



The Bridge

*10:00 a.m. each Sunday: Intergenerational Devotional

*10:10 a.m. Religious Education for all ages

* **Adults, Primary, Teens:** All classes will be looking at Christmas customs and activities. Why do we celebrate as we do???

December 3: "Have a Very Bumpy Christmas" – Lay Service led by Lisa Stolar – Sharing stories of Christmas and ways we share/receive "bumps" of goodness. Please "bring" your stories to share.

December 10 "Nothing is Impossible - # More Peace, # More Hope" - Reverend Claudia M. Frost – The longings of the heart for *Peace on Earth* frame the story of Jesus' birth creating an image of hope. With so much suffering and heartache, death and hate, illness and betrayal in the world, we can become overwhelmed, but hope survives. Join us to explore the Advent themes of Peace and Hope with the spiritual message that is possible to bring light and hope in a world of darkness, oppression and despair.

Love Feast – "Angels Among Us - # More Love" – Reverend Claudia M. Frost – Let's prepare ourselves for this busy, happy, crazy, beautiful and sometimes lonely but highly anticipated celebration of the year.

December 17: "Singing Our Favorite Christmas Songs" – Lay service led by Ann Malpass – Do you have a favorite Christmas song? Have you had a chance to sing it this year? Let Ann know NOW so she can locate the lyrics for you and the music for Jimmy in this service.

December 24: "Joy to the World" – Reverend Claudia M. Frost – Our Advent theme of *Angels Among Us – Be Not Afraid* reminds us that Angels hold an important role in the Christmas story as messengers of joy. Christmas calls us to joy. It summons us to stop our busyness, be in the moment and open up our capacity for connection with what matters. Christmas is a time to allow the joy of our faith to rise up and be contagious. Christmas Joy is around us and within us.

December 31: "Bucket List Versus Being List" – Lay service led by Ann Malpass from **Listening Hearts**.

Dates to Remember

Advent Theme: "Angels Among Us – Be Not Afraid"

December 3: Decorate the Christmas tree following services.

December 7: AUW Christmas Party with Linda Jones (2:00 p.m.) Book Exchange! Please bring a wrapped book (new or read) to share.

December 10: Love Feast Supper begins at 5:30 p.m. followed by Candlelight Service at 6:30 p.m.

December 21: Christmas Concert with Michael Mozingo and Jimmy Merritt: Covered-dish supper at 6:30 p.m. followed by concert at 7:30 p.m.

December 24: Christmas Eve Party following church services.



Claudia's Comments

As the December/January holidays approach, traditional Advent themes of Peace, Hope, Joy and Love come to mind. Yet in this culture of fear in today's world of uncertainty...we need to be reminded not to be afraid. This year our worship services will be based on a central idea..."Angels Among Us - #Do Not Be Afraid".

As Dr. Marcia McFee writes, *"The angels that appear in the story of Jesus' birth would have been very comfortable in our world of tweets and hashtags. Their messages were short and to the point, their favorite line being...Do Not Be Afraid."*

Through the ages in Biblical and secular literature, music and songs, all kinds of meanings have been attributed to a class of "beings" existing between God and humanity known as Angels. Classically, they are known as "messengers". Through our December worship services, we will focus on how we can be those messengers out in the world. I believe it's possible to play a part in defeating fear, unkindness and hatred in the world with # More Hope, # More Peace, # More Love, and # More Joy.

The holidays can bring up issues of perfectionism, unrealistic expectations, stress, sorrow and old or existing family conflicts. Every day we are bombarded with emails, sensational head-lines, sound bites and other information that tears down people or spreads fear of potential disasters lurking in 21st century life. In the days ahead, let us pause to consider whose path might you cross today who could use a message of hope. How can I create a presence of peace within myself, within my home, my family or community? Consider how you might share love with the people in your life and choose joy on a regular basis during the busy days ahead.

As Unitarian Universalists, we are called to be messengers of Good News. Be aware this month for occasions that remind you of hope. If you are active on social media, I invite you to take a picture and post it with the # More Hope. Maybe a moment of peace will come to you; take a photo to illustrate and post # More Peace. Moments of love or joy will appear if you are looking for them. Write a short description or snap a picture and share by email, Twitter, Facebook, etc. # More Love, # More Joy.

Like a ripple in a pond, intentional awareness... being a messenger of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy this holiday season will incorporate less fear and more goodness into our own lives and therefore in the lives of all those we come into contact with. I invite you to join me not only for our December worship services and Love Feast on December 10th, but also as a *Christmas Messenger* of hope, peace, love and joy.



With Love, Hope and Joy,
Reverend Claudia