

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF OWENSBORO

## 11th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Coffeehouse

### And the Light Shines In the Darkness



Saturday, 18 January @ UUCO

Doors open @ 7 pm

Entertainment begins @ 7:15 pm



ADMISSION: \$3 includes popcorn

CONCESSIONS of Coffee, Tea,  
Cookies, and Goodies  
will be sold for the benefit of the  
**HL Neblett Community Center**

To offer talent: Contact Charlot @  
[woodfingers@aol.com](mailto:woodfingers@aol.com)

To volunteer: Contact Linda @  
[lilyangelrose@aol.com](mailto:lilyangelrose@aol.com)

Be Sure to Pick Up a  
Calendar on a Bulletin Or  
Check the Website  
For a Full January Schedule

## Congregational Forum



**Sunday, 26 January, 9:30 am- 12 n  
Lunch to follow**

Put on your thinking caps! The Board requests your thoughtful input at a Congregational Forum. The Board will provide information on the changes in the style of their work, the Ends they have written, and their vision for our next five years. (Spoiler alert: Look for a very fun skit to explain their new life in Policy Governance!) They will ask you for input on filling out our five year plan by considering our programming, our needs, and our commitments.



The forum will include time for reflection, personal storytelling, discernment, and deep dialog. Conversation will focus especially on Leadership, Programming, and Facilities. Please do whatever it will take for you to be there—we need the

voices of all of our members. Lunch will be provided when we finish our meeting.



### Upcoming Community Events...

22 January (Wed)– First meeting of a new Fairness Coalition in Owensboro:  
Here at UUCO @ 6 pm

24 January (Fri)– First meeting of a bimonthly Drum Circle led by Tracy King:  
In the sanctuary at 6:30 pm

2 February (Sun)– Interfaith Dedication of the Owensboro Convention Center:  
Downtown @ 1 pm

15 February (Sat)– Retreat Day @ UUCO Based on A BRIDGE CALLED RESPECT:  
Women and Men Joining as Allies. Facilitated by Marilyn Duncan.  
9 am-2:30 pm. \$10 registration includes lunch and materials.





## Interfaith Moment: Shinto New Year

From [www.ulc.org](http://www.ulc.org)

Shintoism is a Japanese religion that is founded in the belief in the divinity of nature. There are no scriptural texts or deity in Shinto cosmology. Instead, it focuses on a deep, underlying awareness and reverence for the divine energy that suffuses all of life.

Shinto adherents honor pure natural spirits known as "Kami" that reside in all living things, particularly spirits found in trees, special rocks, waterfalls, rivers and other places of great natural beauty. Shinto honors the connection between the beauty of the land and the people of Japan.

The Shinto celebration of Gantan-sai marks the beginning of the new year. Purification rituals are a vital component of Shintoism. Gantan-sai is no exception. It is one of the most important yearly celebrations in Shinto. During this festival, most Shinto celebrate the holiday by visiting sacred Shinto temples at midnight. During their visit to the temple, they dress in their finest clothes and request that their hearts be purified and renewed. They also request blessings for health and prosperity during the coming year. Traditionally, Japanese Shintos celebrate Gantan-sai for seven days, during which time they visit their family and friends in order to offer their blessings and good wishes to their loved ones.

**This Little Light Grant  
Applications will be accepted 20  
Jan-15 Feb.  
Drawing for the Committee is on  
Sunday, 5 January.**

## Pastoral Study Grant & Sabbatical

As announced last month, UUCO has received a Pastoral Study Grant from the Louisville Institute. Claudia will be using sabbatical time to execute the grant. Per UUCO's Letter of Ministry with our minister, sabbatical time is accrued at the "rate" of 1 month for every year of full-time service and is capped at 6 months. So every 7th year, the minister is allowed 6 months off. Sabbatical time is intended for rest and enrichment and frees a minister from any regular duties in the parish. A project is not required, but in our case, the Pastoral Study Grant Program offered us the opportunity to fund some research and extend our Spiritual Mentoring program in conjunction with sabbatical time.

Last year our circumstances prohibited the use of all the accrued months. So the Board approved the use of two months and the reserve of the other four months. By next summer, two more months will be accrued. However, our circumstances still make it unfeasible to take all six months off in a block. Therefore the Minister and Board negotiated and submitted a project proposal that will divide the sabbatical time into three phases:

- ✦ 8-13 June 2014 - Research (Workshop in Hartford)
- ✦ 1 July-11 October 2014- Research & writing
- ✦ 19 January -27 March 2015- Editing & writing Institute program

The Spiritual Mentoring Institute will be offered in July 2015 to cap the project.

The Committee on Ministry is already working on a plan for covering ministerial duties during these periods. This will undoubtedly mean that members will be asked to fill in for some activities, cover a few Sundays, welcome guest presenters, and keep the Committee on Ministry and Board informed of any special needs or circumstances.

## Drops of God

Rev. Dr. Tess Baumberger

God, God is water sleeping  
in high-piled clouds.  
She is gentle drink of rain,  
pooling lake, rounding pond,  
angry flooding river.  
She is frothy horse-maned geyser.  
She is glacier on mountains and polar ice cap,  
and breath-taking crystalline ideas of snowflakes.  
She is frost-dance on trees.  
And we, we are drops of God,  
her tears of joy or sorrow,  
ice crystals  
and raindrops  
in the ocean of her.

