

Created by

*The Rev Ralph Yeager Roberts*

The original Unitarian Universalist Advent Calendar has been a three year labor of love. My great hope is that Unitarian Universalists of all ages would make it a part of their holiday season for years to come.

*Ralph Yeager Roberts*

11 / 2015



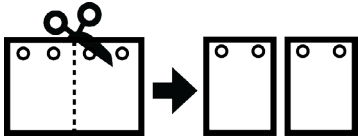
To contact the author and artist  
email Ralph Yeager Roberts at  
[yeagerroberts@gmail.com](mailto:yeagerroberts@gmail.com)

This free download should make it almost as simple as it was affordable for you to start counting down the days until December 25th. Below are some basic instructions for how to get everything ready to enjoy the Original Unitarian Universalist Advent Calendar, after which you will find some details about the calendar's creator and links for you to use to access additional resources for personalizing how you set up and use this Advent Calendar.

- 1) **Print** on 8.5" X 11" white paper. In your *print settings* select *single sided color document with a landscape layout*.

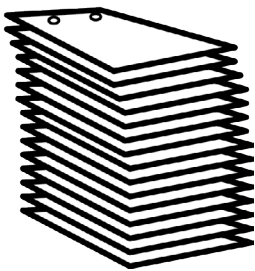


- 2) Use the dotted blue lines as a guide to **cut the pages in half** and where indicated use a paper punch to **make holes**.



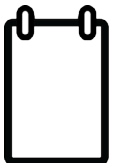
- 3) Make a single stack of the 8.5" X 5.5" pages. Check to be sure . . .

Cover page →  
About page →  
December 1st →  
December 2nd →  
⋮  
December 23rd →  
December 24th →  
Blank Template →  
Blank Template →  
Blank Template →  
Blank Template →



- the printed sides all face up,
- the holes are on the top edge and line up, and
- the pages are in order starting with the cover in the very front or top of your stack, the dates go in descending, and finally the blank templates.

- 4) Bind your advent calendar with 2 metal binding rings or using a length of ribbon threaded through the punched holes with a double knotted bow.



or



In addition to what is included in this document there are a wealth of materials designed to be used as part of The Original Unitarian Universalist Advent Calendar available for you to access and use for free. You can get templates for making ornaments that go with the calendar, images you can print to labels and use to decorate Hershey's kisses or use as a seal for a gift bag or envelope, and all the digital assets you need to share the calendar digitally say posted to your congregation's web page. For the latest about updates on revisions or additions to the Calendar, additional resources you can use, examples of how people have used and personalized their calendar, and to find links to where all of those good things can be found you should go to and like the UU-

The Original Unitarian Universalist Advent Calendar is being featured on the UUA Worship web where you will also be able to view each day's image or download this single document ready to print calendar.



## "Over the River and Through the Woods"

The song "Over the River and Through the Woods" is based on a poem by Unitarian author and human rights champion Lydia Maria Child. Inspiration for the poem came from her own childhood memories of Thanksgiving at her grandparent's house.

As Unitarians and others started to revive and re-imagine Christmas the distinctively Yankee tradition of Thanksgiving became the template they followed in establishing how Christmas would be celebrated.

World AIDS Day 

1844

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts



## Kwanzaa First Celebrated

Kwanzaa's founder Dr. Maulana Karenga was funded in part through money that the UUA had designated for efforts in support of black empowerment.

Drawing from traditional West African harvest celebrations, Karenga introduced practices he believed could strengthen the community, nurture a positive African American identity, and inspire wider pan-African solidarity.

1966

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts



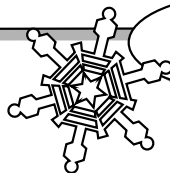
## THE ROAD IN WINTER

### Currier and Ives

Founded by Unitarian Nathaniel Currier, The "Currier and Ives" Printing Firm published an annual set of winter images. Scenes of snowball fights, horse and sleigh races, and children ice skating, wooed Americans into a love affair with the idea of a snow covered New England Holiday.

The 1950 choral arrangement of "Sleigh Ride" attests to the spot these illustrations hold in our modern Christmas canon.

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts



1834



His Inspiration came after a cold day of ice skating.

### The Earmuff is Invented

When he was only 15, lifelong Unitarian Chester Greenwood patented the earmuff from which he made his fortune. He opened a bike shop where he found it easy to invent ways to solve many more problems than just cold ears which earned him respect in the field of mechanical engineering.

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

1873





## "Jingle Bells"

*It was first performed for Thanksgiving by the Sunday school children of the Unitarian Church in Savannah, GA and under the leadership of the church music director and the song's composer, James Pierpont.*

*"Jingle Bells" was published in 1857 but only gained widespread popularity After it was performed by Bing Crosby in 1934.*

**1857**

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

Dec. 6th is the feast of St. Nicholas. In many parts of Europe this is the day when Santa arrives bringing presents and candy.



## The Modern Look and Lore of Santa Claus

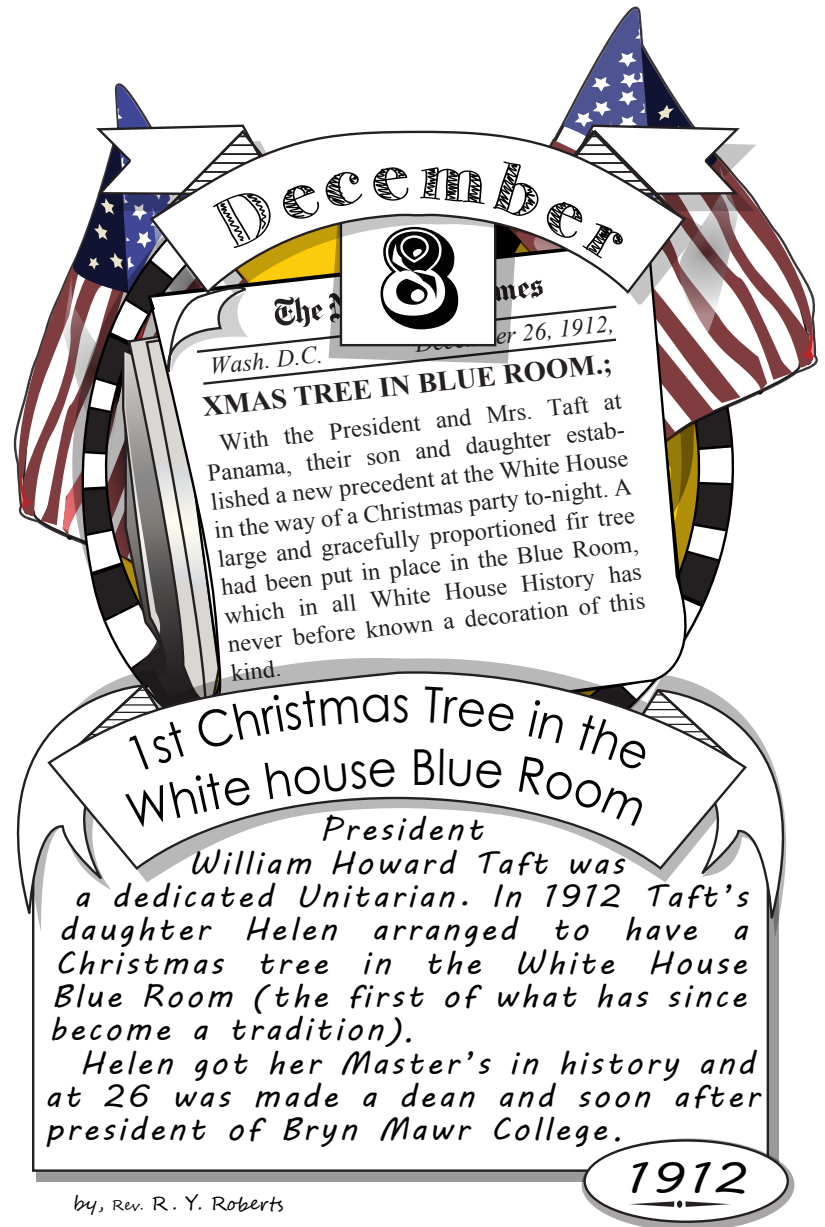
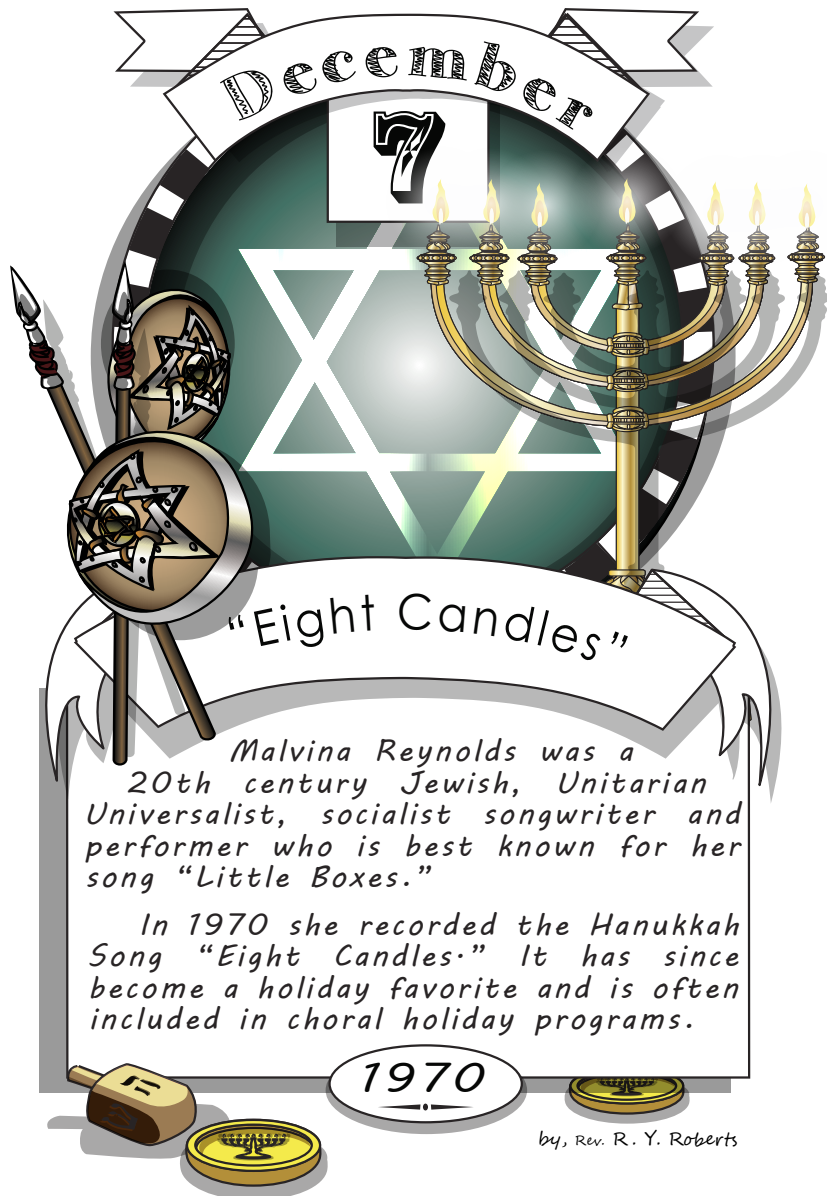
*Universalist Thomas Nast produced over 70 illustrations of Santa. It is from Nast that the world first learned of Santa's red suit, that he gives coal if you're naughty, and even that Santa, as a world citizen, belonging to no single country, lives at the North Pole.*

**1863**

2 other traditions introduced by Thomas Nast.



by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts



December

9



### "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" was written by Unitarian Minister Hamilton Sears while recovering from a nervous breakdown. The melancholy carol's conspicuous omission of any reference to Jesus or his birth has drawn criticism from orthodox Christians. Ironically among Sears' Unitarian contemporaries his theological ideas about Jesus were considered rather old-fashioned.

1849

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

December

10

CHAPTER 10



### Christmas Scenes in "Little Women"

Unitarian  
Louisa May Alcott wrote over a dozen Christmas themed stories and poems in addition to the Christmas scenes in "Little Women." Her description of a holiday with the March family nurtured a growing sense of American nostalgia for a Christmas only newly imagined.

1868



by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

December

11

Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol"

*Unitarian*

Charles Dickens impacted the way Christmas is celebrated today more than any other individual. "A Christmas Carol" has been credited with popularizing everything from turkey dinners and family gift exchanges to holiday bonuses. Less obvious but still immensely influential is the book's story of one man's redemption which Dickens pointedly shows being accomplished apart from the work of God or Church. So while it is a ghost story and Scrooge is helped by supernatural beings the help itself is not supernatural at all.

1843

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

December

12

Christmas Day is Clara Barton's Birthday

*Clara Barton, Universalist and founder of the American Red Cross, is a hero of our liberal religious faith.*

*We remember her around the holidays since she was born Christmas day, 1821. But in the season when we recall an army of angels proclaiming "peace on earth" it seems right to recall one whose life and legacy have done much to realize the angels' message and who was herself known as the "angel of the battlefield" because of her work on the front lines during the civil war providing and managing care for the wounded.*

After the Civil War most in congress opposed involvement in foreign conflicts so there seemed no real point in having a U.S. chapter of what is now the international Red Cross and Crescent Association. To overcome this argument Barton persuaded the organization to expand its mission to include a commitment to provide relief assistance following natural disasters or domestic emergencies. Her plan worked and congress voted to establish the American Red Cross.

1821

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts



December

14



"I Heard the Bells  
on Christmas Day"

Unitarian Poet

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote "Christmas Bells"\* just months before the end of the Civil War. The poem captures the despair felt by the nation after years of war. Drawing on his own experience of having hope restored after tragedy, the final verses celebrates the resilience of people who endure all manner of grief and misery yet find ways to confidently hope toward a day of "peace on Earth."

\* The poem "Christmas Bells" was later set to music and was renamed "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day."

1865

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

December

13



James Edgar's hometown of Brockton, MA holds an annual Santa's hat day in Edgar's honor.

First Department  
Store Santa

Department store owner James Edgar delighted customers' children by walking about the store on weekends dressed as Santa Clause. Edgar aspired to broad-mindedness in his religion, and though not a member he attended the Unitarian church where he paid the anual pledge to reserve a pew. \*

\* In fact he paid for a Pew with the local Unitarian, Congregational, and Episcopal churches but never actually joined any.

1890

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts



December

15

Retrospe  
Travel Western  
I was present at  
the introduction into  
the new country of the  
spectacle of the German  
Christmas-tree.

... The children  
poured in; but in a  
moment, every voice  
was hushed. Their faces  
were upturned to the

Harriet Martineau  
blaze, all eyes wide  
open, all lips parted,  
all steps arrested.  
... I have little  
doubt the Christmas-tree  
will become one of the  
most flourishing exotics  
of New England.

## First American Christmas Tree

Unitarian  
Minister Charles Follen  
delighted his son and party  
guests with a Christmas tree as he  
had growing up in Germany.

Follen postponed the festivities  
until New Year's so that British  
author and Unitarian Harriet Martineau  
could attend.

Her published account of the party  
(perhaps presumptuously) declared the  
event to be America's introduction to  
the Christmas tree and (accurately)  
predicted the future popularity of this  
custom.

1832

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

December

16

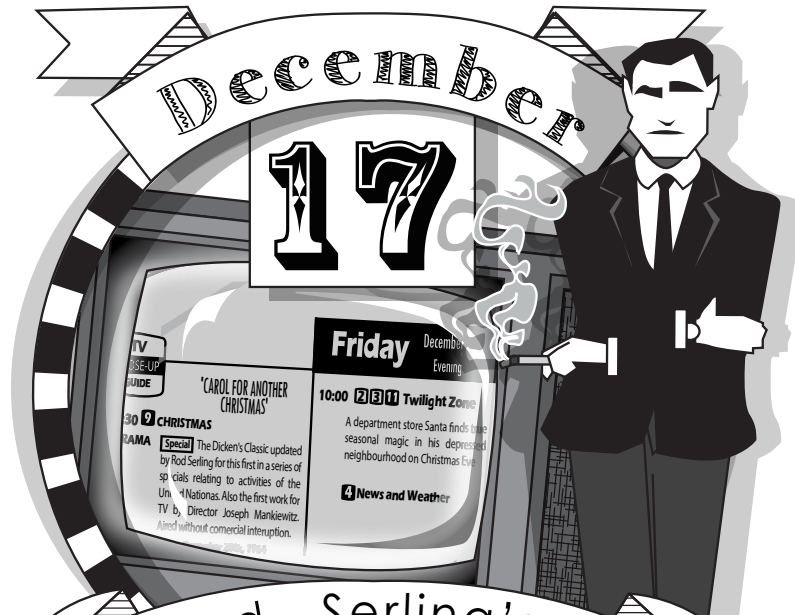


## Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales

When the man he  
loved married a woman Danish  
Unitarian Hans Christian Andersen wrote  
one of his first and most beloved fairy tales  
of a mermaid's tragically unrequited love.  
His timeless tales include several Christmas  
classics such as "The Little Match Girl,"  
"The Fir Tree," and "The Snow Queen."

1835

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts



## Rod Serling's Christmas Specials

Though Jewish, Rod Serling always loved Christmas (maybe because his birthday was Dec. 25th). He became a U.U. while in college and later joined the Unitarian Community Church of Santa Monica. He wrote several holiday episodes and specials including his own modern take on Dickens, "Carol for another Christmas," and a touching "Twilight Zone" episode, "Night of the Meek."

1963

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts



## "Do You Hear What I Hear?"

Amid the anxiety of the Cuban missile crisis Unitarian Noel Regney wrote "Do You Hear What I Hear?" as a protest song but the allusions to the Bible stories of Jesus' birth are so strong that recording artists and the public have always associated it with Christmas.

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

1962

"Pray for peace people everywhere."

December

19

The album included 18 secular and religious carols arranged into 4 suits



### "The Many Moods of Christmas"

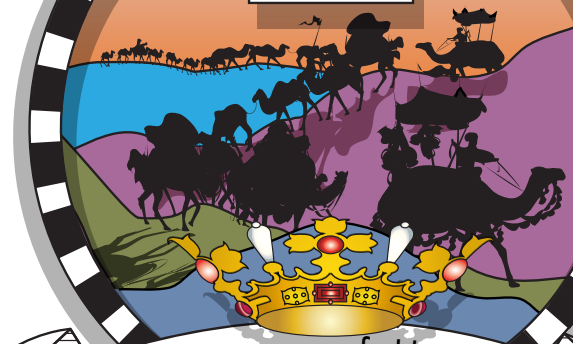
Robert Shaw was best known as the conductor of his namesake Chorale. "Many Moods of Christmas" was for its day the quintessential sound of the season. Even today the albums sell well around the holidays and choirs continue to perform it for their December concert. Shaw was leading his choral when he accepted a call and was ordained as its minister of music by the 1st Unitarian church of Cleveland.

1963

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

December

20



### "The Journey of the Magi" 1st of Eliot's Ariel Poems

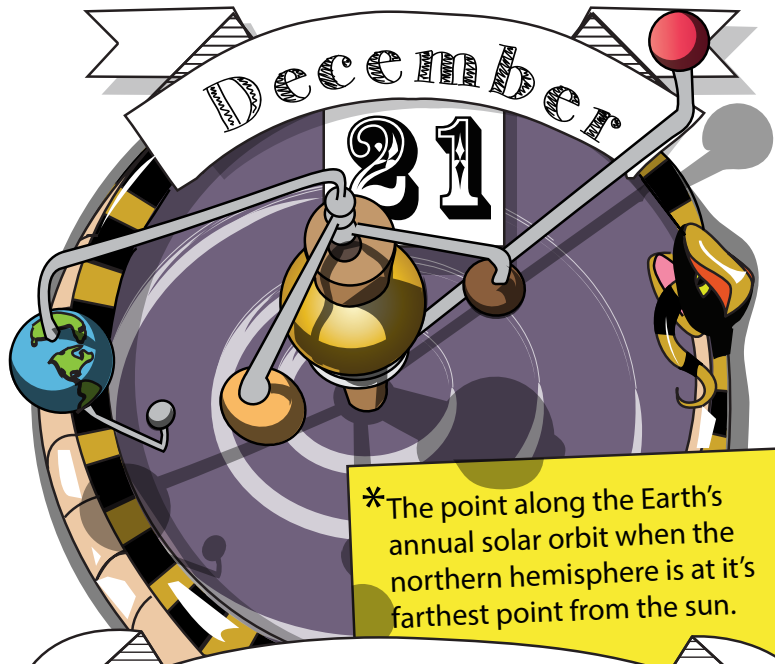
"Magi" is Unitarian T. S. Eliot's first of 5 Christmas poems published after his ambivalent choice to join the Anglican church. Eliot's feelings about his conversion seem to be expressed by the Magus who narrates the poem confessing to the readers his secret disappointment when at last they reach their journey's end to find only the baby Jesus.

The tradition of reading Isaiah 6:3, and Psalms 72:11, together with Matthew 2:1-12 is why people will tell the Christmas story and sometimes refer to the magi as kings. In fact magi or wise men refers to royal advisors who were knowledgeable in astrology, divination, and magic.

1927

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

Another of his "Ariel" poems that remains popular is called "The Cultivation of Christmas Trees."



\*The point along the Earth's annual solar orbit when the northern hemisphere is at it's farthest point from the sun.

## The Winter Solstice \*

*The last harvest of the year is celebrated shortly before the winter solstice. In ancient times people would feast knowing the months ahead would be dark, hungry times when sickness spread quickly.*

*The cycle of winter's death forever yielding new life in spring's rebirth is represented by the ouroboros symbol showing a serpent consuming its own tail.*

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts



## The First Unitarian Church Founded in Transylvania

*Despite recognition under the 1557 Act of Religious Toleration and receiving the King's patronage the Unitarian Church in Transylvania has faced frequent persecution leading to their choice of church crest which is meant to recall when Jesus sent his disciples to preach and expected they would face opposition and he counseled them to be as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves. A recent UU tradition in the US is to have a special Christmas eve offering to help Unitarians still living in Transylvania.*

1557

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts



December  
23

The calendar's only song with Jesus in it

**"Oh Holy Night"**

The first English translation of "Oh Holy Night" was by Unitarian minister, John Sullivan Dwight who tweaked the original French author's socialist themes and images to advance Dwight's own abolitionist cause. Not only was the French author a socialist but he also declared himself an atheist and had it set to music by a Jewish composer, factors that led French clergy to ban the carol's use in worship.

1855

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts

December  
24

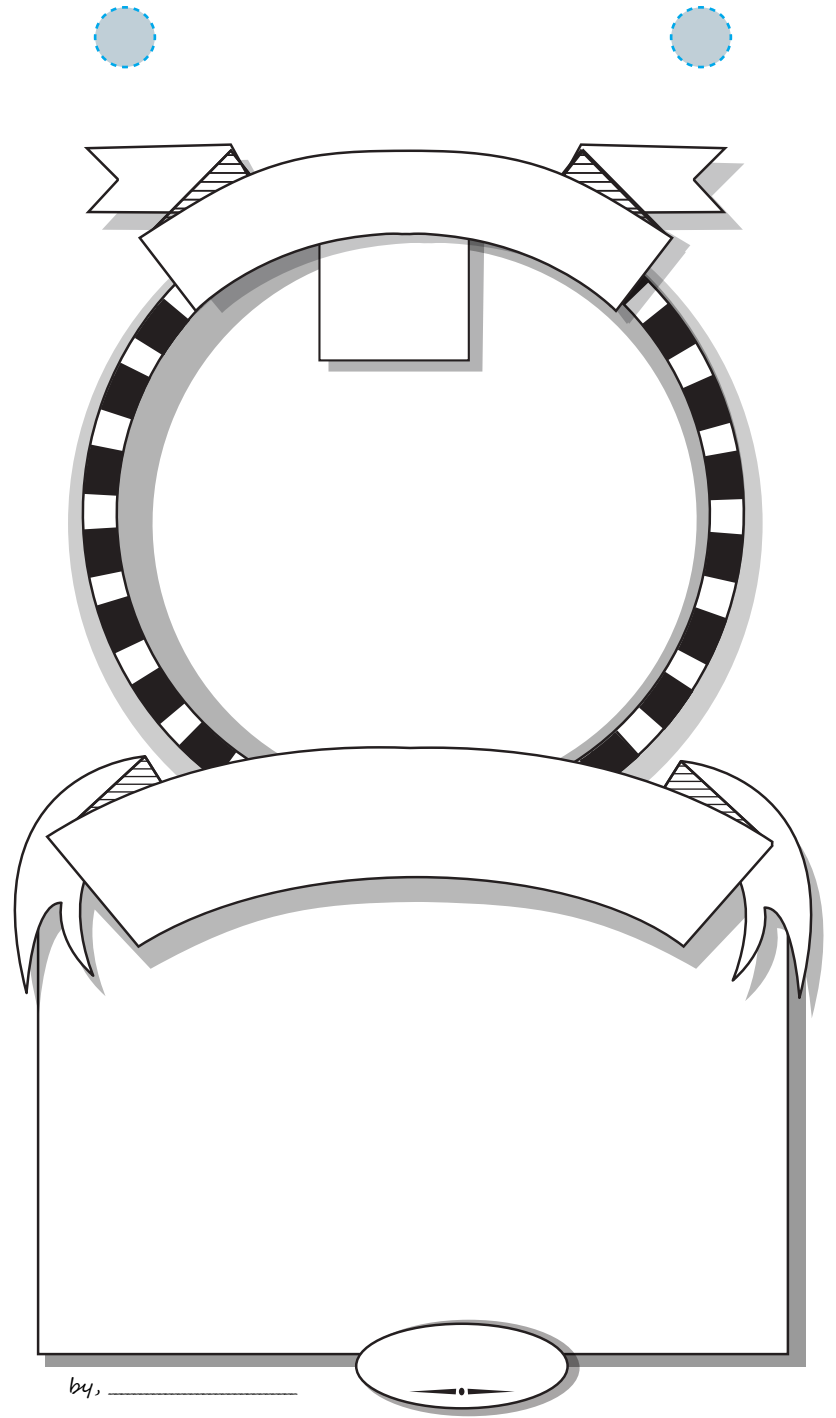
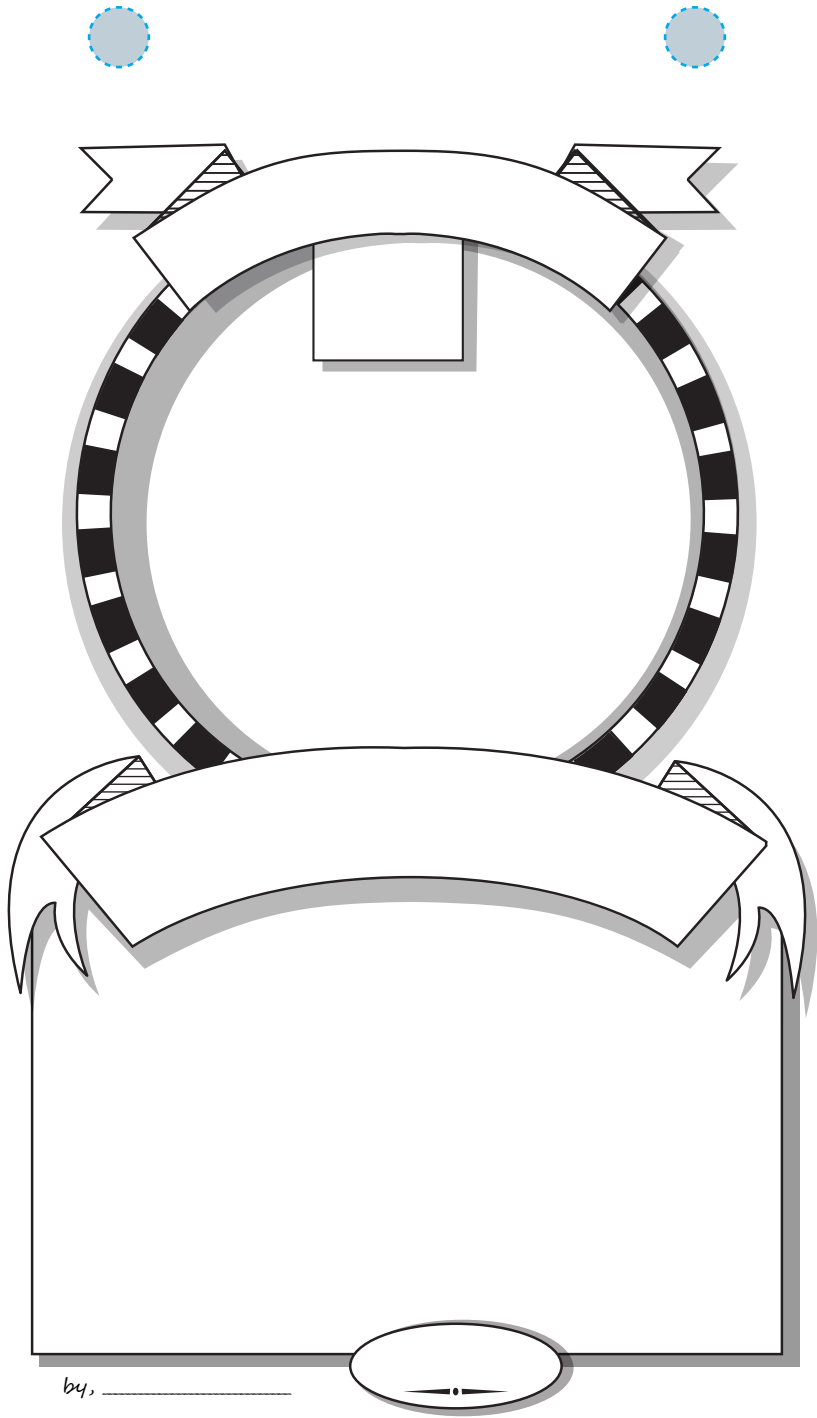
**The Flaming Chalice**

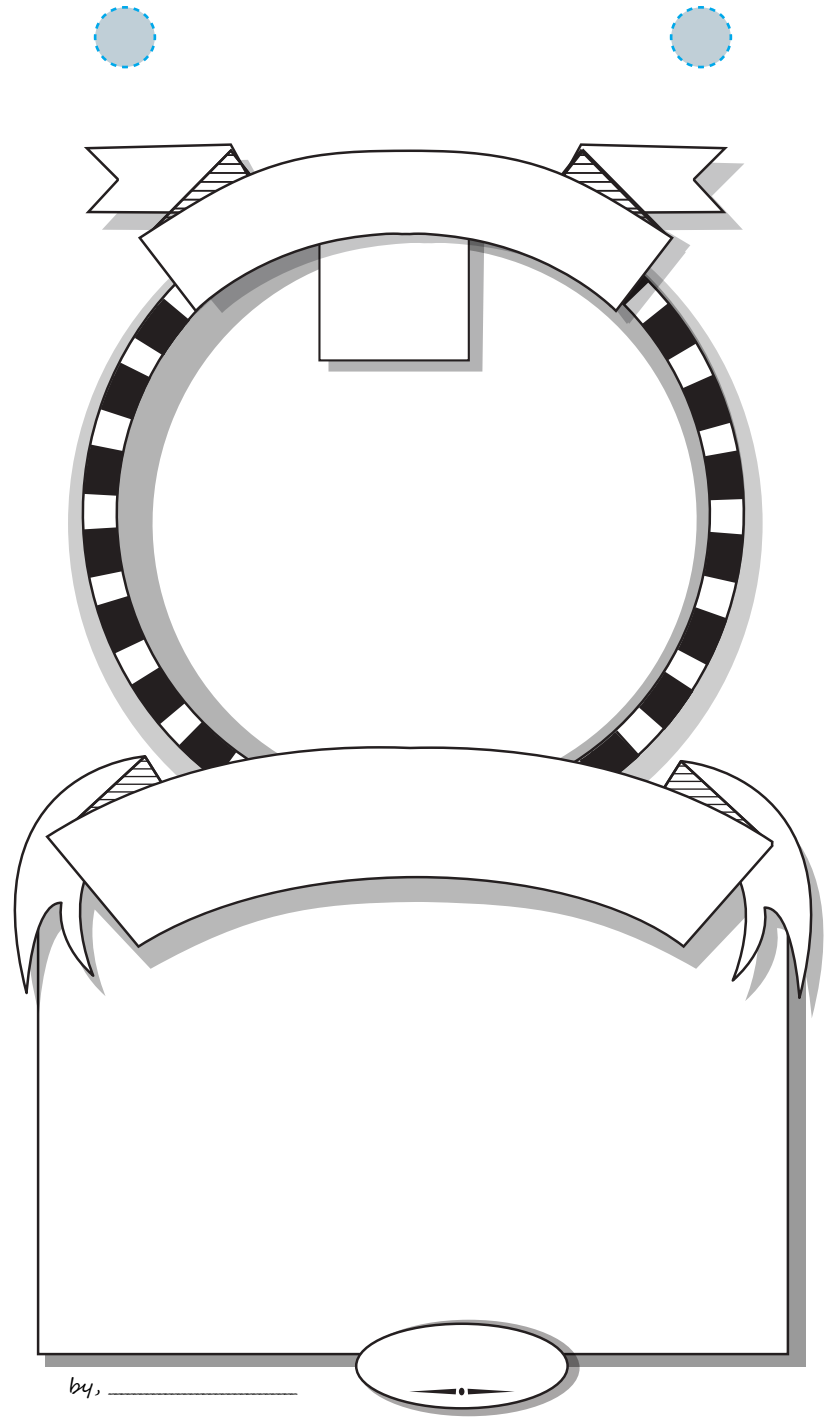
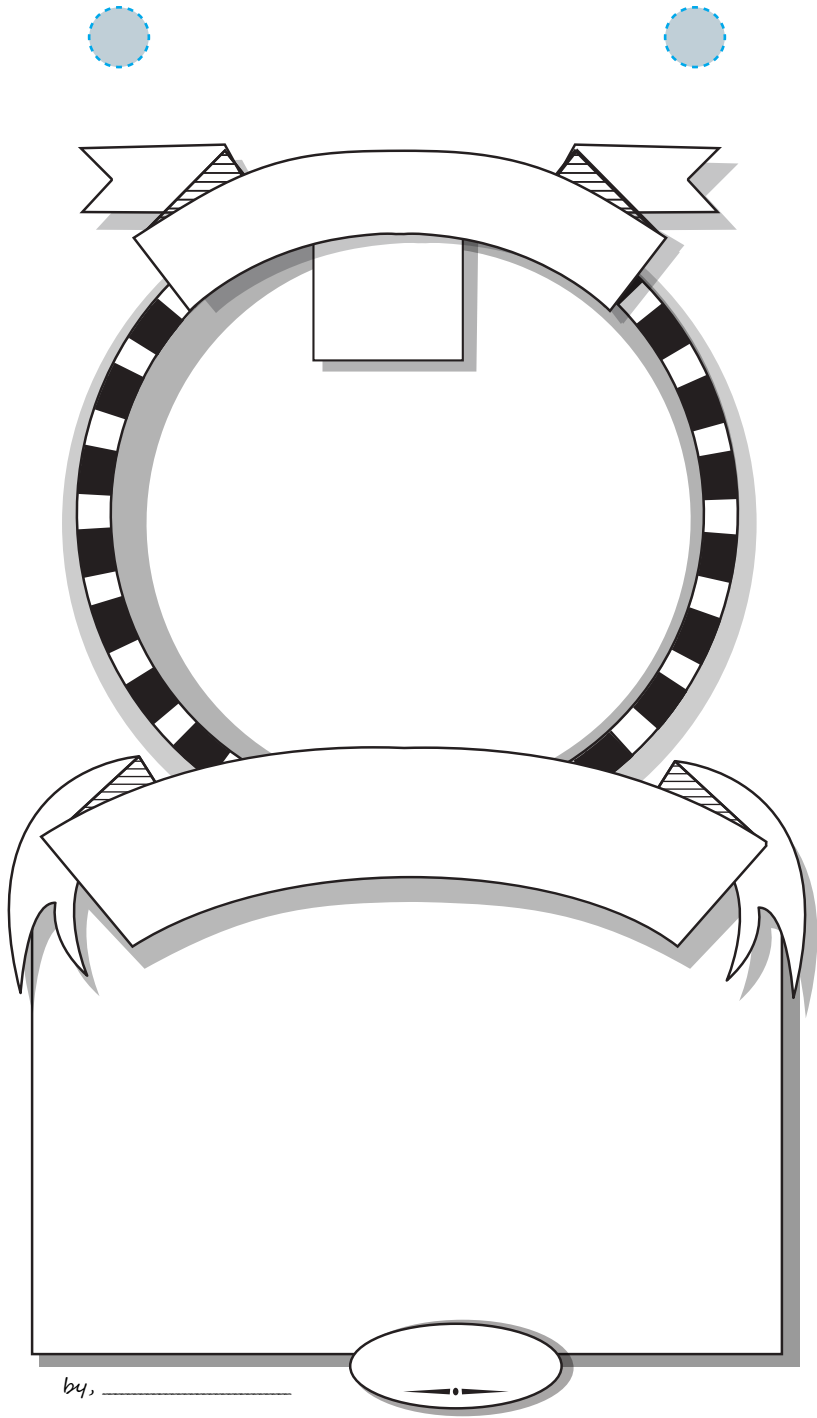
The Unitarian Service Committee adopted the flaming chalice as their logo in 1941. Years later in 1965 at the West Shore Church in Cleveland, OH, the youth-led Christmas service opened by ritually lighting a chalice. This is the first time the chalice was used in this way except for in children's classes and youth gatherings where the practice began.

1965

by, Rev. R. Y. Roberts









# The Original Unitarian Advent Calendar


## Unitarian Universalist


Created by Rev. & Y. Roberts


This is a full of all 24 days  
and if you want  
to get them go with  
each day


 **Visit the River  
and throw on  
the wood!**


 **Squirrel  
research and  
development  
at Woodstock**


 **Charles and Rose  
Printing Firm**


 **Remember of  
the candle**


 **"I Hope Rocks"**


 **"The trouble is  
I can't remember  
how to do it"**


 **"Light Candles"**


 **"The brother who  
was the first to  
give his house to  
us"**


 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**


 **"Candlemas comes  
in the January"**


 **"A Christmas  
Story by Charles  
Webster"**


 **Don't talk  
about the  
Rev. Y.**


 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**


 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**


 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**

 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**

 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**

 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**

 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**

 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**

 **The album "The  
Knowledge  
Columbus"**

 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**

 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**

 **"The candle light  
is a gift of love"**

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In addition to The Original Unitarian Universalist Advent Calendar The Rev. Ralph Yeager Roberts is one of the creators of the Montessori inspired curriculum used in hundreds of congregations across the U.S. and Canada. In addition to serving congregations as an Ordained Unitarian Universalist Minister of religious education Ralph has taught undergraduate and graduate courses at several schools and for two years wrote a column on spiritual wellness for a nationally carried Lifestyle and travel magazine. For the past six years he has been half of a two man team helping local performers and area theater troupes fabricating specialty props, set pieces, and costuming elements earning 5 State theater nominations. While making giant squids and pluming the occasional headpiece is a blast it rarely pays for much more than the supplies but how many people make an animatronic demon eyed mouse head trophy do it for the money. Currently not in active ministry Ralph is available for leading a variety of trainings, workshops, or special programs, as well as design work. To learn more details about scheduling a visit with your group or organization you can find more information using links that will be posted to the UU-Advent Facebook page or you can e-mail him at yeagerroberts@gmail.com for a copy of a promotional flyer.