

**THE MEMPHIS  
UNITARIAN**

**THE  
CHURCH  
OF THE  
RIVER**

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December 7, 2009  
Administrative Assistant: Margaret Park

**SHADY GROVE ELEMENTARY CHOIR & 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS  
BETSY JEWELRY TRUNK SHOW REDUX**

**SERMON: “My Christmas Faith”**

Some would say that my Christmas faith is not Christian. I have a deeper concern. Is faith possible at all?

**The Rev. Burton Carley will deliver the sermon at the eleven o'clock service**

**Church of the River Calendar  
Quotation of the Week**

“The terrible thing about the quest for truth is that you find it.” — Remy de Gourmont, French Poet

**Tuesday, December 8**

10:30 a.m. The Alliance will meet in the Mississippi River Room for the annual Holiday Potluck and carol singing with handchimes. All are invited. Contact [rande5022@wildblue.net](mailto:rande5022@wildblue.net) with questions.

**Wednesday, December 9**

2:00 p.m. Shakespeare Readers will meet at the main library to continue *Much Ado About Nothing*.  
7:30 p.m. Choir Practice in the Sanctuary

**Thursday, December 10**

6:00 p.m. The Board of Trustees will meet in the Beacon Room.

**Friday, December 11**

11:00 a.m. Memorial Service for **Goldene Blinkoff** in the Danziger Chapel at Temple Israel, 1376 E Massey Rd.

**Saturday, December 12**

11:00 a.m. Memorial Service for **Margaret Deininger** here at the Church of the River.  
3:30 p.m. St. John's soup kitchen at St. John's Methodist Church, Bellevue at Peabody. Contact: Dan Bing—763-2384.

**Sunday, December 13**

9:30 a.m. The Quest Group will meet in the Beacon Room to consider “The Bible-Down & Dirty.”  
10:00 a.m. Questions of Faith will wrap up discussion of *The Evolution of God* by Robert Wright.  
Religious Education for the High School class  
11:00 a.m. Worship Service in the Sanctuary  
Childcare for infants and preschoolers  
River Explorers will go to the Chalice Room and then to Holiday workshops. The Middle School Adventure Club will meet with Jeff McDonald  
Noon Caroling around the tree in the Mississippi River Room  
12:30 The Lunch Bunch will meet at the India Palace, 1720 Poplar Ave.

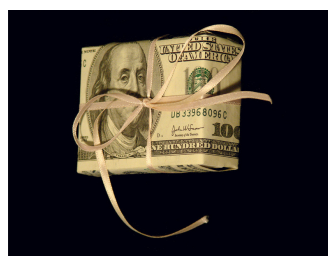
**Announcements from the Children's Ministry**

Thanks to volunteers Julie Lacy, M-T Crump, Shirley Rich, Julie Wood and Jamie Hart for another successful Nifty Gifty. About 80, wrapped, “works of heart” left the Mississippi River Room last Saturday.

Congratulations to the eight young people who completed the *Our Whole Lives* course and a huge thank you to the facilitators who invested so many hours this fall to give our Middle School students the gift of comprehensive, myth-busting, Unitarian Universalist faith-based sex education. The class will celebrate on Friday, Dec. 11, with a banquet at church. Facilitators: Matt Holladay, Diana McClure, Amanda Myers, Bill and Emily Schultz.

On Sunday, December 13 the kindergarten will meet at 11:00 with Kathy Moore for *Treasure Hunting*. River Explorers will begin the hour with a Chalice Service followed by holiday workshops with Richard Lewis and Christy and Norm Shaw. The Middle School Adventure Club will meet with Jeff McDonald at 11:00 and the high school will meet at 10 o'clock.

Our annual *Twelve Days of Christmas* sing-a-long is this week in the Mississippi River Room immediately after the worship service. Plan to join the chorus from Shady Grove Elementary to sing in the season around the beautiful Christmas tree donated by the McCormick family.

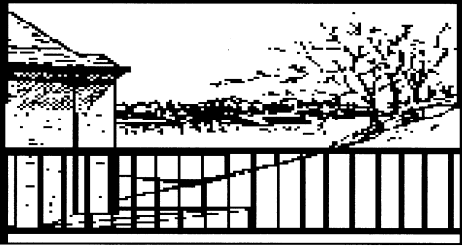


**Many thanks to those who have made their pledges for 2010.**

**If you have NOT made your pledge yet, please do so by calling Margaret Park in the church office (526-8631) or emailing the church office at**

[UURiver@aol.com](mailto:UURiver@aol.com)

**The Care Coordinator for December is Marty Holladay. You can reach Marty at 725-4103**



There is in a Vedic hymn this question: "Who is the god to whom we shall offer sacrifice?" This question has more import in a polytheistic culture but it also is good for our secular and monotheistic society. We do not pay enough attention to the gods we worship in secret. I am not talking about idols found in hidden niches or images brought out from dark places to which we kneel. I speak about no cultic practice behind closed doors that gives worth to a holy figure.

It is all more subtle than that, more ingenious, more subversive. It is the denial of worshipping any god at all. Emerson was so good on this topic. He said, "A person will worship something--have no doubt about that. We may

think that our tribute is paid in secret in the dark recesses of our hearts--but it will out. That which dominates our imaginations and our thoughts will determine our lives, and character. Therefore, it behooves us to be careful what we worship, for what we are worshipping we are becoming."

It is like pretending that you are not in any kind of story. You do have a way to interpreting your life, a way of discerning what you believe makes your life, its story and chapters, worthwhile or significant. The great sin is not believing in a story that is mythical, or not historically factual, but in not recognizing the story you are in.

We may think that we are merely drifting from moment to moment, day to day, month to month, year to year. Yet they are connected, related to each other, and the story told by them is greater than the sum of its parts. And the question is: "What god are you offering sacrifices to in the story that is your life?" To know the answer to that question is to understand in deep ways who you are and who you may yet become. bc

## Thanks

to David & Lisa Jennings,  
Jack & Cathy Richbourg,  
Mack & Doe Hamblen,  
Wayne & Donna Sue  
Shannon, Tom & Mary Jo

Miller and Nathan Blalock, Jr. for gifts to the Endowment Fund in memory of **Bob Myers**. Thanks also to Vivien Weeks for a gift to the Soup Kitchen in memory of **Bob Myers** and to Tuck Dickerson for a gift to the Soup Kitchen in memory of **Bob Myers, Margaret Deininger, and Goldene Blinkoff**. Thanks to Tom & Mary Jo Miller for a gift to the Soup Kitchen in honor of **Dan Bing and the Soup Kitchen Crew**.

### Betsy Jewelry Trunk Show Redux

Many folks asked that the jewelry holiday sale that benefits the church be continued for another Sunday. So if you missed last Sunday or needed to check out the wardrobe to create your accessory list, the Second Chance Church is giving you one.

Follow the Church of the River on **Twitter!** <http://twitter.com/FirstUUChurch>

Join the Church of the River on **Facebook!** <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?v=info&ref=search&gid=127748271227>



### Singing Around the Christmas Tree

Immediately after church on December 13, make your way to the Mississippi River Room to welcome the choir from our newly adopted school Shady Grove Elementary. These children will delight us with a brief holiday program then join in as we ALL participate in the annual Caroling Around the Tree Please

come to the Mississippi River Room right after the church service to enjoy the performance and take part in this merry event! Punch and cookies to follow. What a great opportunity to meet and welcome these charming children who have made a special trip to entertain us.

### Hospitality Hub

During the week of Christmas the HUB will be handing out Goodie Bags to guests. Goodie Bags are a holiday treat right before the holidays. Please consider donating some items found in each bag. Donations should be delivered to the HUB by Wednesday, December 16.

**OUTREACH NEWS** Donations for our Soup Kitchen are needed and appreciated. Make checks out to the church and note it is for the "soup kitchen".

## Among Our Members

We send our loving thoughts and prayers to Betsy Mandel Carley on the death of her mother **Goldene Blinkoff** on December 2nd.

We send more loving thoughts and prayers to Bob Deininger on the death of his wife, **Margaret Deininger** on December 5th. Loving thoughts go out also to Elizabeth and Mary, the Deininger's daughters and to the extended family. Margaret was an active member of the Church of the River and helped out with many activities over the years. She was also quite active in the Southwestern UU Conference. Margaret's memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. here at the Church of the River next Saturday, December 12. A reception will follow.

**Questions of Faith** will wrap up its study of, "The Evolution of God" by Robert Wright on the 13th.

On January 10th the study of "Blink", by Malcolm Gladwell will begin.

There will be a holiday break beginning on December 20th.

### December "Green" Hint.

**Reduce your shower time by one minute each day, 2,190 pounds of water would not have to be purified, thereby reducing your greenhouse gas emissions by 4,700 pounds per year.**

**ON DECEMBER 20TH** we will have our Christmas Candlelight Service at 5:30 p.m. A punch and cookie reception is held in the Mississippi River Room at 4:30 p.m. You are encouraged to bring a dozen of your favorite cookies to share.

During the service, while *We Three Kings* is sung, children in the congregation bring gifts for a baby down to the front of the church where they are placed in a basket in front of our Burton Callicott crèche. Later they are taken to be distributed to infants who are in need of the basics. Bring the gifts unwrapped.

**The Welcoming Team** is expanding to take an even more proactive approach to its mission—improving hospitality to visitors and integrating new members into the congregation. There are many different talents that we need to greet, call and shepherd—can you help?

Please contact Alice Fleming at [fleming.alice@gmail.com](mailto:fleming.alice@gmail.com) or 755-3418 if you would like to learn more.