



December Theme: Wonder

December 3rd— Ornament Workshop 11:30

December 4th—Chalica

Elise May

December 5th— Tree Decorating & More

6:00 PM

December 11th—TBD

Reverend Ken Jones

December 18th —A Wizard of Oz Allegory

Dawn Wilson

December 24th— Get Together 4:00 PM

Live music from Prairie Spring, a Celtic band followed by some fun games

December 25th —No Service

Happy Holidays, Everyone!



MOVIE MONDAYS

Frigid Winter nights

Bask in the glow of warm friends

Wonder fills the room

Join us each Monday in December
for holiday movie classics.

**Special tree decorating event on
12/5**

Shows start at 7:00 PM



KVUUC Board

Debbie Williams, Co-President

copresident2@kvuu.org

Marilyn Gruber, Co-President

copresident1@kvuu.org

James Paton, Past President

pastpresident@kvuu.org

Liz Whitaker, Financial Secretary

financialsecty@kvuu.org

Liz Ritzenthaler, Treasurer

treasurer@kvuu.org

Dawn Wilson, Secretary

secretary@kvuu.org

Tom Duke, Member at Large

Board_at_large@kvuu.org

Rev. Ken Jones, part-time minister

minister@kvuu.org

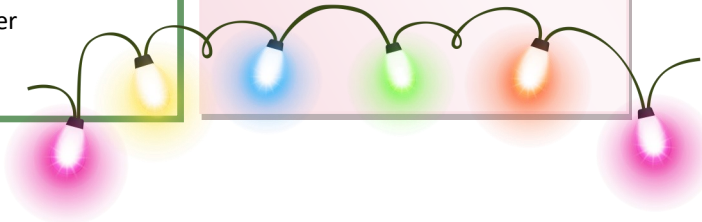
12/05: Mr. Magoo's Christmas*

12/12: It's a Wonderful Life

12/19: Miracle on 34th Street

12/26: Trading Places

***Tree Decorating & Cookie Exchange**
starts at 6:00 PM. Bring two dozen of
your favorite cookies and container
to take some home. Everyone will
take home one at least of each of the
cookies that were brought to the
exchange.



Chalice Lighters Grant

The Chalice Lighter Program assists the growth of new and existing congregations in the Pacific Northwest by providing grants funded exclusively through our Chalice Lighter donors. This program is managed by the Cascadia Growth Fund.

In 2018, KVVUUC was granted, through the Chalice Lighters, the funds to install all of the audio visual equipment such as cameras, projector, and speakers in the sanctuary.

We are hoping to submit another grant for work we'd like to have done in the building.

Some of the ideas are to equip the building with improved accessibility for access from the childcare room to the outside play area and bathroom improvements. There are potential structural work that must be done so we are looking at all the highest priority work first.

To qualify, KVVUUC needs 11 more Chalice Lighters for a total of 15 to meet the 30% requirement.

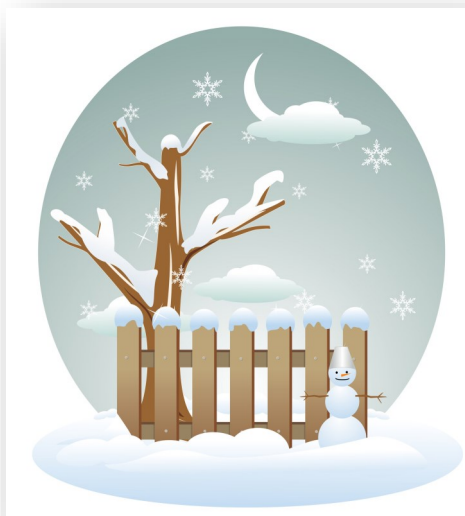
Visit the Giving Page: [Chalice Lighters – The Cascadia Growth Fund for Unitarian Universalism \(cascadiauu.org\)](http://cascadiauu.org)



Shout Out to the Building Clean-up, Clear-out, and De-clutter Participants

A big **THANK YOU** to all the wonderful folks who participated in the November 19th clean-up. They were busy people inside and outside:

- ◆ Debbie Williams
- ◆ Vivian Dunbar
- ◆ Tim Henebry
- ◆ Roberta Clark
- ◆ Meghan Anderson
- ◆ Dan Shissler
- ◆ Carol Orr
- ◆ Tom Duke
- ◆ Liz Ritzenthaler
- ◆ Ruthann
- ◆ Richard Gallagher (extra shout out for the use of your truck, Richard!)



If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.

--Anne Bradstreet

Letter from the Editor

By Dawn Wilson



There's a lot going on in the last month of the year. Regardless of how you spend your holidays, it seems that the world is a colorful, swirling, chaotic mass of lights and music. This can be a difficult time for many people who either don't celebrate Christmas at all, or who are far away from family.

Growing up in the United States, my family did celebrate Christmas with a tree, gift giving, stockings on the mantle, and whatnot. However, we were a bit different from every other family I knew. There was no church service on the Eve or the morning of Christmas. We didn't have any manger scenes. We had Christmas music. Most of it was instrumental. However, I do remember wondering "what the heck is a round, young virgin?" (yes, I know the actual words now).

But you know, I didn't care. I loved the tree, all lit up and decorated with some pretty horrible, hand-made stuff we five kids mashed together. Construction paper rings, wax beads, snowflakes with far too much glitter, and popsicle stick Santas. All fun to make, all as hideous and as beautiful as was the season.

In the tradition of my family and KVVUC's ornament workshop and tree decorating shenanigans, this December will include an ornament workshop with hors d'oeuvres and later a tree decorating event.

We'll also have music with Prairie Spring, a Celtic band, featuring our own Roberta Clark and Tim Henebry.

December 3rd, 11:30 AM: Ornament workshop with brunch hors d'oeuvres. We'll have supplies, feel free to bring any of your own DIY ornament supplies.

December 5th, 6:00 PM: Tree Decorating and Cookie Exchange with a fun holiday movie. If anyone is willing and able to donate a tree, please contact me at secretary@kvuu.org.

December 24th, 4:00 PM: Live Celtic Music with Prairie Spring and... perhaps games.



Share your thoughts, stories, musings, photos, in our newsletter by email them to secretary@kvuu.org

December Events Around Town

December 2nd

First Friday Art Walk

Designed to showcase performing & visual arts on a monthly basis in galleries and non-traditional spaces in Ellensburg. The First Friday Art Walk is an event to honor the local artist and their work.

December 7

December 14

December 21

4:00 – 8:00 PM

Ellensburg Night Market: Holiday Edition

Located at 404 N Pine Street

December 3rd

5:00 PM

Christmas in Kittitas

Visit Main Street for a winter picnic, a lighted tractor parade, and family craft activities

December

8th 5:00—8:00 PM

Holiday Girls Night Out

An established favorite, Girls Night Out is sure to bring much-needed pampering and shopping specials to the ladies of Ellensburg. Grab your friends and take part in this evening of fun, and fabulous deals. Stop by each participating location for a one-of-a-kind shopping experience including refreshments, raffles, added inventory, live entertainment, at-home business consultants,



Not Too Late to Get Tickets

by Dawn Wilson

December 4th: 6:30—8:00 PM

KVUU is providing space for ***The Alaska Suite: a Story of Beauty, Loss, and Hope.***



A hauntingly beautiful jazz composition performed by the Nelda Swiggett Quintet. Live music, spoken words, images and poetry connect audiences emotionally to the tenuous beauty of the Arctic. This work debuted in 2017, and has since inspired over 1,600 people with its message of hope and call to climate action. Tickets will be limited to the space available and tickets will not be available at the door.

Details & Advance Tickets: [The Alaska Suite: a story of beauty, loss and hope Tickets, Sun, Dec 4, 2022 at 6:30 PM | Eventbrite](#)

December 8th —11th

I don't know about you, but I love live theater. I love comedy, drama, musicals, opera, ballet. I love professional productions as much as I love community theater. While we do not have professional dance in town, I was excited to find that Ellensburg Dance will be performing their version of "The Nutcracker".

Tickets are on Sale: [Nutcracker – Ellensburg Dance Ensemble](#) because our very own **Vienna Rose Jaffe**, and **Winter Jewel Nightingale** will be performing. I have our tickets!



Councils & Groups

Let's bring life back to these councils and groups that haven't had much love for some time:

- **Worship Council**— meets by Zoom using the same link we use for services. Next meeting is Wed. December 7th at 6 pm. Help plan meaningful services! If you can't attend, send ideas to Elise at Elise.May@cwu.edu
- **Care Team** —please reach out via text or phone call to Deitra Underhill 509-899-1432. "We hold you in our hearts."
- Adult discussion group returns! Join in on the conversation each Sunday at 9:45 am.
- **Membership/Fellowship**
- **Green Sanctuary**—we are looking to renew Green Sanctuary Accreditation.
- **Social Justice**—We work to serve, to raise awareness, and to support and partner with people who face injustice. We advocate, organize, and act for justice to live out the values of our faith
- **Music**—Musicians and singers wanted for Sunday services and special gatherings
- **Book Club**
- **Pride Month Volunteers**—Kittitas County Pride meets monthly on the last Wednesday of the month, 5:30-7:00 pm at Hal Holmes Center.

What we owe to Wonder

By Dawn Wilson

When I first saw the December theme, I thought of the definition of wonder as that feeling of surprise and awe caused by something unexpected, exceptionally beautiful, or completely new. The wonder of a child when seeing snow for the first time. Then there's the other kind of wonder- curiosity. Wanting to find the answer to a question that is often seems unknowable. Such as "I wonder if twins ever realize that one of them was unplanned" or "I wonder why they make cars go really fast when it's illegal to drive really fast" or "I wonder why we can't tickle ourselves."

Our ancestors were always wondering about the world around them. As languages developed, stories were told to explain the unknown. Stories were passed down for centuries until modern humans developed the written languages and people no longer had to depend on verbal communication to tell their stories.

Skipping ahead about 300,000 years, we humans have evolved in ways that people living even one hundred years ago could not have fathomed. With the exception of a handful of science fiction writers, that is. And most of them off the mark by a longshot. Where's my hover car, huh? *But I digress.*

Bishop of Armagh James Ussher (1654): Ussher was the first to wonder about the age of the earth and try to solve it. So he looked to the Bible. I believe he counted the "begats" and the ages of each generation to come to the highly scientific conclusion that the earth was created around 6 pm on October 22nd 4004 BC. Close enough, right? Some people seem to think so, even today.

Fortunately, humans are never inclined to leave well enough alone. One such human, whose name has been mostly forgotten by history, was a Scottish agriculturist named James Hutton. He spent years examining grass, soil, stones, and the formation of rock strata until he realized that all of his observations led him to one (completely unacceptable in his day) conclusion that the earth was unknowably old. That the Biblical age of the earth was not only wrong, but laughably so. His work was met with much consternation, as you can imagine. He was highly ridiculed, also as you can imagine.

The natural philosophy of James Hutton paved the way for the science of Geology. The science that ultimately gives us the age of the earth.

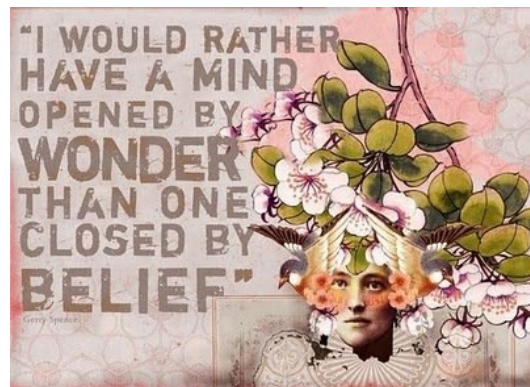
A hundred years later, Charles Darwin realized what he needed for his own theories to make sense—time. Without time, the *Origin of the Species* could never have been written. What James Hutton gave to Darwin was the gift of time.

And Darwin gave the world the gift of wonder. Not just the awe we feel when we contemplate the incredible mechanism of evolution, but the gift to wonder about the very nature of our universe.

Religion does not allow true wonder. Once you have been indoctrinated by religion, your mind refuses to ask questions that might conflict with your narrow world view. Once you have religion in your life, and you accept that a god simply snapped or spoke the universe into existence, there are no surprises. Nothing is exciting. God did it; end of story. You aren't allowed to question God.

To have wonder in your life, to be inspired and in awe of nature, to be able to ask questions and seek out serious answers is a gift we owe to the natural philosophers and scientists who bucked the system (often losing their lives at the hands of terrified priests) to ask questions. Thanks to them, there will always be questions as we travel around the sun on our small planet. So let us look upon the universe with wonder and also — never stop wondering.

To learn more about James Hutton, I recommend "The Man Who Found Time" by Jack Repcheck



Interfaith Celebrations for November

Holidays are beautiful reminders of the human experience. Whatever your culture or beliefs, celebrating a holiday is the same as celebrating life. These are only a handful of December celebrations:

- ◇ .December 6th: St. Nicholas Day
- ◇ December 8th: Bodhi Day
- ◇ December 12th: Feast Day - Our Lady of Guadalupe
- ◇ December 18th: Hanukkah begins
- ◇ December 22nd: Yule/Winter Solstice
- ◇ December 24th: Christmas Eve
- ◇ December 25th: Feast of the Nativity
- ◇ December 26st: Hanukkah ends
- ◇ December 26th: Boxer Day
- ◇ December 26th—January 1: Kwanzaa



December Birthdays: People of Wonder

December 5th—Walt Disney: Pioneer of the American animation industry

Regardless of what we've learned, and currently think, about Walt Disney it cannot be argued that Walt Disney remains an important figure in the history of animation and in the cultural history of the United States, where he is considered a national cultural icon.

December 8th — Brad Pitt: Actor Who is Known for His Good Looks and for His Portrayal of Unconventional Characters

Known for his breakout role in "Thelma & Louise" before he made "Cool World" which lead a lot of us to wonder if that film was going to be his last. Happily, it was not.

December 12th —Frank Sinatra: One of the world's best selling music artists of all time

With a career that spanned over five decades, Sinatra remains as one of America's most easily recognizable faces and voices. Starting out as an incredibly popular singer, he easily transitioned to movies and television. His versatility as an actor from light musicals to heavy dramatic roles still has me in awe.

December 16th—Ludwig van Beethoven: German Pianist and Composer

Surely no other composer has instilled more wonder than the man who wrote some of the most brilliant symphonies while completely deaf.

December 18th —Steven Spielberg: One of the Most Influential Personalities in the History of Cinema

After a shaky start with an uncooperative, 36 foot mechanical shark, Steven Spielberg made a decision that altered film history forever—he didn't show the fish, but let the music scare the crap out of us. And it worked!

