

# CEDAR LANE

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

# NEWSLETTER

December 2017



CEDAR LANE  
WHERE LOVE WORKS

## THE NOVEMBER FALLING FOR CEDAR LANE AUCTION



EXPLORE  
*the eternal*



NURTURE  
*community*



BUILD  
*a more just world*

**On the cover:** A bunch of photos taken at the annual Falling for Cedar Lane Auction on November 4. Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, talent, and/or financial support. We are happy to announce that our gross proceeds were **\$44,500**.

## December Worship



### "Awaiting Hope"

**December 3, 9 & 11 am**

*Rev. Abhi Janamanchi*

In the face of all the brutality, violence, and stupidity that goes on in the name of god and human beings, is there any reason to have hope in the human race, in the human spirit, in human history?



### Advent Vespers

**December 6, 13 & 20 // 6:45-7:15 pm**

As shadows lengthen and the year comes to a close, we embrace the hopeful spirit of Advent and all the riches it has to offer. Included in the services will be readings from varied faith traditions and

opportunities for shared contemplation, meditative song, and silence.

### "The Fabric of Our Identity"

**December 10 // 9 & 11 am**

*Rev. Abhi Janamanchi*

Unitarian Universalism not only offers us a religious identity, it also celebrates and supports our many identities. Our faith cheers Whitman's celebration of messiness and contradiction: "Do I contradict myself? Very well, then I contradict myself, I am large, I contain multitudes." The service will investigate. We will welcome new members during the service.



### "Spirit Experience: Winter Holidays & Holy Days"

**December 16 // 7 pm**

*Rev. Abhi Janamanchi & DC Labor Chorus*

The holiday season evokes a mixture of responses in us, from melancholy to joyous. There is something profoundly serious about it, but it is also a time of gaiety and laughter. Join us for a special Spirit Experience to celebrate the many meanings and moods of the holiday season in song and word, silence and prayer.

### "Winter Holidays Service"

**December 17 // 9 & 11 am**

*Tim Atkins and Katie Romano Griffin*

Join us for our annual multigenerational family winter holidays service. We will explore the themes of winter solstice, with a special appearance of our nativity animals as presented by our first grade class.



### "Winter Solstice Service"

**December 17 // 5 pm**

Join us as we begin celebrating this holiday season with songs and stories of the winter solstice. This is

the time when we welcome back the light and rejoice in the light present in our world, in ourselves and in one another. Sponsored by Cedar Lane's Journeywomen Group.

### "Hope for the Holidays"

**December 24 // 10 am**

*Rev. Abhi Janamanchi*

Let us join together in meditation and celebration as we honor the season of hope, light and healing. This intergenerational service will be led by Rev. Abhi Janamanchi and Rev. Katie Romano Griffin.



### Christmas Eve Services

**December 24, 4, 6, 10 pm**

*Revs. Katie Romano Griffin & Abhi Janamanchi, Tim Atkins, Norman Allen*

We join together in story and song, with carols and candle-lights and rekindle the Christmas spirit of joy, peace, and hope within each of us.

4 pm: Join us for this youth-full and interactive service as folks of all ages help us unfold a unique telling of the Christmas story, complete with sing-along carols and children choirs – not to mention a little mooing, braying, and clucking! Together, we'll look with wonder on the shimmering Christmas star and celebrate the hope and joy that it brings to a cold winter night. This service is for families with young children.

6 pm: An hour-long service for children & adults.

10 pm: A reflective service of music, readings, prayer, and personal reflection. This service is best suited for adults and older children and youth.

### "Harnessing Hope"

**December 31 // 10 am**

*Rev. Katie Romano Griffin & Tim Atkins*

What if 2018 could be your best year yet? As 2017 is comes to a close, we will end it ritually and then begin to harness hope for the New Year. This intergenerational service will be led by Rev. Katie Romano Griffin and Tim Atkins, Director of Lifespan Religious Education.

## From the Senior Minister

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Rev. Abhi Janamanchi,  
ajanamanchi@cedarlane.org

Unitarian Universalist theologian James Luther Adams identifies the practice of hope as one of the defining characteristics of our faith. He writes, "[Unitarian Universalism] holds that the resources (divine and human) that are available for the achievement of meaningful change justify an attitude of ultimate optimism (not immediate optimism) . . . . There is something in the genuine liberal perspective that, while recognizing this tragic nature of the human condition, continues to live with a dynamic hope."

This "dynamic hope" is grounded in the present, in the here-and-now while having an eye toward the future. It is about possibility. It asks, "If not now, then when? If not here, where? If not us, then who?"

This hope is an orientation of the heart. It is not outside us but within us. It is not merely a positive attitude, a panglossian optimism that somehow things will turn out just fine. Instead, it is a resilient hope, predicated on the acceptance of the world as it is — in all its messiness, pain, tragedy, and glory.

This hope is grounded in a human refusal to concede to the harsh realities of living. It is always prepared for the worst, yet always seeks the best. It trusts in life without denying the tragic sense of life. It asserts the goodness of life in spite of adversity.

There's no room for fatalism or cynicism in this kind of hope. Even if we think we won't necessarily win the struggle today, in our lifetime, it asks us to keep up the struggle.

And this hope is not a feeling, it is a decision. The decision for hope is based on what we believe at the deepest level – what our most basic convictions are about the world and what the future holds – all based on our faith – in humanity, in ourselves, in God or whatever it is that we consider holy. We choose hope, not as a naïve wish, but as a choice,

with our eyes wide open to the brutal and broken reality of the world.

That's the spirit that we are called to embrace as we make our way through these critical and difficult times.

In this holiday season, amid all the hustle and bustle, may we make room for love in our crowded hearts. May the stories we share strengthen our faith. May the songs we sing lift our spirits. And may our time together renew our hope.

Keep Shining.  
Abhi

## *Welcome to Our New Staff Members!*

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### **(Photo unavailable)**

**Jen Morley** joined the staff of Cedar Lane in early November as our Accounting and Office Manager. She has worked and volunteered at a number of nonprofits throughout the DC-metro area, and has experience in bookkeeping, office management, fundraising, and human resources. She is also (very) slowly pursuing a CPA license. Jen and her family live in Wheaton.



**Irene Ravitz** also joined the staff as the new nursery attendant on Sundays this past month.

Irene is an undergraduate student at Trinity Washington University and has been working with kids since a young age. Irene plans to become an elementary school teacher upon graduation. She enjoys working in the nursery with the little ones; reading books, playing games, and drawing with them.



**Tiffany Lewis** also joined the staff as the new youth coordinator this past month! Tiffany Lewis is a native of Jamaica, West Indies, but spent the majority of her life in New York City where she grew up and eventually worked in education and child-oriented; music and art-based facilities. She received an A.S. in Math and Science, in addition to a B.A. in Sociology from Brooklyn College. She is currently a Speech and Hearing Pathology Graduate student. She looks forward to guiding Cedar Lane youth into good service, leadership, and transparent fellowship.



# Social Justice

## A Symposium on CLIMATE, FAITH, AND ADVOCACY

Sunday, December 3 - 2:30- 5:30pm

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church,  
9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda, MD

### Panel Speakers:

Interfaith Power and Light - Joelle Novey

Sierra Club - Mark Posner

Interfaith Partnership for the Chesapeake -  
Bonnie Sorak

Islam - Ambereen Shaffe

African American Faith Community -  
Rev. Darryl Roberts

Unitarian Universalist - Jim Laurenson



### Keynote Speaker:

**Rev. Fletcher Harper,**  
**GreenFaith**

*Now or Never:*  
The Absolute Urgency of  
Religious Action for Earth



## December 6: DACA TPS Action with CASA

On December 6th, CASA will be holding a noontime rally on Capitol Hill as we fight to #SaveTPS and ensure the passage of a #CleanDREAMAct. Please RSVP here: [goo.gl/forms/L2SMionjXLt16qxF2](http://goo.gl/forms/L2SMionjXLt16qxF2).

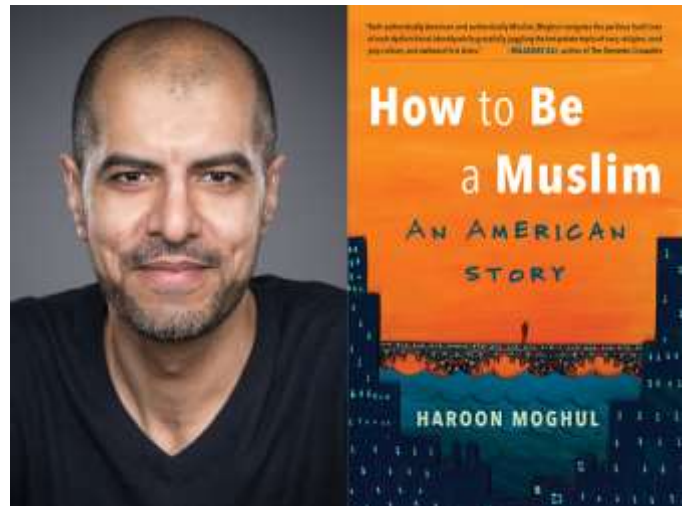
## December 3, 2:30 pm: Climate, Faith, and Advocacy Symposium

Join us for a free symposium held at Cedar Lane on the intersection between climate issues, faith, and ways we can be better stewards of the earth. The keynote speaker will be Rev. Fletcher Harper, Executive Director of GreenFaith, with many panelists also participating. Hosted by: Kehila Chadasha, Am Kolel, and Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church. More info may be found on our website: <http://bit.ly/2AzjS7o>.



## December 7, 7 pm: Combating the Rising Tide of Antisemitism

Cedar Lane is hosting a second educational event to help us all be better allies and more effectively arm ourselves in the fight against White Supremacy in all its forms on December 7th at 7 pm in Room 32-35 downstairs. Free event; all are welcome and encouraged to attend. Find and share the event on Facebook: <http://bit.ly/2njM8pf>.



Please join us for an Evening Forum with Haroon Moghul, author of How to Be a Muslim: An American Story, on **Sunday, Dec 10 at 7:30 pm** at Cedar Lane. Haroon Moghul is the Fellow in Jewish-Muslim Relations at the Shalom Hartman Institute. He's appeared on all major U.S. media networks, and has been published at the Washington Post, TIME, CNN, and Foreign Policy. In 2016, he was honored with the Religion News Writer's Awards for Religion Reporting Excellence. We hope you will spread the word and join us!



**beaconhouse**

Where Learning Has A Home

### **Holiday Gift Donations for Beacon House**

We will be in the Lounge Dec 3 and 10, and deliver the gifts to Beacon House on Dec 17. There are two ways to give to Beacon House children: specific gifts for the neediest kids by name and age, and gifts for additional children who participate in Beacon House activities. Information will be posted on the Social Justice bulletin board at Cedar Lane and in the Religious Education area downstairs. We are joining with several other UU churches in the area to help kids in their Edgewood community of Northeast DC have a good holiday.



### **December 14, 10 - noon: National Interfaith Clergy Witness at the NRA**

Join us to bear witness in front of the National Rifle Association headquarters in Fairfax, VA: 11250 Waples Mill Rd, Fairfax, VA 22030. The intent is to gather for an interfaith worship service of faithful witness to mourn together and to call for moral clarity around the tragedy of pervasive gun violence in our communities. More information can be found here: [uucfweb.wixsite.com/nra-clergy-witness](http://uucfweb.wixsite.com/nra-clergy-witness).



### **January 28, 2018, 12:30 – 2:30 pm: “Protecting our Children from Child Abuse” with Hyun Martin**

Ms. Martin, Cedar Laner and author of How I Survived Childhood, will be the guest speaker at the first POCI Speak Out—a new series run by Cedar Lane POCI (people of color and indigenous). If you want to join Cedar Lane POCI, please come to this event or email [poci@cedarlane.org](mailto:poci@cedarlane.org). Lunch will be served. Please bring potluck dishes. All are warmly invited to attend this event.

## *Community News*



### **Getting Connected to the December Soul Matters Theme of Hope**

The monthly Soul Matters theme for December is Hope, as mentioned earlier in the newsletter as part

of the worship descriptions and in the column by Senior Minister Rev. Janamanchi. As part of this thematic ministry work, the ministers also record a monthly meditation centered on monthly theme. This month's video is about 20 minutes, so please find a comfy, quiet space and take a short break to meditate with Rev. Abhi: [youtu.be/0qCNRn8IW3g](https://youtu.be/0qCNRn8IW3g).

We also distribute monthly packets that center on the theme that we hope you will use throughout the month. You may find poems, video links, etc. on our Facebook page that are drawn from the packet, and we encourage Ministry Teams and Committees to use words from this packet for chalice lightings before your meetings. You may find the packets for this month on our Soul Matters ministry section of the website: [www.cedarlane.org/small-groups](http://www.cedarlane.org/small-groups). The link for the monthly meditation may also be found on that page.

### **Building Bridges: Portraits of Immigrants and Refugees Exhibit**

Display plans for the Family Diversity Projects "Building Bridges" exhibit (currently posted in the Cedar Lane main entrance hallway) have been extended until the end of December. Also, an additional set of text (written especially for elementary school children and printed in red) has been added to the display. More info: [familydiv.org](http://familydiv.org).



### **Thank you for Supporting Puerto Rico Recovery!**

The November 19th collection for the Hurricane Maria Recovery and Relief Fund will be funding already established grass-roots organizations in Puerto Rico. For example, Taller Salud is a Women's Health Center in Loiza, an economically impoverished but culturally rich historic Afro-Puerto Rican town famous for providing the Plena dance form and for its annual festival. G8 of Caño Martín Peña in San Juan is a consortium of 8 poor neighborhoods around a polluted canal working together to improve their living conditions. Centro

para Desarrollo Político, Educativo, y Cultural in Caguas has been helping the development of this central eastern city. The donations meet immediate relief efforts after the hurricane and longer-term rebuilding efforts. Thank you!

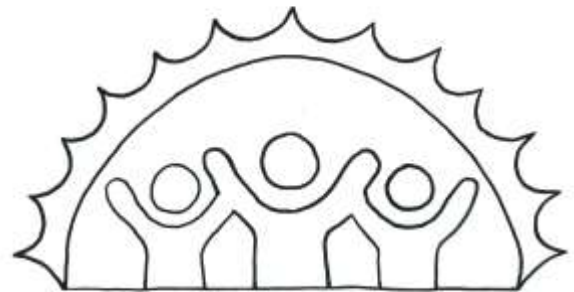
## *Events*

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### **December 14: The Alliance Holiday Luncheon & Sing Along**

Join The Alliance on the 2nd Thursday of each month from September - June for a lunch and talk. Lunch at noon; holiday celebration at 1 pm this month. Our annual event will include singers Leslie Backus, Laura Sailer, Kate Harrison, and Kathie Bryant, accompanied by Susan Easterly, to be followed by a Holiday Sing Along. During lunch, people will share stories of Christmas and other seasonal holidays. In addition, there will be a Secret Santa Raffle. Turkey and ham will be provided for the potluck. Please bring a dish to serve 6 to 8 people.

# HAPPY HUMANLIGHT!



REASON ✪ COMPASSION ✪ HOPE

### **December 16, 4 – 9 pm: HumanLight Celebration**

The HumanLight holiday presents an alternative reason to celebrate in the December holiday season! HumanLight illuminates Humanism's positive humanist ideals and values: Reason, Compassion, Hope, Humanity, and Community. See you at Gary's home. Please bring a dish, snack, or libation to share on this festive occasion! Address: 13 Atwell Ct, Potomac, Maryland. Questions? Please email Brian Lofgren; [uuhumanist@yahoo.com](mailto:uuhumanist@yahoo.com).



## December 16, 7 – 9 pm: The Spirit Experience: Winter Holidays & Holy

Rev. Abhi Janamanchi & DC Labor Chorus

The holiday season evokes a mixture of responses in us, from melancholy to joyous. There is something profoundly serious about it, but it is also a time of gaiety and laughter. Join us for a special spirit experience to celebrate the many meanings and moods of the holiday season in song and word, silence and prayer.

## Music

Dr. Henry Sgrecci, [hsgrecci@cedarlane.org](mailto:hsgrecci@cedarlane.org)

### Sing with the Choir on Christmas Eve!

During this year's Christmas Eve service the Choir will introduce a new work to its repertoire. *Glad Tidings of Great Joy* is scored for choir, organ, and harp. This sublime work includes familiar Christmas songs such as *Coventry Carol* and *Il est ne le divine enfant* as well as some original settings by composer, Robert Hebble. We're looking forward to singing this cantata at the 10 pm Christmas Eve service. Rehearsals will begin on Wednesday evening, Dec 6. Want to sing with us? Inquire with Henry Sgrecci: [music@cedarlane.org](mailto:music@cedarlane.org).

The 4 pm service on Christmas Eve will be led by the Children's Choir. Director Jenny Crane has selected *Your Holiday Song* by Emily Saliers and Hap Palmer's delightful song *Angel Band*.

During the 6 pm service, the Youth Choir will celebrate the unique positioning of the December sun with Diane Benjamin's *Solstice Carol* and welcome the new born babe with a rocking tune called *Christmas Joy* by Roger Emerson.

### Music in Upcoming Services

**Dec 3** – The Ring Out Bell Choir welcomes the Advent season with *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*.

The Choir embraces the December Soul Matters theme of hope with Clif Hardin's finger snapping tune *Yonder Come Day*. Kevin Miller and the Choir observe Advent with an arrangement of *Watchman, Tell Us of the Night* by Alan Hovhaness. The congregation sings *Morning has Come* and *Come, Sing a Song with Me*.

**Dec 10** – Bell Canto opens our service with an ethereal setting of *The Friendly Beasts* that features the "singing bell" technique. The Choir continues the December Soul Matters theme with Ysaye Barnwell's anthem, *Hope*. Embracing the coming of the baby Jesus, the Choir sings the rhythmic African song *Bethlehemu*.

**Dec 17** – In celebrating the Jewish holy days of Hanukkah, the Youth Choir sings *Light a Candle*. The Children's Choir sings *Deck the Halls*.

**Dec 24** – A short, lively service involving readings and plenty of carols at 10 am in the Chapel will be led by Rev. Katie Romano Griffin.

**Dec 31** – Dr. Henry Sgrecci and Dr. Jasmin Lee will provide music for the New Year.



### Jan 20, 2018, 7:30 pm: Benefit Concert

Dr. Henry Sgrecci, Dr. Jasmin Lee and the Cedar Lane Choir and Chamber Orchestra will perform *Appalachian Spring* by Copland and works by Samuel Barber and Leonard Bernstein. Admission is free and all donations will benefit Shepherd's Table, the Silver Spring-based soup kitchen that provides nourishing meals to those in need while offering an array of additional services to the homeless. Mark your calendars!



# Lifespan Religious Education (LRE)

Tim Atkins, *Director of Lifespan Religious Education*  
Ashley Del Sole, *Lifespan RE Administrator*  
Tiffany Lewis, *Youth Coordinator*  
Irene Ravitz, *Nursery Attendant*

## Upcoming Dates

**Dec 2, 10 to 2:30 pm** // Holiday Craft Day  
**Dec 8, 6 to 10 pm** // Middle School Youth Group  
Pizza & Movie Night  
**Dec 10, 11 am – 1 pm** // High School Youth Group  
2nd Sunday Meeting  
**Dec 16 – 17, 6 pm – 9 am** // High School Youth  
Group Lock-In  
**Dec 17, 9 & 11 am** // Time for All Ages  
**Dec 24, 4, 6, 10 pm** // No Religious Education  
Classes; Christmas Eve Services  
**Dec 31, 10 am** // No Religious Education Classes



Cedar Lane's beloved way to kick off the holiday season is here! It is a day for all ages to make gifts and decorations. There will be 20 crafts, including old favorites like chocolates, gingerbread houses, wreaths, bird feeders and Peace on Earth map cards, plus a few new crafts! More info here: [cedarlane.org/event/holiday-craft-day](http://cedarlane.org/event/holiday-craft-day).



## Dec 8, 6 – 10 pm: Middle/High School Youth Group Pizza and Movie Night

Come join your fellow middle schoolers for a fun evening of movie watching and pizza eating at the Chalice House!

## Dec 10, 11 – 1 pm: High School Youth 2nd Sunday Meeting

Come have an opportunity to be with friends in a more relaxed environment instead of Sr. Seminar. Meetings are in the Lower Level Chalice House Youth Room.

## Dec 16, overnight: High School Youth Group Lock-In

Come kick back and have fun while camping out at the Chalice House!

## Dec 17, 9 & 11 am: Time for All Ages

Children will begin in the Sanctuary with their families and will then be dismissed to Religious Education classes.

## Adult Programs

**Meditation** (M, 7:30 – 9 pm),

**Yoga** (various days/times – next session begins the week of Jan 8),

**Science and Religion** (M, 10 – noon),

**Philosophy Club** (1st and 3rd Tu, 7:30 – 9 pm)

**Writers of Color Book Club** (3rd Tu, 7:15 – 8:30 pm)



**Yoga Share the Mat for Puerto Rico** (Dec 12, 6 – 8 pm) - donations will support Hurricane Maria Community Recovery Fund. Plan to bring a snack, sweet or beverage and share some cheer after yoga!

Register here: [bit.ly/CedarLaneRegistrations](http://bit.ly/CedarLaneRegistrations)

The Cedar Lane Newsletter is published monthly.  
The next deadline is **Monday, Dec 18**, at noon.  
Please submit to [newsletter@cedarlane.org](mailto:newsletter@cedarlane.org).  
Editor: Sara Davidson

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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**The Rev. Abhi Janamanchi**, *Senior Minister*

**The Rev. Katie Romano Griffin**, *Assistant Minister*

**Tim Atkins**, *Director of Lifespan Religious Education*

**The Rev. Archene Turner**, *Affiliated Community Minister*

**The Rev. Kenneth Torquil MacLean**, *Minister Emeritus*

**Dr. Henry Sgrecci**, *Director of Music*

**Jim Anderson**, *President, Board of Trustees*

**Sara Deshler**, *Executive Director*

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TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL



# Christmas Eve Services

December 24 // 4, 6, 10 pm



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WHERE LOVE WORKS