Living By Heart will be leading us in creating other holiday crafts.

UU Values Open Forum

brought to you by the Humanists of BUC

Immigrant rights are now more important than ever. At our next UU Values Open Forum on **Sunday, December 15 at 7:00 pm** on Zoom, Diana Gonzalez (they/elle), a paralegal and DOJ Accredited Representative at the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center, will speak on “Protecting the Rights of Unaccompanied Immigrant Children.” Each year hundreds of children are brought to Michigan in federal custody. What happens to these children? What legal rights do they have? What resources are available to help them? Diana will discuss these questions and others related to the support of undocumented immigrants.



Do you have an experience, passion, or connection related to UU values that you would like to share at a future Open Forum? Click [here](#) or contact Larry Freedman at lawrenceman@sbcglobal.net.

MAMA's Coffeehouse

a monthly acoustic music concert series

Income from MAMA's
Coffeehouse (after operating
expenses) benefits BUC

Saturday, December 21

Finvarra's Wren

Winter Solstice Concert

doors open at 7:00 pm

concert begins at 7:30 pm

Admission: \$17 (\$15 student/senior)

Cash or check at door only

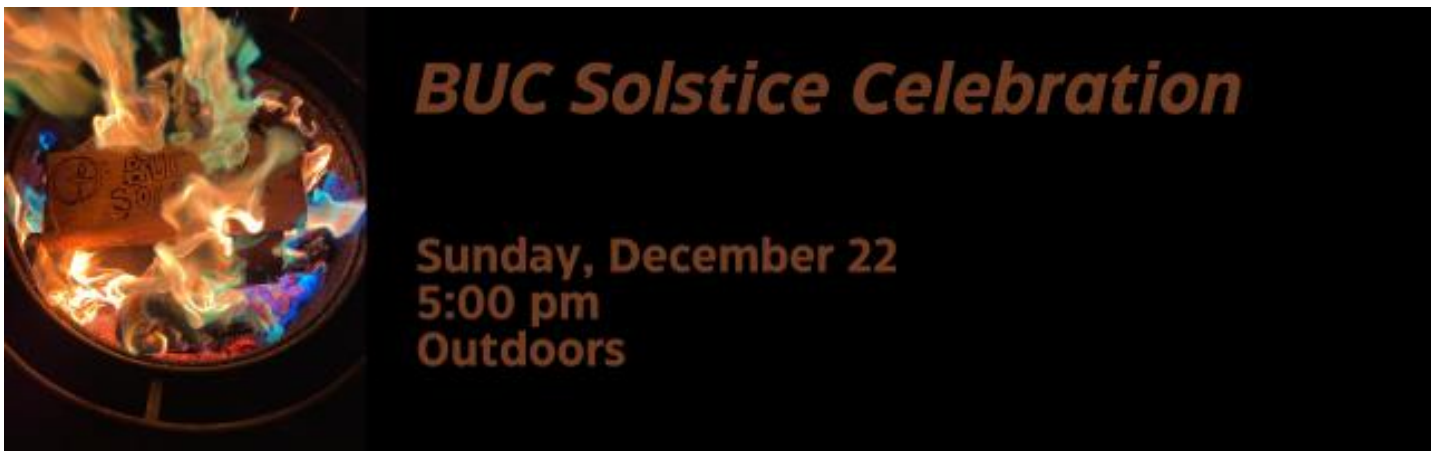


Finvarra's Wren brings their solstice celebration back to MAMA's Coffeehouse. One of North America's most exciting Irish quartets, this Detroit-based band has an intense dedication to their instruments and to Irish music. Traditional and

contemporary Irish, Scottish, and Celtic-American folk songs are punctuated with wonderfully inventive arrangements of jigs, reels, and hornpipes.

The band is led by Jim Perkins and Cheryl Burns, well known for their sensitive vocals and the inventive musical weaving of Jim's guitar and Cheryl's mountain dulcimer and bodhran. Their son Asher Perkins (button accordion and concertina) and daughter Alison Perkins (vocals, fiddle, and tin whistle), are world renowned for their award-winning playing.

“Finvarra’s Wren unequivocally ranks in the topmost echelon of American bands performing Irish traditional music today. With expert musicianship from every quarter, the band’s imaginative interpretations of tunes and songs are wholly true to the Irish tradition.” –Don Penzien, Director, CelticFest Mississippi



Join us on Sunday, December 22 at 5:00 pm as we celebrate the Winter Solstice at BUC! The Pulver Family will be hosting the event again this year, which will include a hearty feast (prepared by Chef Ben), warm drinks and plenty of singing, dancing, and even some rituals around a roaring fire to help encourage the Sun to return to us again. Dress warmly as this event is held outside regardless of the weather.

BUC Alliance

Click [here](#) to read Carol Lee's history of Alliance talk given at this year's holiday luncheon. Remaining Alliance programs are Tuesday, March 11 (12:00 noon), Tuesday, April 8 (7:00 pm), and Tuesday, May 13 (a day trip to be decided).

Hosting a Guest at Your “Table”

The idea behind the Guest at Your Table program of the [Unitarian Universalist Service Committee](#) is to place an amount of money in the collection box that we might spend to host a guest in our homes. We’ll bring our donations together to help the UUSC and partner organizations respond to extraordinary human rights challenges of today, address root causes of injustice, and build capacity to respond to future crises.

The theme of this year’s program is “Expanding the Welcome Table.” What does it mean to ensure that everyone is welcome at the table? It’s more than having an extra place setting. It’s ensuring that the guest can arrive at the table safely and be treated with respect.

For 50 years, through the Guest at Your Table program, the UUSC has used the metaphor of a global table where we come together to learn each other’s stories and share our hopes for a future in which all may thrive. Their partner-led model of justice work centers the hope, defiance, and imagination of the communities they engage with. The relationships of trust upon which they base their work extend to each person who would take their place at the table and engage in the accountability, justice, and healing needed today.

On January 5, our worship service will focus on the stories of the grassroots organizations who are partners of the UUSC in the collaborative work for human rights. Please return your donations for Guest at Table on January 5.

The Art of Dining: Food Culture in the Islamic World

Sunday, January 5 at the Detroit Institute of Arts

An excursion with BUC UUs for Justice in the Middle East

Join BUC UUSC on Sunday, January 5 for an excursion to the DIA to see their exhibit “The Art of Dining: Food Culture in the Islamic World,” which brings together more than 200 works from the Middle East, Egypt, Central and South Asia, and beyond to explore connections between art and cuisine from ancient times to the present day. Paintings of elaborate feasts, sumptuous vessels for food and drink,

and historical cookbooks show how culinary cultures have thrived in the Islamic world for centuries. Highlighting the relationship of these works to preparing, serving, and enjoying food, the exhibition engages multiple senses and invites us to appreciate the pleasures of sharing a meal.

We will meet in the BUC lobby at 12:00 noon on Sunday, January 5 and carpool to the DIA and have lunch there before the tour. There is no charge, except for your lunch.

Please let Izzy Khapoya (248-933-4293) or Sarah Redmond (906-361-0003) know if you plan to join the carpool so that we can make sure we have enough drivers.