



**THE UNITARIAN CHURCH  
IN FALL RIVER.**

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**December 2009**

How quickly the time passes, at least when we're busy and we have what seem like a million things to do. Of course we realize it's only several thousand, but our minds multiply these things. Christmas in a matter of weeks...

To see what we see on television or in the daily papers, we assume that getting ready for the Christmas holidays is just a matter of spending money, making sure all the gifts are the correct size or color or style or shape or material or whatever. We don't hear much about the original message of Christmas, the birth of a person who would try very hard to spread a message of hope and love to all and for all people, the underlying design of a world much more loving, humane, tolerant, peaceful, wise, good and the list could go on. And we can see a certain shortage of results, at least on a world scale. We can, we hope, see more progress in our own pieces of the world.

Life, of course, is like that. We should remember, of course, that what we know as Christmas is a mixture of ideas and practices, rituals and traditions that come from a wide variety of sources. What they have in common is a vision of hope for a better world, a world marked by peace and goodwill, generosity and caring concern. The specifics have been the subject of disputes and altercations, major and minor for centuries. However, despite all the suggestions, opinions, magazine articles, sermons, commercials, books and other sources of ideas on how to celebrate the holidays, the do's and don'ts, the must's and the should's, we know we need to follow our own feelings, remember our own traditions, live up to our own personal expectations. That is not really too far removed from the way we ought to live the rest of the year, is it?

Have a Merry Christmas!!

— *C.F. Flagg*

**Remember,  
if Christmas isn't  
found in your  
heart, you won't  
find it under a tree.**  
— *Charlotte Carpenter.*

**Sundays at 10:30  
Followed by Coffee and Fellowship**

- December 13<sup>th</sup> Hopes and Expectations**
- December 20<sup>th</sup> Season of Joy ...and Stress**
- December 23<sup>rd</sup> The Traditional Christmas Candlelight Service**
- December 27<sup>th</sup> Winter's Cold ...or Warmer?**
- January 3<sup>rd</sup> Another Year So Soon?**



## Order of Service

We've been using essentially the same order of service for quite a while now. It's time to rethink it. We can keep it the same, rearrange it completely, make small or large adjustments, add or remove or alter current elements, but it is important to reevaluate it from time to time.

What would you like to change? What would you like to keep the same? What would you like to eliminate? What would you like to add? What would you like to adjust? What would you like to rearrange?

Please look carefully at our current order, to the right, and make whatever minor or major adjustments you would like. What changes would possibly encourage our occasional visitors to come again? What would appeal to more people? What would appeal more to you? Let us know! Reply by sending your response by post to the church to preserve anonymity or send it to [ehdarling@unitarianchurchfr.org](mailto:ehdarling@unitarianchurchfr.org). We are trying to meet your needs, wants and desires. Won't you help us?

## Autumn

Thou comest, Autumn, heralded by the rain,  
With banners, by great gales incessant fanned,  
Brighter than brightest silks of Samarcand,  
And stately oxen harnessed to thy wain!  
Thou standest, like imperial Charlemagne,  
Upon thy bridge of gold; thy royal hand  
Outstretched with benedictions o'er the land,  
Blessing the farms through all thy vast domain!  
Thy shield is the red harvest moon, suspended  
So long beneath the heaven's o'er-hanging eaves;  
Thy steps are by the farmer's prayers attended;  
Like flames upon an altar shine the sheaves;  
And, following thee, in thy ovation splendid,  
Thine almoner, the wind, scatters the golden leaves!

**Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**

## Christmas Special Offering

Included with this newsletter is a special offering envelope for the Christmas Season. Thank you for using it. This may be returned when you come to the Candle Light Service on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, or you may mail it to the Church at 309 North Main Street, Fall River, MA 02720. Again, your support is very much appreciated. Of course, this is a virtual envelope and it is up to you to turn it into a real envelope and fill it with your support.

## Christmas Flowers

We will be decorating the Sanctuary with Poinsettias during the Holiday season. Any one who would like to donate a plant in memory of loved ones, please see Diana Norman.

## Present Order of Service

Prelude  
Welcome and Lighting of the  
Candles and Chalice  
Hymn #  
Affirmation #471 "Love is the doctrine..."  
Announcements  
Musical Selection  
Invocation  
Antiphonal Reading #  
Music • Readings  
Meditation  
The Lord's Prayer  
Hymn #  
Sermon  
Sharing of Joys and Concerns  
Offertory  
Hymn #  
Closing Words  
Choral Amen  
Postlude (time for listening and reflection)



## Traditional Candlelight Service

At this Holiday event, we will be serving the traditional Wassail and other light refreshments. Any one interested in donating refreshments, please talk to Diana Norman, Priscilla Brightman or Diane Darling.

## Pledge Your Support!

If you are an active member, an occasional visitor, or just one who believes the Unitarian Society is a worthy cause, we ask you to fill out and return a pledge card to the Church as soon as possible. This returned pledge card, indicating your support, would allow us to plan the year's program, activities, building and grounds expenditures, utilities, etc. We need a commitment to help us grow. That commitment needs to be your personal answer to our call. Please respond! **And, even more, we hope you will come and be an active part of this small community of freethinkers!**

**2009**

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### OPINION SURVEY

1. Do you regularly attend this Church? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, have you regularly attended in the past? \_\_\_\_\_

2. If you have stopped attending services, what caused you to do so?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What do (did) you like best about this Church? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What do (did) you like least about this Church? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What things would you like to see changed in the Church? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What would you like more of? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What would you like less of? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other comments you feel might be helpful:

\_\_\_\_\_



*You are invited to our*

*The Traditional*

*Christmas*

*Candle Light Service*

*Wednesday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>*

*7:30 pm*

A service of readings and carols with special music for all ages

