



The El Paso NUUsletter

December 2011

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Luis Irwin's Quest – a review of Cosmic Biology

By John Dart

Imagine a book in which one sentence includes the following terms: “motile magnetroph,” “cellular specializations,” “energy-yielding gradients,” “thylakoid membranes,” and “plant chloroplasts that sequester electrons.” The book exists, and it was written by our former member Louis Irwin and his colleague Dirk Schulze-Makuch. Published earlier this year, it is called *Cosmic Biology: How Life Could Evolve on Other Worlds*. The authors state that, in contrast to an earlier, more technical book of theirs on the same topic, *Cosmic Biology* is intended for “a reader without a higher education in science.” I think they may have overestimated their target audience.

Many of the sentences in the book contain technical phraseology similar to the examples cited above, although that one sentence is noteworthy for going above and beyond the rest. By the way, “magnetroph” apparently is a misprint of “magnetotroph,” a term that is defined in the book’s extensive glossary. I found numerous typos throughout the book, indicating to me that it may have been rushed into print without adequate proofreading.

Those are the negative comments I would make about this book, but there are many positive things about it as well. If you are curious about what forms biology could take on worlds vastly different from our own, this book offers intriguing possibilities. The authors describe in detail the different kinds of biology that conceivably could populate other planets and moons in our solar system. Their speculations are based on their knowledge of the chemical basis for life as we know it here, extrapolated to the kinds of chemistry, and perhaps life, that are likely to be found on other planetary bodies. This tour of our cosmic neighborhood is followed by discussions of the evolution of intelligence, the likelihood of other technologically adept creatures out there somewhere, and the ultimate destiny that awaits life on Earth and elsewhere.

If you are looking for a well-written, well-illustrated, and well-annotated book on the frontiers of biology, and if you don’t mind expanding your vocabulary quite a bit, *Cosmic Biology* may be the book for you.

Announcements, updates and MORE inside! December is going to be a GREAT month!

This congregation welcomes the participation of all members, friends and visitors without regard to race, class, national origin, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression.

**Dec. 4:****Miracles**

Who among you has experienced a miracle? I would venture a guess that most of us have been fortunate enough to witness or experience a miracle at least once in our lives. What better time than the Christmas Season to honor these miracles? Please join us Sunday, Dec 4th and share your miracle with us. The service will be similar to the poetry service in format, so don't be shy! By sharing your story, you will also share joy and hope.

Dec. 11:**To Wake Before Dying**

Presented by: Reverend Nancy J. Anderson

Unitarian Universalist worship has often been described as the "celebration of life." As we all know from our own experience, life is not easy. All of us have known suffering, pain and adversity. Even in this season of Advent, the season of hope, many of us experience a sense of hopelessness and discouragement. Where can we turn when life is too hard? How can we reclaim hope? What is it we celebrate, anyway?

Dec. 18:**Winter Holiday Celebration!**

Presented by CYRE

The CYRE students and teachers invite you to join them as they look at the winter holidays from their perspective.

Dec. 24:**Christmas Eve Service**

Begins at 6:30 pm

Coming together on Christmas Eve has become a cherished tradition within our community. Join us this year at 5:30pm for a candlelight service that celebrates the Light, Love and Hope that this holiday celebrates. Bring your caroling voice!

Dec. 25:

NO SERVICE

Jan. 1:

UU LITE

SPECIAL EVENT!!

Tree Trimming & Potluck Dinner: Dec. 2nd Begins at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary. There is no childcare scheduled for this event.

Christmas Bazaar

Our annual Christmas Bazaar will be on Sunday, December 4 and Sunday, December 11 from 9:30 am – 1:00 pm. Vendors will be selling items suitable for Christmas presents or for the holidays. We will also have a bake sale (contact Tina Priester to let her know what you plan to bake), chocolate truffles on December 11, and pecans by the pound. Bring your checkbook and do your holiday shopping.
****TRUFFLES WILL NOT BE SOLD DEC. 4TH BUT WILL BE SOLD ON DEC. 11TH!!**

Pledge Drive

Our annual pledge drive got off to a good start but has slowed down. We now have 33 pledges for a total of \$46,970 out of the \$58,263.24 in the proposed budget. If you haven't yet turned in your pledge card or if you need a pledge card, please contact Naomi Lacy, Nick Emerick, or Pat White. We need to finish the pledge drive by early December so that we can finalize the budget for next year before the annual meeting on December 18.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE & RECEIVE SERVICE

If you have concerns for yourself or for others or need a ride, please call 562-4001.

Food Bank:

Clear box with a blue lid next to the Sanctuary information table/ Food is donated to the Missouri Street Shelter.

Chalice Lighting, Flowers & Music:

For opportunities to help with Sunday morning programs, please call 562-4001.

Recycling at the Community:

El Paso recycles not only paper, but also cardboard, junk mail, plastic containers, cans, and aluminum foil. We don't have a recycling pickup at the Community; however, there are members willing to take stuff home to recycle; so, when we have community events, like the potluck luncheons, please set aside recyclables which includes the disposable foil baking pans and the plastic cookie or raw veggie trays.

Address Changes:

Anytime you move, change your phone number or your email address, please let our office administrator, Christy, know, so she can update our records and the directory. Just send her an email: UUCEP@UUELPASO.ORG

Volunteers Needed:

We need volunteers to help with Sunday Services. There is a sign-up sheet, to bring snacks, on the table next to the double doors in the sanctuary. People are also needed for set-up and clean-up. Please contact Enedina Vargas to sign up.

Orders of Service and Bulletin

Announcements need to be to Christy no later than Wednesday of that week. 915-562-4001 or uucep@uuel Paso.org

Events taking place at UUCEP will be listed on the calendar when a room reservation (Building Usage Form 1-A) has been made through the office. Forms are available in the hutch outside the office. Forms need to be submitted 30 days before the event.



Special Announcements & Requests

ADULT RE Class possibility:

I would like to give a class on Kabbalah (Jewish Mysticism). It is fascinating and thought provoking!

This will be an introduction (and some advanced ideas) to the symbolic nature of the Hebrew alphabet and Hebrew words and Gematria. This class would possibly be 1-2 hours on 2 different Sundays and given by Gregory Glavinovich. If interested, please contact either Sunday Programs, Mr. Glavinovich or the NUUsletter editor so we will know how many people would be interested in attending.



Do you enjoy your coffee and treats after the service?

Volunteers are DESPERATELY needed to help out with bringing goodies as well as help with set up and clean up.

PLEASE DO NOT TAKE OUR VOLUNTEERS FOR GRANTED!

CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF!

We all have things to do after Sunday Services, but our volunteers stay sometimes until after 2pm cleaning up and this is after arriving early to make sure there is coffee prior to the service.

GREETERS are needed for Sunday Services as well! Please see Enedina (Dina) Vargas for more information.



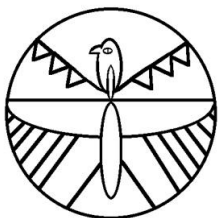
CALLING ALL GAMERS!!!



Do you play Magic: The Gathering?

If you're an avid player or want to learn, we hope you will join us for *after* the services each Sunday.

Game is open to youth of all ages! *Come and get your game on!*



Camp Thunderbird Save the Dates!

Our annual family camp for 2012 will be held Tuesday, July 3 – Sunday, July 8. Save the dates and get your leave requests in early so that you can join us for a wonderful time in the cool Gila Mountains.



Dear Community,

Recently we began a conversation about the Occupy El Paso / Occupy Wall Street movements. As you know, some of us are already committing our support to it. Several of our Community members are taking active roles in the Occupation. I believe that the Occupy movement is a cause that exemplifies core UU values. It is a non-violent protest focusing on the need for social justice and reform.

In short, I hope this is something that our community can support. The Occupy Movement needs more than just the courageous young people that are so passionate and vocal. If you can't see yourself camping out in a public park that is fine, there are many other ways to show your support. The basic needs are:

1. food
2. basic medical supplies
3. public relations assistance
4. computer / information assistance
5. blankets and camping supplies

and lots more! What is your area of expertise? We can put you to good use! If you have items / food to donate and can't deliver it, let me know and I will make sure it gets there.

If you are interested please consider any General Assembly meeting every evening at 7pm in San Jacinto Plaza. Also, please visit the following websites:

<http://occupyelpaso.org/>

<http://www.occupytogether.org/>

<http://nycga.cc/>

For those of you on Twitter and Facebook, Occupy El Paso can be found there as well.

Hope to see you there!

Sonia Galindo



Social Justice: Chalice Circle meeting at 7pm in the Sanctuary on the 1st & 3rd Mondays each month.

For childcare, please contact Tina Priester at DYCRE@UUELPASO.ORG to arrange childcare.

Pagan Spirituality Group

All events this month will be held at The Crane House (3500 Tyler) and will begin at 6:30pm. Childcare will be available for Tarot and Yule. For Yule this year, we are asking everyone to bring a wrapped altar gift (under \$5) for a gift exchange. We hope you will come and join us!

DECEMBER EVENTS: 14th Tarot Class 21st Yule 30th Drumming Circle

****Pagan Council Meeting will be before Tarot Class! If you would like to help set up next year's schedule, please join us at 6pm that evening at the Crane House.**

Witches' Ball Total....drum roll please! \$1230!!!!

Thank you to EVERYONE for helping & coming out!



The Board of Trustees will meet in the Sanctuary the third Sunday of each month after the Service. Regular meetings are open meetings with no set agenda. Members and friends of UUCEP are invited to attend and present matters for consideration by the Board.

Do You Want to Know What's Going On?

Copies of the minutes from Congregation & Board Meetings are posted on the door between the middle hallway & Fellowship Hall. Reading these minutes is a good way to keep up with what is happening in our Community.

The Program Council Committee Chairs meet the 2nd Sunday of each month at 12 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

These meetings are open to anyone wishing to be more active in our community.



UUCEP's Book Discussion Group

Dear All,
 Our Book Discussion Group has begun, but it's not too late to join in on the discussions. Our first book, *The Spiritual Emerson: Essential Writings by Ralph Waldo Emerson.* It is a Beacon Press Book and the introduction and first chapter are available online.

Please call me at 402.214.7904 or 915.222.8481 for information or to arrange transportation.

Naomi Lacey, PhD

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- Gregory Glavinovich 12/01
- Phyllis Petersen 12/05
- Niescja Turner 12/05
- Connie Crawford 12/09
- Lynn Rutledge 12/16
- Kevin Rauvola 12/18
- Abigail Galindo 12/29
- Carol Veit 12/31

Happy Birthday to all!

If your birthday is incorrect, or is not listed, please send proper information to Christy at uucep@uuel Paso.org

Administration & Finance Updates:

On-going fundraisers:
 The Albertsons card is easy to use. Just give it to the clerk to scan when you checkout. We receive 1% of what you spend each month. If you don't yet have a card or know someone who would like one, see Pat White.

UUCEP \$152.83 has received from Albertsons Community Partners for this past quarter.

We are also selling our UUCEP t-shirts & cookbooks on Sunday. The t-shirts are \$15 for adult sizes and \$10 for children's sizes. We have 1 cookbook left at \$10.



Membership Committee Chair: Enedina Vargas

If **YOU** are interested in membership in this Community, please ask the greeter for a membership application. After completing the form, please put it in the offering basket or give it to a greeter at the end of the service.

The Membership Committee meets every other second Sunday, 30 minutes after the service. All are welcome to attend. If you need a new nametag, please see a greeter on Sunday morning. You do not have to be a member to wear a nametag.

Interested in getting to know us?

If you have been visiting and feel that you would like to get to know us better, please fill out one of the light-green Welcome Guest!/Visitor Cards found in the packet that a greeter can get for you. The packets are located at the entrance to the hall on the shelves. Please ask for one; fill it out and place it in the offering basket or give it to one of the greeters at the end of the service. Remember that you do not have to be a member to wear a nametag: so, if you would like one, be sure to let us know.



Denominational Affairs

Mountain Desert District (MDD) Office:
District Executive: Rev Nancy Bowen executive@mdduua.org
2242 S Albion Street Denver, CO 80222
(303) 756-1378/ (303) 756-1407 FAX



*A n n o u n c i n g t h e 2 0 1 2
B u i l d i n g B e l o v e d
C o m m u n i t y E v e n t*

This year's Building Beloved Community Event is titled **The Resilient Power of Stories** and will be held January 20-22, 2012 in Denver, CO.

Online Registration coming soon!

Stories – personal and communal, inspirational and mundane – shape our lives, inform our identities, and transform our spirits. Stories are the substance of covenantal community. Stories express our values, give us vision, and empower us to live with integrity as we live into our highest ideals.

The act of sharing stories, both in telling and in listening, grows our imaginations and creates new possibilities. All social change is the telling and re-telling of stories. You are one story away from having your life changed, or changing the life of another.

Learn about the power of your stories to connect, to transform, and to create just and resilient communities – to create beloved community.

Send a team from your congregation and receive discounted registration!

Tentative Schedule:

- Friday, January 20th, 1-5 PM: Program for religious professionals
- Friday, January 20th, 5-7 PM: Registration & dinner
- Friday, January 20th, 7-9 PM: Interactive keynote address (open to all)
- Saturday, January 21st, 9-5 PM: Public program
- Sunday, January 22nd, 9:15AM and 11AM: Shared worship

Featured Presenters:

Rev. Jan Christian: *Leave No Brother Behind: A Sister's Memoir*
James Tracy & Amy Sonnie: *Hillbilly Nationalists, Urban Race Rebels, and Black Power*

Pledge Drive UPDATE: If you have not yet turned in your pledge card for 2011, please send it to UUCEP, or contact Naomi Lacy, 222-8481 naomi.lacy@gmail.com, Ann Singer, 755-6818 ann.singer@att.net or Pat White, 591-3562 pat_white@hotmail.com.

Annunciation House

If you would like to volunteer to help prepare a meal or donate items, please contact Ann Singer or Janet Kincaid for more info.

If you would like more information, please contact: Ann Singer, 755-6818 or Janet Kincaid, 539-8851.

**Let your light shine.
Be a source of strength and courage.
Share your wisdom.
Radiate love.**

NEED A HAND?

The *Caring Committee* at UUCEP is alive & well. If you are ill or need help of any kind or know someone who is or does, please call Ann Singer at 915-755-6818. We will do our best to see that you are taken care of.

GET CONNECTED





Children and Youth Religious Education 2011-2012

Wonders of Wonders!!

Is it already that time of year?

Well the winter holidays are upon us again which means it's time for our Annual Intergenerational CYRE Winter Service!

The youth and their teachers have begun putting their minds to work on the service and it promises to be another terrific event!

Practice will happen during classes as well as on Saturday Dec. 10th & 17th from 10:30 – noon. Childcare will be available for those parents wanting to help on those days. It is very important that your child(ren) are present over the next couple of weeks for class and practice if they want to be part of the service on Dec. 18th.

Our 3rd Annual Toy Drive will begin with the Tree Trimming on Dec. 2nd.

Our CYRE card fundraiser is still going on!

Only \$10

Purchasing these cards will not only help the CYRE, but also transform the backyard into a family oriented outdoor sanctuary.



DISCOUNT CARD VENDORS:

Winger's Wings ☪ Texas Roadhouse ☪ Fuddruckers ☪ Arby's ☪ Dairy Queen ☪ Brown Bag Deli ☪ Long John Silver's ☪ Jando's Italian Cuisine ☪ Bob O's Family Fun Center ☪ PB's Pizza ☪ Pizza Pros ☪ Peter Piper Pizza ☪ Burger King ☪ Mulligan's North Bar & Grill ☪ Carl's Jr. ☪ Little Caesars Pizza ☪ Leo's Mexican Food Restaurant

AVAILABLE NOW & DOES NOT EXPIRE UNTIL OCTOBER 2012!

CONTACT TINA PRIESTER OR CYRE YOUTH TO PURCHASE ONE AND START SAVING TODAY!

If you have any questions or comments about the CYRE program, please contact DCYRE Tina Priester at 915-235-6867, email: dcyre@uuel Paso.org or after the service on Sunday (if you can catch me, ha ha).

December 2011

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