

The Bridge

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

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

*Primary: "Meet Jesus: The Life and Lessons of a Beloved Teacher": Lynn Tuttle Gunney

*Teens: "UU Kids": Brotman & Marshman

*Adults: "A Faith People Make": Stephen Kendrick

December 8: "DIY Christmas: Joyous Love" – Rev. Claudia M. Frost – The second Sunday of Advent (Love) is a perfect time to talk about *Joyous Love*. Why is the hope and peace touted to be a part of this holiday often just a little out of reach? Where is the love and joy that helps us capture the magic of Christmas? Let's prepare ourselves for this busy, happy, crazy, beautiful and sometimes lonely but highly anticipated celebration of the year from a DIY perspective.

December 8: "Love Feast: Joy to the World" – Rev. Claudia M. Frost – Please join us for a celebration of the 300th birthday of the hymn, *Joy to the World*. This time of the year brings desire and yearning for a reconnection with the incredible memories and feelings of wonder and awe we experienced as children.

December 15: "God Never Condemned Us" – Rev. Brian Clougherty – The title comes from a line in a Swedish movie, "As it is in Heaven", released in 2004. The wife of an uptight, stern minister tells him, "There is no sin! ... I have thought. The church invented sin. Handing out guilt with one hand then offering redemption with the other. It's all a lie, hot air to suppress people, to gain power." Let's look at this startling claim in light of the Universalist belief that there is no eternal Hell since God is love.

December 22: "Repeat the Sounding Joy" – Rev. Claudia M. Frost – On this last Sunday before Christmas, we will light the Advent Candle of Joy. We will continue our celebration of the 300th Birthday of the beloved Christmas hymn, *Joy to the World* as we reflect on the *Voices of Christmas*.

December 29: "Finding Commonality" – Jimmy Merritt – What do the pole barn spike and the tiny machine screw have in common? More than you would think! These two connectors offer a chance to explore our own common bonds amongst a diverse human community.



Dates to Remember

December 5: 2:00 p.m.: Christmas A UW meeting and annual book exchange at the home of Linda Jones. Wear your favorite Christmas shirt/sweater, bring a plate of Christmas goodies to share, and a book to exchange.

December 8: Love Feast and Candle Lighting Service – 5:30 p.m.: Covered-dish supper; **6:30 p.m.:** Candle Lighting service.

December 22: Following church service: Christmas Party with a visit from Santa!



“Christmas as a Time to Awaken”
Reverend Doctor Vernon Chandler

Two men were standing at Fifth Avenue and 57th in New York City; it was the beginning of the Christmas shopping season and one of the men was irritated by having to wait for the heavy traffic to clear so they could cross the street. “This town is totally disorganized; look at this traffic. Something ought to be done about it.”

The other man was more philosophical. He said, “You know, it’s just amazing. Think about it. There was a baby born of peasant parents in a little out of the way place – halfway around the world. The parents had no money, no social standing. Yet 2,000 years later, that little baby creates a traffic jam on Fifth Avenue. Amazing! That irritates you; it should fascinate you.”

It is easy to become so caught-up in the events of the Christmas season that we miss the amazement, the fascination, and the magic of this holiday. For some folks the Christmas season is one of darkness, i.e., stress, hurry, domestic violence, overindulgence, greed, envy and loneliness. One purpose of the Advent season is to prepare to awake. It is a time to awake spiritually to the miracle of life, the joy of giving, and the power of love. May our own Christmas awakenings bring light to our individual and collective journeys during this season and throughout the new year.

Vernon

