

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF OWENSBORO



Tom Hicks, President /Rev. Dr. Claudia A. Ramisch, Minister

DECEMBER  
2015  
NEWSLETTER

**SET-UP CHRISTMAS TREES:**  
THURSDAY, 3 DEC @ 4:30 PM

**TREE DECORATING SERVICE:**  
SUNDAY, 6 DEC @ 10:30 AM

**SOUP AND STUFF CELEBRATION:**  
SUNDAY, 20 DEC @ 12 NOON

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE:**  
THURSDAY, 24 DEC @ 7:00 PM



**WELCOME TO OUR  
SEASONAL CELEBRATIONS**

## Grinchiness or Gratitude?

The holiday season is in full swing in the stores and on all forms of media. Even as we recognize the hype is unreasonable and unnecessary, we find ourselves crunched by the pressure and conflicting emotions.

What keeps you balanced, whole and centered? What keeps your focus on gratitude and grace? What keeps you from becoming a grinch? Whatever came to mind in answering those questions is what you need to survive the next few weeks--and maybe even thrive! Be good to yourself and your neighbors by doing things that are healthy and nourishing.

It's seems corny to "ramp up" spiritual practices when all they world is partying, but simple things can really save your

sanity and calm you:

- Add 2 minutes of deep, relaxed breathing before each meal.
- Use a daily meditation book to carve out quiet at the beginning or end of your day ( or both!)
- Add some chair yoga to your day. Do it at your desk--or at stoplights!
- Make a gratitude list and add to it each day. Ask others what they would add and ponder their answers.
- Stay in touch with friends who know your heart. Don't leave this to chance but schedule it in--and do it no matter what else is going on.
- Listen to music that soothes your spirit--and at least once a week, sing along at the top of your lungs!
- Come to church and light a candle.
- As always, call a professional if you are depressed or in need of more support. Don't think you have to tough it out.

## Annual Charity Collections: Hats & Gloves & Socks

Beginning 29 Nov we will be collecting hats, gloves, and socks for neighbors in need. All sizes kinds and colors are needed.

Any women's and children's goods will supplement Salvation Army Angel Tree Gifts. Our gifts fill in some of the "holes" in gift bags because most folks prefer to get the bigger, flashier gifts and overlook the everyday needs. These are due **13 DEC.**

Men's sizes will go to St. Benedict Joseph Shelter. Obviously, the guys need sturdy keep-your-feet-warm-and-dry socks and work gloves. However they also need dress socks for job interviews. These are due **20 DEC.**

Every item matters! Thank you for your generosity!



DECEMBER ACTIVITIES	
WED 02	Home office 9 am-12 n Board Meeting 6:30 pm
THU 03	Tree Set-Up 4:30 pm Tai Chi/Qi Gong 6 pm Meditation 6:30 pm
SUN 06	Tree Decorating 10:30 am
MON 07	Book Discusssion 6:30 pm
TUE 08	Home office 9 am-12 n Interfaith Study 6:30 pm
THU 10	Tai Chi/Qi Gong 6 pm Meditation 6:30 pm
FRI 11	Drum Circle 6:30 pm
SAT 12	BIZbaz (Bizarre Bazaar) 10 am-2 pm
SUN 13	SALVATION ARMY GIFTS DUE
THU 17	Tai Chi/Qi Gong 6 pm Meditation 6:30 pm
THU 17	RSVP DUE for Soup & Stuff
SUN 20	Soup & Stuff 12 n
SUN 20	ST. JOSEPH BENEDICT GIFTS DUE

**CHRISTMAS EVE  
CHALICE LIGHTING**

**We welcome the coming  
Of the days we have waited for;  
We have realized hope,  
Yet know that hope  
Can never be realized.  
We commit ourselves  
to patience;  
To working to dispel darkness;  
To working for peace;  
We commit ourselves  
To love and to hope.  
We light this flame  
As an end,  
As a beginning,  
As the symbol of  
The eternal now.**

**By Rev. Dr. Bill Breeden**

## Interfaith Moment: Mawlid al-Nabi Excerpted from Omid Safi @ OnBeing.org

Muslims are no strangers to arguments, and have their own debates. I am speaking about the one over whether Muslims should honor the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. Historically speaking, many Muslims have honored the birth of Muhammad in a ritual called the Mawlid. These popular practices are festive occasions, often with decorations all over cities, featuring tents in which sweets and candy are handed out.

Connected to these festivities is a whole tradition of devotional songs that portray Muhammad not simply as the deliverer of the last divine dispensation (the Qur'an) but as a being of cosmic significance, an opening of a channel of divine mercy onto this world, and a means of intercession for us sinners.

Perhaps the most famous of devotional Mawlid poems is a Turkish version that dates back to about 700 years ago. Written by Suleyman Chelebi, this Mawlid poem offers a somewhat rare point of view in Abrahamic traditions: a chance to see a central religious narrative from the point of view of a female character — in this case Muhammad's mother, Amina. The narrative is something of a "super best friends" episode of great luminous women of religious history: Muhammad's mother, Asiya (who raised Moses), and Lady Mary, the mother of Jesus. [Excerpts can be found in Safi's article @ <http://bit.ly/1xCtMLD> ]

As has been characteristic of the Muslim tradition, the paramount quality of Muhammad emphasized is that of rahmatun li 'l-alamin ("a mercy to all the worlds"), a direct reference to Qur'an 21:107. This Muhammad is much more than simply a child; he is the cure for pain, one who is not separated from God, and a saintly being ("friend of God"), whom all will call upon to deliver them from sin in the days of the Hereafter.

Here is where the Mawlid goes from being a nativity poem to an everyday occasion of connecting to God. Muslims can celebrate Muhammad's birthday anytime. So if the Mawlid is a chance to honor Muhammad, why would some Muslims object to such a celebration?

For some Muslims, the objection is mainly an objection to the presentation of

the cosmic Muhammad, which they feel glorifies Muhammad beyond his mere human dimension. Other Muslims object based on a notion of objecting to religious practices that have no sanction in Muhammad's own practice.

The Mawlid gives us a useful chance to see the range of interpretations and practices marked as Muslim. As paradoxical as it sounds, it's all about the love, even the disagreement. For the Muslims who honor Muhammad's Mawlid, it's the deep love for Muhammad that brings them closer to God. For those who identify as Salafi, and wish to abide only by practices that they believe originate in the Qur'an and the example of Muhammad, it is a way of honoring the desire to practice Islam as Muhammad would have wanted us to do, without what is deemed to be later accretions and potentially dubious practices. As the Prophet himself is to have said, disagreement among the scholars is a mercy.

**Mawlid al-Nabi falls on 24 Dec.**

**THANK UU:  
Much help with Faith Fest!**

**Interfaith Thanksgiving Team**

Claud  
DuWayne  
Elaine  
Gracie  
Jody  
Linda  
Maude  
Peggy  
Rachel  
Richard  
Tom  
Tracy

**FaithFest.org &  
Cleaning out the  
Chalice Center gutters**

Tom

**A Season of Yard Care**

Scott