

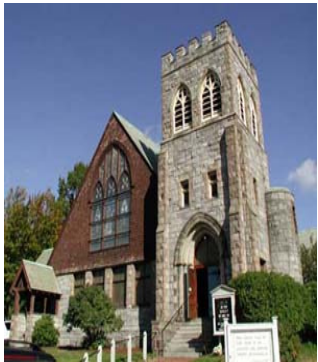
UU Medford Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford

# Highlights

www.uumedford.org

(781) 396-4549

December 2008



147 High Street

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**Moxie** *The ability to face difficulty with spirit and courage.*

A letter from an 1834 edition of The Christian Register, A Boston Unitarian magazine.

*"All the children are expecting presents, and all the aunts and cousins to say nothing of near relatives, are considering what they shall bestow upon earnest expectants. I observe that the shops are preparing themselves with all sorts of things to suit all sorts of tastes; and with cunning skill with which the most worthless as well as most valuable articles are set forth to tempt and decoy the bewildered purchaser." The same letter warned shoppers to "put themselves on guard, to be resolved to select from tempting mass only what is useful and what may do good; and to avoid empty trifles, which amuse or gratify for the day only."*

One of the many interesting things about the 1834 letter is the fact that Christmas was not made a legal holiday in Massachusetts until 1855, showing that at least eleven years before the holiday was legitimated by the state, people in our faith struggled with its consumerist nature. The history of this winter holiday is like a snowball rolling down a hill, it has picked up everything in its path from the winter solstice, to the Roman Saturnalia, to the birth of the Zoroastrian god Mazda, to St. Nicholas, to the birth of Jesus, and a celebration of gift giving. What all this means is that there is no one message of Christmas to get back to, Christmas can and does mean many things to each of us, but that meaning should be based on what we want it to be, not on what corporations say it should.

Last year we began the *It's Not Your Birthday* project, as a way for us to curb the consumerist nature of this holiday, and to contribute as a religious body to a social justice program. Last year we raised thirty-six hundred dollars, gave to two charities and discovered that in doing so we increased the meaning of Christmas for all of us.

Once again it will be our young people who will decide which charity receives our gifts. Unlike last year, half of the funds are going to be dedicated to sponsoring our members to travel to the Gulf Coast and work with the 1<sup>st</sup> Unitarian church of New Orleans to help rebuild. Another difference from last year is that the other projects are all focused on aiding the immigrant community in our area. As we did last year a letter will be going out early this month which will hopefully address any question you may have about the project. The list of projects to choose from are listed elsewhere in the newsletter.



I wish you the blessings of the holidays.

- Rev. Hank

## Worship Services for December

### **DEC 7: God Bless you Mr. Milk - Rev. Hank Peirce**

Sean Penn's new film, *Milk*, tells the story of Harvey Milk the first openly gay politician who was slain in the SF city hall in 1978. It is a poignant reminder of the both the distance that the GLBT community, and our society, has come and the hazards that confront those who struggle for human rights.

### **DEC 14: Revolutionary Spirit - Rev. Hank Peirce**

Next month's inauguration of Sen. Obama has caused many to look to past presidential administrations for clues as to what direction our nation may be heading. With this in mind today's sermon will focus on the enlightened faith of the founders of our nation.

### **DEC 21: Holiday Pageant Intergenerational Service**

Our service this morning will be an enjoyable trip into the traditions of these winter holidays we'll be singing Christmas Carols and have our pageant. We will all get involved in this fun joyous service and season! Today we will also collect our *It's Not Your Birthday* envelopes.\*

### **DEC 24: Christmas Eve Service 6:00 - Rev. Hank Peirce**

Tonight we will be having our traditional family candle light service at 6:00, with the choir, readings and Christmas Carol singing. There are a few surprises planned for tonight. So join us for this wonderful expression of love and hope.

### **DEC 28: Hidden Treasures - Rev. Hank Peirce**

\*Below are organizations to consider as recipients for the 2008 "It's Not Your Birthday" gifts.

**Refugee Immigration Ministry** [www.r-i-m.net](http://www.r-i-m.net) 142 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148

Begun in 1986 RIM has had many incarnations and yet its values as an interfaith/ ecumenical organization that offers support and ongoing training so the experience is enriching and skill building for all participants. This year they have a program to purchase winter clothing for children whose families are unable to do so.

**Centro Presente**, [www.cpresente.org](http://www.cpresente.org) 17 Inner Belt Road, Somerville, MA, 02143

Centro Presente is a member-driven, state-wide Latin American immigrant organization dedicated to the self-determination and self-sufficiency of this community of the state. They have a large number of programs for adults and youth, but the one that we would be giving towards is the Peer Leadership Program. This project aims to not only train young people on issues that affect their community, but also demonstrate that Latino youth can be leaders and agents of change in Somerville.

**Massachusetts Immigration Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)** [www.miracoalition.org](http://www.miracoalition.org) 105 Chauncy Street, #901 Boston, MA 02111

MIRA is the only statewide organization that unites community organizations, human service providers, civic and religious leaders, state and local agencies, and legal and labor groups to work together to uphold the rights and opportunities of newcomers. They also work to connect local activists with national policy debates that impact immigrants' lives.

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## **TUESDAY NIGHT EVENTS**

DEC 2: Raw Food and Raw Poetry. Led by Samantha Scolamiero.

DEC 9: Rise Up Singing. Led by Paul Estin. A fun sing-a-long using the famous Pete Seeger songbook. (Google "Rise Up Singing").

DEC 16: Christmas Meditation. Led by Steve Schmidt. Guided meditation with discussion.

DEC 23: Christmas Carols Sing-a-long. Led by Hank Driscoll on piano. Followed by eggnog & socializing.

DEC 30: Medford UU Tuesday Celebrations 2008 Recap and 2009 Planning Meeting.

*Benker Hall: Doors open at 6:30pm. Talks start at 7:00pm, followed by discussion, coffee, tea and socializing. Please call Hank Driscoll (781-439-1529) if you have any questions about or suggestions for future events.*

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### Thank You

Thank you to the following people who were worship service volunteers during October and November.

**Greeters:** Lois Phinney, Matt Haberstroh, Mark Koenig, Troy Liston, Liz Ammons, Eileen Dunne, Karen Johnston, Gretel Munroe, Lois Phinney and Annette Bloom

**Bell ringers:** Willa Driscoll, Lorn Jaeger, David Concepcion and Sophia Mahoney, Brian Leonard

**Social Hour hosts:** Miles Fidelman and Mark Castle, Julia Hendrix, Mary Finn, Bea Grayson, Loren Gomez, Carol Schachet, Nancy Kurtz, Paul Estin and Heather Munn

**Flower contributors:** : Miles Fidelman, the St. Clair family.

Thank you Mary Stevenson for her wonderful weekly flower arrangements

Thank you to Russell Tripp for his ongoing help with making the coffee for Social Hour.

Newsletter Volunteer Acknowledgement: Thank you Brad Chapman for his ongoing contribution as editor in chief of this newsletter.

*Worship volunteers will be acknowledged monthly in this newsletter. Please let us know if we missed anyone.*

### Building and Grounds Committee Report

#### **Building:**

- Another light has been installed in the church kitchen. (Thank you Matt Haberstroh for donating and installing it.)
- Half of the floor in the front of the church sanctuary has been sanded. (Thank you Matt Haberstroh: Hubbard and Sons for generously donating the screeder machine for this purpose.)
- The Osgood House lock and key set was reconfigured (Thank You Geoff Ward.)

#### **Grounds:**

Thank you to the following volunteers who helped with the many tasks on Fall Clean Up Day: Annette and Phil Bloom; Sue, Hank and Willa Driscoll; Philip Haberstroh, Matt Haberstroh, Karen Johnson; Mark Koenig; Troy Liston; Maria Muller; Steve Schmidt; Helen Silver; Mary and Bill Stevenson; and Geoff Ward. They weeded, mulched, raked and bagged leaves, cut down bushes and dug up their roots, cut down perennial foliage for the winter, repaired the sunken bricks at the main church entrance, and removed the bricks at the left church entrance (to be relayed in the spring).

- Thank you to Phil and Annette Bloom for making and donating a protective winter tent for the new hydrangea tree near the church side entrance.
- Two large trees, three large boughs from another tree, and several smaller trees on the Osgood House grounds were cut down. (Thank you Geoff Ward and his friend with the chainsaw, Jon Evans.)
- Since Clean Up Day, 20 trash barrels, 10 bags, and 6 tied bundles of tree and yard waste were gathered up and disposed of. (Thank you Geoff Ward, Hank Driscoll, and Peter and Mitchell Morse -- Mary Stevenson's grandson and son.)

Thank You All: Maria Muller, Building and Grounds Chairperson

### COMMUNITY CUPBOARD FOOD PANTRY

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help pre-bag the Thanksgiving turkey and trimmings distribution. The people who come to our Food Pantry were most grateful to receive special food for the holiday, especially in this terrible economy which is creating increased need and stress in poor families. The 150 Thanksgiving baskets that we gave out could not have been prepared without the help of the church volunteers. MANY thanks!

Also, the donations of food you are bringing on Sunday morning and putting in the basket that comes forward with the offering are most welcome. The number of clients coming to our Food Pantry this fall has skyrocketed, so all donations of nonperishable food go directly to people in need. Thank you.

- Liz Ammons, Co-Coordinator

# UU Medford

147 High Street  
Medford, MA 02155  
(781) 396-4549  
Fax: (781) 396-2965  
info@uumedford.org  
www.uumedford.org

## **Church Office Hours**

Tues-Wed-Friday: 9 am–2 pm  
Thurs: 9 am–12 noon

## **Rev. Hank Peirce, Minister**

revhank@uumedford.org  
(781) 643-2523  
Office: (781) 396-7309

## **Esther Rosado**

*Director of Religious Education*  
dre@uumedford.org  
(781)396-4549

## **Lynn Battinelli**

*Church Administrator*  
(781) 396-4549  
info@uumedford.org

## **Thom Lissey**

*Music Director*  
(617) 966-1526  
music@uumedford.org



## **Ongoing Events**

Please check calendar section on web-site for an updated listing.

### **Thursdays Community Cupboard Food Pantry**

6:00 –7:30 pm, Sanctuary

### **Saturday Buddhist Meditation**

8:30-11:30 am, Moore Room

### **Keep in Touch — Announcements E-mail List**

To join the announcements e-mail list, contact Miles Fidelman at mfidelman@fidelman.net. You will receive an e-mail confirming that you have been added to the list.

### **Newsletter Submissions**

All articles for the newsletter are due the 15th of each month, for the following month's issue. Please send submissions to Brad Chapman at: newsletter@uumedford.org

## **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford is a diverse, welcoming community striving to provide a nurturing environment for the spiritual journeys of people at all stages of life. We foster social engagement among ourselves and seek to make a difference in our community and in the world at large.*

### **Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford**

147 High Street Medford, MA 02155

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## Greetings from the Board of Trustees!

- **Hank Driscoll** is putting lots of love into the Tuesday night series. So far we have had eight events, and the next eight are already planned. These events were created to respond to the desire for more community gathering opportunities that was expressed in Café Conversations we participated in over the last two years, and the feedback your Trustees received while conducting the canvass earlier this year.

- **Jesse Jaeger, Geoff Ward** and **Tom Innis** are interviewing UU Medford employees and volunteers -- past and present -- to write job descriptions for each position. Anyone who performs a routine function for the community but who is not contacted should feel free to let one of them know! Every little bit helps and is important.

**Mary Stevenson** is working hard with **Maria Muller** championing the stewardship of our buildings and grounds. With the help of many hands, we have never looked better.

### Finance Summary

Below is financial data through October 2008. Please note our expenses increase in the winter due to costs of snow plowing and heating oil.

INCOME	1st 4 mo.Actual	1st 4 mo.BUDGET	% 1st 4 MO BUDGET	Total Yr Budget
4000 – Cong'l Income	\$23,594.11	23,673.33	100%	\$71,020.00
5000 – Restricted funds Income	952.49	13,552.00	7%	40,656.00
<b>Total Congregational Income</b>	\$24,546.60	37,225.33	66%	\$111,676.00
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
6000 – Personnel	\$38,219.34	37,601.33	102%	\$112,804.00
7100 – Other Personnel	0.00	466.67	0%	1,400.00
7200 – Occupancy	4,347.58	15,000.00	29%	45,000.00
7300 – Office & Equipment	2,253.16	2,016.67	112%	6,050.00
7400 - Program	397.18	1,083.33	37%	3,250.00
7600 – Staff Expenses	1,722.78	2,166.67	80%	6,500.00
7800 – Fundraising Exp.	0.00	200.00	0%	600.00
7900 – Other Expenses	1,973.34	9,258.33	21%	27,775.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$48,913.38	67,793.00	72%	\$203,379.00
<b>Difference*</b>	<b>(\$24,366.78)</b>	<b>(\$30,567.67)</b>	80%	<b>(\$91,703.00)</b>
*(covered by endowment money)				

### Announcements

- If you would like to put names with faces, please see photographs of your Trustees displayed by the greeter's table in the vestibule on the way to Benker Hall.

- **Helen Silver** continues on as Acting Treasurer (Thank you, Helen!). We are in need of a Treasurer! Basic knowledge is required but lots of training and support will be provided. Please see Nominating Committee members **Coleen Squires** and **Sue Driscoll** if you would like more information. The next Board meeting is Wednesday, December 10 at 7 PM in the Osgood House. Please join us!

## FROM THE TASK FORCE ON IMMIGRATION ISSUES

We've now sponsored three Tuesday evening events. Thanks to everyone who has given us your support! This month the Task Force will be planning our activities for 2009. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please tell us.

One project in the works is a series of monthly films on the immigrant experience, co-sponsored with the Medford Public Library, where the films will be shown. The series begins Thursday night, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, with "The Visitor."

Four Task Force members heard Aviva Chomsky speak on November 13<sup>th</sup> at North Shore Community College as part of its ongoing Forum on Tolerance. Her talk was entitled "Immigrant Rights and Human Rights." We also arranged for the photo-journalism exhibit, "Faces of Medford," to be displayed in Benker Hall for ten days from November 14<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>.

Here is the result of our autumn fundraising: The soccer ticket raffle raised \$40 for the Medford English at Large program, and the RE programs's soup sale raised another \$104. We raised \$167 at our first two events and \$83 at our own meetings. This led to a total of \$394. Here's how we spent it:

\$ 25... Jenny Alexander ("Detained")	\$ 35... Centro Presente
30... Interfaith Workers Fellowship	45... A Better Tomorrow Charity
144... Medford English at Large program	45... Refugee Immigration Ministry
45... Community Cupboard Food Pantry	25... Immigration film series

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Thanks go out to everyone who worked on the November 18<sup>th</sup> program and/or who has been active in or helped out with the Task Force. This includes Steve Schmidt, Michael Sandberg, Liz Ammons, Eileen Dunne, Nancy Kurtz, Hank Driscoll, Esther Rosado, Heather Gomez, Philip Bloom, Annette Bloom, Julie Abruzzo and Michael Glenn. If you are interested in working with us, please contact Michael Glenn at 781-396-6424 or [michaelglenn01@comcast.net](mailto:michaelglenn01@comcast.net).