

CUUCSA NEWSLETTER/ VOL. 48, December, 2008  
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Web site: <<<http://www.cuucsa.org/>>>

.WE COVENANT TO PROMOTE:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;  
Justice, equality, and compassion in human relations;  
Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth,  
A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;  
The right to conscience and the use of the democratic process;  
The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all,  
Respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part.

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**Notice to Contributors:**

**The most reliable way to send text material for the newsletter is to copy and paste to an e-mail. The ability of my computer to open attachments is highly uncertain even when they are sent in two different types of files.**

**Also be advised that no matter what the monthly calendar reminder may say, the newsletter deadline henceforth will be the first Sunday after the CUUC board meeting on the second Wednesday.**

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**#1**

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

Dec 19: Americans United for Separation of Church and State, 7:pm

Dec 22: Beautify CUUC - Stewards of the Grounds, 10 am - 3 pm  
Dec 23: "Xmas in Iraq and Bleak Weather Forecasts," Rev. Phil Schulman  
Dec 24: Christmas Eve Service, Rev Phil Schulman 7:00 pm  
Dec 23: Men's Group, 6:30 pm  
Dec 30:"Joys and Concerns. Reminiscence and Resolution," Henry Halff  
Jan 06 A Military Veteran Speaks on Equal Rights for All,": Ron Clarke  
Jan 06 Brown Bag Socrates Cafe  
Jan 09 Board of Trustees Meeting  
Jan 13 "Reflections on Martin Luther King," Congregational panel  
Jan 13: Men's Group, 6:30 pm  
Jan 14: Women's Group, 7 pm  
Jan 15: Non-Violent Communication class, 7:00 - 9:00 pm  
Jan 20 Rev. Phil Schulman  
Jan 27 Rev Phil Schulman  
Jan.27: Men's Group, 6:30 pm  
Jan 28: Women's Group, 7 pm

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**#2.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Remarkable Film Group

Clem Chow

From the Remarkable Film Group:

The theme selected for the next series of Remarkable Films is “films set in a night club”.

The second film in this series will be “Cabaret”. This 1972 film based on the highly successful Broadway musical was one of the most successful transference of stage to film production. It won eight Oscars including best acting awards for Liza Minnelli and Joey Grey as well as directing award for Bob Fosse. This film will be shown at church at 6:30 PM on Sunday, January 20, 2008.

The Remarkable Film Group selected “Moulin Rouge” as the third film in the night club film series. The 2001 film was nominated for eight Oscars and won two. The film starred Nicole Kidman and Ewan McGregor and cemented the reputation of the Australian director, Baz Luhrmann. It also features the familiar music of the 20th Century. This film will be shown at church at 6:30 PM on Sunday, February 17, 2008.

To complete the night club film series, the group will be showing “Chicago”. This 2002 film also successfully transferred the Broadway hit musical to the screen. The film was nominated for 13 Oscars and won six including that of best actress in a supporting role for Catherine Zeta-Jones. The film also featured regular actors in dancing roles and reaffirmed the reputation of its director-choreographer, Bob Marshall. This film will be shown at church at 6:30 PM on Sunday, March 16, 2008.

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UU Church of Niagra

Hear the roar! Feel the mist! See the mighty Falls! July 20-23, 2008 Come experience the wonder of Niagara Falls including some great educational opportunities while being taken care of like royalty. The UU Church of Niagra is conducting a four day UU Niagara Experience which is a lifetime opportunity to encounter the Falls up close from every perspective, even safely riding beneath a tethered balloon. Spend four days with us exploring the rich historical and natural wonders around the Falls.

For information visit our web site : <http://www.uunex.net/>  
Email : [uunex@yahoo.com](mailto:uunex@yahoo.com) [<mailto:uunex@yahoo.com>](mailto:uunex@yahoo.com)  
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**#3**

**UPCOMING SERVICES**

December 23  
Xmas in Iraq and bleak weather forecasts  
Phil Schulman

How do we find reason for celebration while also remembering families suffering from the scourge of war? Do we have to ignore the news in order to see the beauty of this season? Will angels bring good tidings this year?

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December 30  
Joys and Concerns, Reminiscence and Resolution.  
Henry Halff.

It's New Year's Eve Sunday (or close enough thereto). Bring your memories, fond and not so fond, of the past year and your visions, joyous or fearful, of the year ahead. Join us in our second annual communion and toasts to the year past and that to come.

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January 6  
A Military Veterans Speaks on Equal Rights For All”  
Ron Clarke

Ron will discuss LGBT ( lesbian, gay, bisexual, transexual ) history, the impact of LGBT veterans and active duty service on our national defense and financial impact.

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January 13  
Reflections on Martin Luther King  
Congregational Panel

A panel of CUUC members will speak on the lasting impressions made by the slain civil rights leader.

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Jan 20 Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Person  
Rev. Phil Schulman

As tribute to MLK, lets look at our most controversial principal. We say it, but do we mean it? How do we put this principal to practice in our lives?

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Jan 27  
Capital Punishment & Suffering in the land  
Rev. Phil Schulman

Our opinion of the death penalty likely expresses our view of what we call "right and wrong." Perhaps we can move away from "Crossfire" type debates and speak of this issue in a way that fosters understanding of our deeper beliefs and values? Can we gain insight as to what we are creating? Can we gain a realistic understanding of how capital punishment affects us?

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**#4**  
**ARTICLES AND REPORTS**

From Our Pastor  
Phil Schulman  
The most wonderful time of the year?

The "most wonderful time of the year" also finds the populace with a heavy load of depression and anxiety. This is not news to any of us. We've all heard reports and warnings from an army of mental health professionals. We can assume that these writers are reaching out based on their love, concern and generosity. However, we're probably not paranoid if we suspect that these experts are yet another commercial industry trying to reach their target audience and expand the demand for their service.

One useful thing about all the attention on holiday stress and blues is that it contradicts the messages we get that suggest that we are "supposed to" be cheerful and generous

during the holiday season. One reason that people feel depressed in December and January is that they realize that they don't measure up to the holiday expectations. For example if we are alone or if we don't get along with our family, we are likely to get the idea that we are missing out on the good stuff, and our esteem may take a hit. Even if we generally do okay with the holidays, surely there comes an evening when we don't feel like "celebrating" or rising to the occasion.

Because we value freedom and autonomy, it is natural for us to resist being pushed or forced to do anything. For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. We get inundated with songs, movies, shows, and most of all commercials that suggest that happy is the way to feel now. Part of us is bound to resist.

One of the most common forms of resistance for us UU's is to rail against the commercialism of the season. I confess I love to rail against the commercialism of our society any time of year. I have a deep wish that our society could become liberated from the trap of commercialism that keeps us from valuing what's inside us. However, commercialism is too easy of a target. Besides I will undoubtedly take a shot or two against it in my next sermon. I mention it here for only two reasons. First, the force of our market place economy as it permeates the cultural airwaves is very real and not to be dismissed. Second, (therefore) it is helpful to recognize our natural desire to want to rebel against this force.

Otherwise, without consciousness of this inner rebellion, we are less likely to end up where we really want to be. If our resistance is unconscious we will be ruled by the very forces we wish to resist. Given my assumption of our rebellious nature, I suggest that we realize our freedom and use it. That means declining participation in aspects that are unhealthy or don't make sense to us. It also means that we can (at least occasionally) join in the swells of merriment that occur in this season

Where do you want to be now? What kind of experience do you wish to create for yourself?

There is room for all of it. We don't always have to have "appropriate holiday cheer" and we also don't need to reject the season altogether. If we enjoy playing "Scrooge" why not indulge a little? Where would that holiday classic be without Scrooge? And here is my wish for your authentic fulfillment: No matter how you did the holidays yesterday or last year, you are entirely free to do that in a way that supports and nourishes you! There can be room to honor the "resistance" and still be room to enjoy the many wonderful aspects of the season.

Here's a good holiday idea: "Peace on Earth, goodwill to All!"  
May each of us find peace, fulfillment and joy this year!

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SERVICE AUCTION NEWS!  
Henry Halff

Yippee!!!! It's Service Auction Time again. That time of year when we

offer our multifarious talents to each other, for absurd fees, which are then donated to the church.

Here's how the service auction works.

Phase I: We each offer services to be sold at auction. This phase starts on January 6 and ends on January 19.

Phase II: Everyone peruses all of the donations and makes bids, big bids. At the end of Phase II, there's a huge party where final bids are taken and a few special items are auctioned off. This phase starts on January 20 and ends with a bang on February 2.

Phase III: Everyone writes a check to the church and collects the services that they bought. This phase starts on February 2 and ends when it ends.

So, start thinking about what you are going to donate this year. (You are going to donate aren't you?) On the off chance that you can't think of something, here are some ideas.

Serve dinner at your house.  
Pack a picnic lunch.  
Cater, butle, tend bar, ....  
Lead a hike, bike ride, pub crawl, ....  
Paint a portrait.  
Bake, roast, fry ....  
Parents day off--take someone's kids to the zoo, the Witte, ....  
Serenade someone's sweetie.  
Conduct an auto or walking tour of ....  
Write a poem, an essay, ....  
Give someone tickets to the Spurs, a weekend in your vacation home, ....  
Let someone pick a topic that you give a service on.  
Teach someone how to fly a kite, dance the samba, ....  
Consult on computers, antiques, interior decoration ....  
Design invitations, business cards, web pages ....  
Paint a room, hang paintings, arrange flowers, decorate, ....  
Pay someone to fix up the church.

And maybe you can think of something that you would like someone to donate. If so, save the thought. The auction committee will do its level best to make sure that what you want to get donated does get donated.

Above all, don't blow all your cash on Christmas presents. You'll need some for the auction!

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LATE BREAKING NEWS!!! VERY IMPORTANT!

Henry Halff

We have just been advised an impending event of major consequence to each and every one of us. So brace yourselves and read on!

The year, that is, this year, 2007, is going to end soon, real soon. We have it on good authority that the year will actually come to an end on or about midnight, December 31. That's only two weeks away, folks!

We are trying to disseminate this news as widely as possible, as quickly as possible. For we realize that most of us are, to be honest, completely unprepared for this catastrophe. Many of us are deeply attached to 2007. Virtually no one has any idea of what the new year, which we understand will be called "2008," has in store for them or how they can prepare for it. So please, pass this warning on to everyone you know. It would not be a bad idea to forward this article to everyone in your address book.

CUUC, ever ready to bring its prodigious lay-based worship skills to bear on tough spiritual problems such as the passing of a year, will be offering a special service on Sunday, December 30. This service will prepare us for a smooth transition from our old, dearly beloved, 2007 to the dark, uncertain future of 2008. But we need your help, all of your help, to make the service a success. Please bring with you at least one of the following items.

- a memory of 2007 that sent your spirit soaring,
- a memory of 2007 that troubled and/or still troubles your spirit,
- something that you look forward to in 2008, and
- something will challenge you in 2008.

Feel free to bring any number of these items in any or all of the above categories. Come prepared to record them in some way and/or to speak about them.

If we all do this, we will be able to face the new year courageously, as UUs always do, with our heads held high, our faces to the wind, and a song in our hearts, affirming and promoting the inherent worth and dignity of every person and heeding the words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.

If you have any questions, contact Henry Halff ([henry@quiensabe.com](mailto:henry@quiensabe.com) <mailto:henry@quiensabe.com>, 493-7501). If you can't make it to the service, he will be happy to record and/or read any contributions that you might have.

-- Henry M. Halff 210-493-75019 Villa Verde (fax) 210-479-6435 San Antonio, TX 78230-2709 (cell) 210-363-7501 <http://www.quiensabe.com> AIM: [hmhalff@mac.com](mailto:hmhalff@mac.com) <mailto:hmhalff@mac.com>

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Stewardship Committee  
June Kachtik, Coordinator

### OUR DREAMS, OUR EXPECTATIONS FOR CUUC

The board received the report from the Stewardship Committee on the discussions held by members and friends about their desires for the church. The responses suggest that the church serves these major functions:

Community - It is essential that the church be a loving and devoted community. It should be a place where, as one participant put it, "everybody knows your name." It should take newcomers to its bosom. It should show concern for those of us who are or even might be in need. We should feel comfortable with each other.

Spiritual Growth and Ferment - The church should be a house for intellectual, spiritual, and social stimulation. It should offer the company of "cool" people. It should be place of spiritual and cultural diversity. It should strive, in particular, for more worship and worship that better addresses the congregation's spiritual needs.

Striving and Accomplishment - The church should be an organization stretches itself beyond its limits, both in service to itself and in service to the larger community. It should be the kind of institution that can build its own sanctuary. It should be the kind of institution that can help a Katrina evacuee make a home in San Antonio.

Posterity - The church should have a particular concern for the children in the congregation. It should seek, as a community, to instill in those children basic UU values. It should make special efforts to involve children in worship and in social action.

To sum it up, as a Mission Statement, Our church extends loving arms to all that enter its doors and holds them to its heart. We yearn for spiritual growth. We thrive on cultural diversity and ferment. As a community, we strive to promote the spiritual growth of our children and advance the greater good.

The Committee also noted areas that were not covered in these small-group discussions, but need to be addressed by the congregation as it prepares for the new church year. They are:

- \* Growth in the Church
- \* Professional Leadership
- \* Lay Leadership
- \* The Unitarian Universalist Community

The board will be asking each committee chair to attend an Orientation on this report after church on January 13, 2008. That will prepare committee chairs to discuss the report with the entire congregation over Soup Lunch on January 27, 2008.

The entire report is available at the URL: <http://cuucsa.org/pdf/vision.pdf> or, if you are on cuuc-admin, go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cuuc-admin>

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Care Committee Report  
Diane Wilson

The Care Committee was reorganized in early October, and we sent cards to Veronica Gard and Huyen Nguyen. Veronica traveled to England to see a friend whose son was ill, and Huyen went to Viet Nam to see her sick grandmother. This month we sent a card to Mary Beth Romeo, who has had a long running virus.

If a member of the congregation knows a circumstance in which the Care Committee could be helpful, please call me at 677-0513.

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RE News for December  
Glenna Jones-Kachtik, DRE

We are just learning about social justice and what it is or means.

The parents said that they really wanted the children to have some hands on Social Justice Experiences in addition to re planning to adopt a nursing home. At first, we were going to carol at one of the nursing homes that Dr. Nguyen practices at; but we decided that we wanted one that was nearer our church community. Tri-Sun is part of the South TX Medical Center member institutions and is right down the street on Babcock.

I will check with them and see if there is something that the children can do there. If it is not conducive, there is a retirement home right down the road in the medical center area that we should be able to make cards for and write letters to people living there.

I had plans to make sure that we remembered our college students; but we have yet to send them any CARE packages or even an e-mail. We might be able to do that 12/16 - we have Daniel Vargas e-mail and we can at least wish him well on his mid terms...

The parents decided that they wanted to participate in Under the Bridge so I will contact 1 UU and let them know that our children want to take part in February. This is a great opportunity for our children to see that there are others much less fortunate than they and that some of them are children!

We don't often think of children as being homeless; but according to SAMMs Shelter, 39% of the homeless in shelters are families with children... We are again in this Season of Giving and trying to bring home to the children of CUUC that there are people less fortunate and that this season and every season is about giving to others - that to be of service is the basis of our religious heritage! We encourage them to give to GAYT by placing money in their boxes as a family; to make sure that they include in their giving such places as Heifer International by

donating money for a share of trees, rabbits, chicks, ducks and livestock so that people can become self sufficient. We try to let them know about UNICEF and fair trade in an effort to teach them that it is truly better to give than to receive.

I was recently sent an e-mail by two separate classmates - called the Gratitude Campaign. It espouses just saying thank you - either verbally or in sign language to our men and women in uniform. How would it look in the if children took the time to let people know that they were appreciated - not just our soldiers - but our Doctors, our teachers - those people who are actually making a difference in the lives of others? If we just said Thanks - You are appreciated - Peace be with you - any number of greetings that would let them know that someone thinks of them; would the world be better off? If we are supposed to work for peace and justice - our parents here at CUUC are doing some pretty hands on stuff!

Patty recently took her kids to volunteer wrapping presents at Elf Louise and her children are making kits to hand out to homeless people and those are just things near Christmas! All the parents here are involved in teaching their children the true meaning of social justice. from all of us - to all of you - Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

May you know peace and may you strive to make 2008 a year of social justice.

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Social Justice Opportunities  
Glenna Jones-Kactik

Social Justice News Social justice had an online meeting this past week. It was decided that GAYT boxes should all be back in on the final Sunday in January. Glenna will make a last plea the Sunday before during Phil's service. We also will be participating in the annual MLK march and festival in January and we will be contacting (Marilyn Stavinhoa) about the dinner to be held also in January. We are hosting the soup lunch on the last Sunday in January.

June Kachtik asked for volunteers for UUHAC and Phil had some thoughts about the 10 Tree Challenge. During the last RE meeting, the parents decided that they wanted social justice to be a bit more hands on. To that end, we are participating in Under the Bridge in February. The SAMMs Shelter was discussed but then discarded. As a whole, social justice decided to take this on.

Sunday, December 16, 2007 There will be a box in the coffee room for articles for the Shelter and a list of needed items will be provided. According to SAMM ministries, the causes of homelessness in San Antonio can be attributed to: lack of affordable housing, low paying jobs, Mental illnesses, abuse, and the lack of needed services, as well as domestic violence and poverty.

On any given day, there are 2,250 homeless men, women and CHILDREN in 59% are single men or women-2% are unaccompanied youth 20% are African American. SAMM helps the homeless become self-sufficient by offering, with dignity and compassion, shelter, housing and services. The Transitional Living and Learning Center provides residential living, life skills and support for up to 40 families. Transitional Housing provides life skills training and support for families in 25 scattered site houses in San Antonio and Bexar County They also have Case Management; Support Services for families at 16 apartment units with San Antonio Housing Authority through their "Families First" program, which also does case management and social service referrals for homeless people accused of violating "quality of life" ordinances (sleeping or urinating in public, public intoxication, etc.) through Support Services for Community Court.

This is the season of the year for giving to others less fortunate than we so - let's pitch in and do so.

Mary Beth and I will be sending out e-mails and letters soon about GAYT - remember to set the box on your table during this season and throw spare change into it or place the equivalent of what you would pay for a meal into it each time you eat. Explain to visitors what the box is for (a brilliant idea from Ron Clarke and Burke Reed) and encourage them to support UUSC and its work.

As always, Social Justice asks that you be mindful of others this holiday season: Buy fair trade goods when you can. Support Elf Louise, Angel Tree and other agencies that give to those less fortunate than you so that their children can have a good Christmas too. Help the work of agencies such as Heifer International and UNICEF by buying their products - (both can be purchased on line and their work is ongoing and appropriate for any season. Make kits up of food and blankets, give them to the homeless: We are fortunate that we have few really cold days and nights here - but we do have some.

Don't forget the animals. If you are going to get a dog or cat, visit the local shelters. Mixed breeds usually live longer than purebreds and you will get a wonderful companion at the fraction of the cost you would pay from a pet store or a 'breeder

Have a "Holly, Jolly Christmas" and an even happier 2008 and may all the peace, love and joy of this season be found right on your doorstep.

Glenna Jones-Kachtik and Mary Beth Romeo Social Justice Co-Chairs

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**#5**

## **AFFINITY GROUPS**

Socrates Cafe  
Marilyn DeKing

The Brown Bag Socrates Cafe will meet at 12:15 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month

at Community Unitarian Universalist Church. Bring your lunch and join us for a satisfying philosophical session.

At the beginning of each session, participants submit and vote on the question to be discussed. Resolution is not the goal of the discussion. We usually end with more questions than we began with.

Everyone is welcome to participate in Socrates Cafe or to visit and see what it is about

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### Women's Support Group

Jean Halff

The Women's Support Group is open to CUUC women and friends of the church. We meet every 2 weeks, on a Monday night at the church, starting at 7 p.m. and usually finishing before 9 p.m.

Each woman usually talks for about 10 minutes about anything she wishes. However, you don't have to talk if you would rather not. What is divulged is kept confidential unless otherwise stated. It is a great way to get to know the women in the church on a more personal level in a safe environment. We invite you to come and join us and let us get to know you.

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### Men's Group

Steven Botts

The CUUC men's group meets every second and fourth Sunday from 6:30 - 8:30 P.M. All CUUC men or visitors are welcome to join us.

Group leadership rotates from meeting to meeting. The leader for each meeting is also the host, and he is responsible for furnishing snacks and drinks.

We usually start off meetings with a clearing, in which each member is allowed to talk about recent events in his life, if he wishes to, for as long as he sees fit. Next, the facilitator introduces the topic for the evening. This may involve a short reading - a poem, an article or other text. The subject could be just about anything that the facilitator would like the group to address: What's going on at CUUC, religion, economics science, health, family, friendship, etc.

Around 8:30, we wind things up by deciding who is going to facilitate the next meeting, declare this one finished, clean up, and leave.

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### Remarkable Film Group

Clem Chow

The Remarkable Film Group consists of members and friends of CUUC who gather each month to view one feature film and discuss it afterward. Everyone is welcome to attend. The films are usually shown at church at 6 PM on the third Sunday of each month. Films are shown in a series. The attendees select the theme, and content of each series normally compose of four films on that theme, whether directed by the same person or featuring a specific actor or actress. Current leaders of the group are Clem and Joyce Chow. Any questions about this group may be directed to Clem or Joyce.

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**#6**

**DIRECTORY**

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Email Addresses

Messages to the Board of Trustees may be sent to [cuuc-board@yahoogroups.com](mailto:cuuc-board@yahoogroups.com)  
<<mailto:cuuc-board@yahoogroups.com>>.

Calendar additions and changes should be submitted to Diane Wilson,  
[calendar@cuucsa.org](mailto:calendar@cuucsa.org) <<mailto:calendar@cuucsa.org>>.

Suggestions for and comments on the worship program may be sent to [cuuc-worship@yahoogroups.com](mailto:cuuc-worship@yahoogroups.com) <<mailto:cuuc-worship@yahoogroups.com>>.

Requests for special assistance and pastoral care may be sent to [cuuc-cares@yahoogroups.com](mailto:cuuc-cares@yahoogroups.com) <<mailto:cuuc-cares@yahoogroups.com>>.

Requests for use of the church facility and reports of maintenance problems may be sent to [cuuc-ops@yahoogroups.com](mailto:cuuc-ops@yahoogroups.com) <<mailto:cuuc-ops@yahoogroups.com>>.

Changes of address, other membership information, and newsletter subscription or  
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