



Unitarian Universalist  
Church of Davis (UUCD)

## Theme Journal – December, Waiting



**We learn about waiting as children.** This is a hard lesson; when you are a child, time seems to stretch out in long endless tracks; minutes seem like hours and hours like days. We sometimes grunt and fuss, reduced to an 'I want it now' mentality. Other times our waiting manifests as excitement and we bounce joyfully knowing that something very good will happen soon. Then, there are other lessons in waiting.

My parents divorced when I was six. My father wasn't around much after that. On the rare occasions he was supposed to come see us, I waited by sitting and watching for him on the front step. I remember feeling such a longing for him. I imagined the fun we would have. I imagined him taking us on adventures. I imagined him always being there to comfort me, to make me laugh, and to make me feel safe. I would sit and wait, and wait, and wait.

My patience would eventually run thin and I would get angry that he wasn't there yet. Where is he? Why isn't he here? The compromise would start. I would tell myself, I'm only going to count 10 more cars driving by and then I'm going in the house. Still, he was not there. I would next re-compromise that I was only going to count 10 more *white* cars before giving up. This inner dialogue would continue until, eventually, my mom came out to tell me that he called to say he wasn't going to make it.

The feelings of waiting instantly transformed into deep disappointment. Wounds formed in my tender-young heart. These wounds are now scars that still tug and tighten when it comes time for me to wait, and I can't help but know in my bones that my waiting might be for disappointment. My waiting might be for heartbreak. My waiting might be for being unchosen or unwanted. These are the hardest things to find at the end of the waiting.

So, here we are in the season of Advent; in the season of waiting. And as much as it is a time filled with promise, love and commitment, it is also time filled with longing, grief and discouragement. These are truths, but they are truths held alongside another; you don't have to go it alone. Caring is the core of our community, in this time of waiting let us make space to hold all that it brings.

– Laura Thompson, Intern & Campus Minister

## Waiting can build such sweet anticipation.

It can also feed the chronic anxiety of a busy modern life. What's the difference?

A few years ago I stumbled across an award-winning novel called *Waiting* by Chinese-American author Ha Jin. The entire novel revolves around characters who endure waiting in their own ways, in a very particular cultural context. It got me thinking about how we 'wait' in America by rushing to get everything done before the event arrives. We, as a culture, actually 'do Christmas' and feel all the feelings before the day actually arrives. We are NOT waiting at all! I find this interesting since the general consensus is that the holiday mania is not a good experience for most people. So maybe waiting isn't such a bad thing.

How can we actually wait? One way might be to state the obvious. Mr. Rogers sang a simple song\* "I think it's very, very, very hard to wait / Especially when you're waiting / For something very nice / I think it's very, very, very hard to wait." Just slowing down and acknowledging that we are in a pause can be so helpful.

We could also wait as a way of practicing the infinite potential of non-doing (Wu Wei) in Taoism. Sitting with the potential of some tasty holiday treat, a special visit, a family tradition, a sale, a surprise... These are good ways to practice for the difficult waiting that we often do in traffic, waiting for results, sitting at someone's bedside. Why not start with the idea that waiting can be good, interesting, even magical. It is possible – if we give it a try! May each of us have a December full of un-rushed, present, and full potential moments! – Adrean Dills, Interim Director of Lifespan Learning

\*[http://www.neighborhoodarchive.com/music/songs/hard\\_to\\_wait.html](http://www.neighborhoodarchive.com/music/songs/hard_to_wait.html)





**Deck the Halls, Sunday, Dec 6, 12:30pm** (after worship), Join us for soup, holiday music, and to deck the tree and social hall! UUs of all ages are invited to bring a picture book for Rev. Beth's holiday storytime, and to join carolers who will travel about town brightening spirits. Crafts too!

**Un-Decked, Unplugged, and Fully Cheesed! Sat., Jan. 2, 2-5pm**  
Unplug, Unwind, and gather to Un-decorate the church. Chef Laura Thompson will serve grilled cheese sandwiches. Bring cheesy jokes and enjoy unplugged music to wind down the holiday season! Crafts!

(\$3-5 donation suggested for each event)

**We're looking for folks** to help with set-up, cooking and clean-up for both events. Guidance and recipes provided. Contact Laura, [campusministry@uudavis.org](mailto:campusministry@uudavis.org)



## Waiting For Sunday Morning Miracles

Sometimes we leave choir rehearsal on Thursday evening with a song in "almost ready" condition. We know it is not yet what we want to share on Sunday morning. We hope for a Sunday Morning Miracle, as it is known among church choir directors.

Should we rehearse our parts diligently at home? Yes, of course. It settles us down and gives us the feeling that we can handle this, we've got this. When we arrive with that feeling Sunday, our presence will enter more fully into the music.

What about the waiting? What part does waiting play between Thursday and Sunday? I believe the song continues to ripen within us even while we are not working on it. As we sleep, the song's patterns are stitched into our minds and hearts. As we walk and breathe and rest, or even pray, we continue to become the container the song needs, by some unspoken agreement.

And when our Sunday-morning-ripened selves face the beaming congregants, who eagerly await the beauty of our song, how could we not bring forth a miracle?  
– Laura Sandage, Sparks Choir Director

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# December Worship

**Hymn of the Month**, "Let Christmas Come," an Advent hymn.

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**December 6, 9:30 & 11:15am**, *What Are You Waiting For?* Laura Thompson, Ministerial Intern; Carlena Wike, Worship Associate. So often we are focused on what we hope to find at the end of waiting. But, what about the waiting itself; what lies in it, waiting for us? **FIRST SUNDAY: Return Guest At Your Table Boxes** (Please bring a check for the total collected in your box, made out to UUCD, memo: Guest.)

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**December 13, 9:30 & 11:15am**, *Prophet Mohammed: The Story of a Pure Vessel*; Rev. Beth Banks; Amanda Caudle, Worship Associate. This Sunday we'll prepare the way for the prophet Mohammed's birthday, which falls on Dec 24 on the lunar calendar. The accepted tradition for recognizing the prophet's birth is by telling stories about his life. With the assistance of Kamal Lemseffer and Anne Kjemtrup, Director of the Salam Center in Sacramento, we've identified pivotal events in Mohammed's life that shaped the development of the message of Islam. *Guest musician Lua Hightower will offer Sufi devotional music. Lua was recommended by recommended by Anne Kjemtrup, and often performs for interfaith events.*



**Diving Deep** (a new UUCD Series where we explore deep theological waters) Dec 13, 3-4:30pm, Islam. We welcome Anne Kjemtrup and Kamal Lemseffer, members of the SALAM Islamic Center in Sacramento. They are known for their belief in the power of interfaith dialogue to create community. Anne will speak about her experience as a convert to Islam, and the role of women in the faith tradition. Kamal will share his knowledge of Islam, and talk about practicing his faith as an American citizen of Moroccan birth. Anne is currently the Chairperson of the Board at the Sacramento Area League of Associated Muslims (SALAM) Islamic Center. SALAM Islamic Center is described as one of the most ethnically diverse Mosques in the area; it holds education and outreach to others as primary values. *Bring hearty appetizers to share after the presentation.*

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**December 19, 7pm, Longest Night**, Karen Klussendorf; Alexandra Lee-Jobe, Amanda Caudle, Amethyst McKay, Worship Associates. Darkness invites us to reflection. At this season of gift-giving and caroling, our evening offers time to remember what has been lost, and honor yearnings. The Threshold Singers and Juuliebells Chimes blend their music with readings, songs and candle light. We end our hour together with hope and light. *A light reception follows.*  
*Note: this is not a Solstice service, which serves a different purpose.*

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**December 20, 11:15am ONLY**, *The Wholly Family Service*, Rev. Beth Banks; Amethyst McKay, Worship Associate. We celebrate the many forms of family, singles who find family with chosen friends, the husband and wife family, same-sex couples, families with children and without, families with adopted children and foster children – the list of possibilities is almost endless. The question? "How is your family sacred?" Juuliebells perform.

**Special Collection** – AB 540 Undocumented Student Center, UC Davis. *Please make checks out to UUCD, memo: UCD Student Center.* Our congregation has a UU Campus Ministry, and our congregants are active with agencies that address issues of immigration. The Unitarian Universalist denomination actively advocates for undocumented people, especially families and students. The AB 540 Undocumented Student Center is the perfect intersection of two areas of our interests as UUs. This new non-profit Center is in its formative stages and continues to expand its services to 267 students at UCD. They expect their numbers to increase as the undocumented population becomes aware of the Center's existence. It is being used as a model throughout the nation for its support and advocacy of the rights of undocumented students. [undocumented.ucdavis.edu](http://undocumented.ucdavis.edu)

Director, Andrea Gaytan said that financial support for scholarships and emergency funds will help many students. She also encouraged us to collect gift cards to grocery stores, Amazon.com, and the UC Davis bookstore. There will be a table in the social hall for the month of December, and we'll be gathering gift cards December 6-27. Can't get to church? You can mail us gift cards or checks: UUCD, POB 73710, Davis CA 95617.

**December 24, 5pm, Festival of Lights Family Christmas Eve Service** Carols, Family Choir, the Chime Choir, candlelight ritual, and more! Themed costumes welcome for the No-Rehearsal Nativity Pageant. Get ready to shine, sparkle, sing, and shepherd! – Adrean Dills, Interim Dir. Lifespan Learning: re@uudavis.org

**December 24, 6pm Cookie Reception.** The Brigadoon Band plays holiday tunes while we all share goodies and fellowship in the Social Hall. Everyone is invited to bring cookies and/or non-sugary finger foods to share.

**December 24, 8pm, Candlelight Service: *Throw Wide the Door of Welcome*** Invite your neighbors, friends and family to a special evening with an ancient story, candle light, and carols. Our Christmas story will be woven with choral music from the Sparks Choir and the Free Range Singers. On this night we remember once again the importance of preserving what is precious. Come, be a part of the light.

**The Christmas Eve Offering** is for the *Interfaith Winter Rotating Shelter*. Make checks out to UUCD, memo IRWS.

**December 27, 11:15am ONLY, *The End of the Innocence***, Laura Thompson, Ministerial Intern. California is home to millions of undocumented children. The strife of their lives deprives them of dignity and dreams. What shall become of them? And what shall become of us in the process?

**January 3, 11:15am ONLY.**



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**Reflect** **The Committee on Ministry** (Lucas Frerichs, Stefan Harvey, Hiram Jackson, Lisa Oakes, Susan Steinbach, Karen Urbano) invites you to make the theme part of your spiritual practice: What do you think is worth waiting for? "I Am Waiting" (excerpt) by Lawrence Ferlinghetti *I am waiting for my case to come up/ and I am waiting/ for a rebirth of wonder/ and I am waiting for someone/ to really discover America/ and wail/ and I am waiting/ for the discovery/ of a new symbolic western frontier/ and I am waiting/ for the American Eagle/ to really spread its wings/ and straighten up and fly right/ and I am waiting/ for the Age of Anxiety/ to drop dead/ and I am waiting/ for the war to be fought/ which will make the world safe/ for anarchy/ and I am waiting/ for the final withering away/ of all governments/ and I am perpetually awaiting/ a rebirth of wonder*



**Share** **Death** is waiting for us all. Join us for Death Cafe: Dec. 5, 1:30-3:30pm, Davis Cemetery, 820 Pole Line Rd. This event has no agenda or program, it simply creates space for people to have coffee, cake, and conversation about the impermanence of our physical lives.

**Listen** Download or stream edited Sunday services at [www.uudavispodcast.org](http://www.uudavispodcast.org)