

The Flaming Chalice

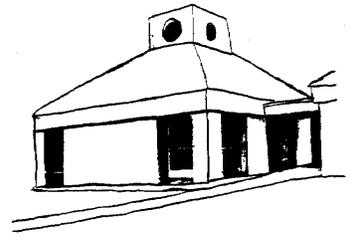
Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

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What's going on... July 2012

Sun	July 1	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - "Working with God to Conserve the Earth," Dr. Mario Bartoletti Meet & Greet Coffee after the service
W	July 4		<i>Independence Day</i>
Th	July 5	6:00 PM	Board Meeting in the RE wing
Sun	July 8	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - "The Current State of Politics," Dr. Richard Saeger Meet & Greet Coffee after the service
M	July 9	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
F	July 13	6:30 p.m.	Pizza and a movie
Sun	July 15	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - "Philosophical Thoughts," Dr. Keith Johnson Meet & Greet Coffee after the service <i>Deadline for the August UU Newsletter</i>
F	July 20		<i>Ramadan begins at sundown</i>
Sun	July 22	8:30 AM 9:00AM 10:30 AM 11 AM 12:30 PM	Shared Service Sunday with Serenity Christian Church Carpool from UU Church to Serenity Christian Church Service at Serenity Christian Church Return to UU Church with Serenity members Religious Education for children from both churches Service - "Being Good for Nothing," Rev. Fred Howard Potluck Dinner at UU Church <i>Share the Plate Sunday</i>
F	July 27	6:30 PM	Book Discussion and Potluck at the church
Sun	July 29	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - "Daoism: Perpetual Transformation and Creative Synthesis," Dr. Michael Stoltzfus Meet & Greet Coffee after the service
W	Aug. 1	6:00 PM	Board Meeting in the RE wing

❖ If this symbol appears on your address label this month, please **contact** the newsletter editor if you wish to **continue** to receive a **mailed copy** of the newsletter. The newsletter is also available on the church website, although personal information about members does not appear in that version. A small contribution to cover mailing costs would be appreciated.

Sunday Services

Sunday, July 1 – Dr. Mario Bartoletti, “Working with God to Conserve the Earth”

Local activist and humanist Dr. Mario Bartoletti, a member of the Occupy Valdosta movement and Vote No on Biomass, joins us to discuss a new initiative “Working with God to Conserve the Earth”. Please join us to learn more about this new environmental movement.

Sunday, July 8 – Dr. Richard Saeger, “The Current State of Politics”

Dr. Richard Saeger, Professor Emeritus from the VSU Political Science Department, will join us to discuss the current state of politics in Georgia and the United States. Join us for an insightful look at the turbulent, partisan battle that currently rages across our country. Today’s political divide is greater than ever and marked with almost unprecedented rancor between opposing sides.

Sunday, July 15- Dr. Keith Johnson, “Is UU a Religious Tradition?”

Some people look askance when learning about UU and classifying it as a religious tradition. I will explore a definition of religion which I employ when teaching any religious studies classes. The definition is from an introduction to the study of religion text that is no longer in print that I find a useful tool. It is inclusive definition with clarity that contains categories the majority of religious traditions share (with possible arguable positions regarding one of the categories for a given tradition though I disagree with most of these analyses which I will explain). I will then analyze UU as a religious tradition in this context. [The generating idea(s) behind this discussion are: 1) those who argue that they cannot define religion and 2) UU atheistic, individuals whom I experienced, who are insulted when UU is described as a religion.]

Sunday, July 22 –3rd Annual Shared Worship Service with Serenity Christian Church

8:30 AM - We will carpool the short distance from our church to Serenity Christian Church.

Directions to Serenity Christian Church -- From our church, head towards the city on Park Ave. Turn left onto Lee St, heading towards downtown. (Lee Street is at the first traffic light past Ashley on Park, as you travel out of the city towards our church.) Serenity church is about 1/3 mile down Park, on the left at the corner of Park and Moore. They have a large parking lot at the back of the church.

9:00 - AM – Attend the Serenity Christian church service

10:30 AM - Members of the Serenity congregation will follow us back to our church to attend our service.

11:00AM - Rev. Fred Howard, “Being Good for Nothing”

The parable of the Good Samaritan is perhaps the most well known and well worn of Jesus’ teachings. But do we really understand what it is that Jesus is asking of us in this teaching? The story is much more than a simple morality tale. This morning we will reexamine the story looking for the unusual twist that was characteristic of all Jesus’ parables, and explore the way that twist can turn conventional understanding of the parable on its head. The story may yet have new

insights for us as we seek how to live uprightly in today’s world.

(Note: Our service and RE will begin at 11:00 AM rather than 10:45 this day.) The Children’s RE kids have a special project planned that they will do along with Serenity children.

12:15 PM - Fellowship Luncheon with Serenity at the UU Church.

(Expect to hear from Dee Tait who is coordinating the potluck with dishes from our church as well as Serenity Church.)

Share the Plate Sunday Offering (the 4th Sunday this month)

As this will be our Shared Services Sunday, the UU Board decided that the recipient organization this month will be Save Our Children (SOC). Dr. Winston Prescott, who is a member of Serenity, has just been named the new Executive Director of SOC. SOC has partnered with L.O.D.A.C, and the Juvenile Justice System to assist young people, some who are being assigned to Save Our Children as an alternative to confinement. SOC’s Rights Of Passage program provides them with a process through which they can change their way of thinking about themselves, and therefore change their behavior. Instead of imposing behavior from without by demanding assimilation, Save Our Children provides an opportunity and an incentive to change their thinking about their behavior....By laying a straight stick besides a crooked stick, the crooked stick sees that it is crooked. You don’t have to tell it.

Monies not otherwise designated from the July 22 UU offering plate will be donated to SOC.

Sunday, July 29 - Michael Stoltzfus, “Daoism: Perpetual Transformation and Creative Synthesis”

Daoism celebrates the profound and mysterious creativity within the very fabric of time and space. We will investigate the core motives associated with a Daoist religious worldview paying particular attention to the rhythm or flow of the Tao, the dynamic balance between yin and yang, and qi as the breath of life. Implications of Daoist thinking and practice will be connected to human health and wellbeing.

Religious Education

INVITATION TO MEMBERSHIP

If you are interested in becoming a member of our fellowship, we encourage you to talk with our minister, Rev. Fred Howard or our President, Carol Stiles or Membership Director, Kimberly Tanner. We welcome your questions, and we extend an open invitation to all who want to join our liberal community of faith.

For Children: The RE program for children under 15 years of age meets at 10:45 AM concurrent with the Sunday morning service. Older young people will remain with the adult service. Two adults are needed each Sunday to help with RE. Children from Serenity Christian Church will join kids from our church for RE on the Shared Service Sunday this month.

Fred Howard is our part time minister. You may contact Rev. Howard by email (preferable) at fredhoward3622@gmail.com He is available for consultations on Monday and Wednesday afternoons on most weeks from 2-5PM by appointment. Fred welcomes any questions you may have about membership in our congregation. He is also available for weddings and rites of passage ceremonies by prearrangement.

Sangha Tuesdays

5:30-7:00 PM at the church

The KTD Buddhist reading and meditation group continues to meet on Tuesday evenings at the church. Everyone interested in Buddhist practice and meditation is welcome. The group shares tea from 5:30-6, sits and meditates (Buddhist shamata meditation) from 6-6:30, and discusses the reading from 6:30-7. The group is currently reading Robert Thurman's book, "The Jewel Tree of Tibet." If someone is unable to sit on the floor, it is perfectly alright to use a chair. Otherwise, people should supply their own pillow for sitting. The group shares books and the liturgy.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

CAROL STILES

I look forward to serving as President of UU Valdosta for the next year! First, let me thank outgoing president Lars Leader for his leadership over the last few years. We know that Lars will continue to be involved in the life of the congregation and we are grateful for that. Thanks, too, to other members of the board who will continue in their current positions. Special thanks to Kat Nicola and best wishes to Brian and Kat and family and to Jam Jenkins and Christine Clay as they leave for other places. We will miss you!

Lars Leader will serve as our delegate at this year's GA is called "Justice GA" and will focus on social justice issues in Arizona, a hot-bed of anti-immigrant efforts. We look forward to hearing Lars report back on what promises to be a special GA and to work with us on expanding our congregational awareness of immigration issues.

In keeping with the social justice theme of GA, by the time you read this, we will have participated for the first time in the Valdosta-Lake Park Migrant Farmworkers Health Fair Clinic. Between June 23-28 student physician assistants from Emory University will provide much needed health services to farmworkers on area farms. We are collecting food and clothing donations to be distributed and also planning to help serve one meal, in conjunction with St. Barnabas Episcopal Church. More on that next month!

In community, Carol

Governor's Honors Program Visitors

The Georgia Governor's Honors Program (GHP) is a four-week summer residential instructional program designed to provide intellectually gifted and artistically talented high school students challenging and enriching educational opportunities not usually available during the regular school year. The 2012 Governor's Honors Program will begin on Sunday, June 24, and end on Saturday, July 21, on the campus of Valdosta State University. Every summer some GHP students attend Sunday services at UU Valdosta. Depending on the number that sign up, one or more of our church

members transports those students from and back to VSU. Lars Leader will be organizing transportation this year. The first possible Sunday for visiting students will be July 1. The 2012 program will be four weeks long, from Sunday, June 24, 2012, to Saturday, July 21, 2012. Lars Leader will pick up students and coordinate transportation. Check with him to see if he needs additional cars.

MINISTERIAL MUUSINGS: Our minister, Rev. Fred Howard, takes a break during the summer months. Watch for his regular column to return in the fall.

Thank You! Thank You!

For layleading services: Betty Derrick, Lars Leader,
For Sunday Service music: Amy Wells, Keith Johnson
For Stories for All Ages: Sue Bailey, Amy Wells
For speaking at Sunday Service: Doug Tanner
For helping with Children's RE: Sue Bailey, Emmilee Bailey
For serving as Meet and Greet Hosts: Rosie Asbury, Dee Tait
For greeting visitors: Dee Tait, Betty Derrick
For delivering Break Bread meals: Frank and Rosie Asbury,
For cleaning the church: Frank Asbury, Lars Leader
For serving on the Board of Directors beginning this month for the coming year: Carol Stiles, Doug Tanner, Rosie Asbury, Kimberly Tanner, Jim Ingram, Susan Bailey, and Amy Wells who has agreed to fill the vacant Secretary position when Christine Clay moved.
For others who assisted on Sunday mornings—Thank You!!

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Keep in your thoughts

- ❖ Our members and friends experience personal health concerns or concerns about family pets....

We said Goodbye this past month to

- ❖ Christine Clay and Jam Jenkins who moved to Seattle, WA where Jam has a new opportunity to work as a software developer for Amazon. We will miss both of them. Christine, of course, had to resign her position as incoming Board Secretary. Thanks go to Amy Wells for agreeing to take on this job for the coming year. We wish Christine good luck in finding a new job in an area where there may be more opportunities for her than Valdosta offered.
- ❖ Brian and Kat and family also left for their new posting in Korea. We will miss all of them and their contributions to our congregation while Bryan was at Moody Air Force Base.

Social Action Activities-Break Bread Together

Our date for meal deliveries with the Break Bread Together program is the 2nd Monday (and 5th when there is one) of each month. If you would like to help deliver meals beginning about 11:00 AM, please contact Frank or Rosie Asbury.

Let's Have Some Fun!!

PIZZA AND A MOVIE

Friday July, 13, 6:30 p.m.

The July 13, 2012 UU Church film for Movies and Pizza Night is *Babies*. We will meet at 6:30 and show the film at 7:00 p.m. at the church. Thank you for donating \$5.00 for pizza and drinks.

Babies represents the distillation of a year Director Thomas Balmès and a small camera crew spent causing the least disturbance they could while documenting natural behaviors of a ubiquitous animal they find as fascinating any other creature on the planet: the human baby. Alain Chabat originated the idea of recording the birth and first year of humans in their natural and cultural habitats as he would any other animal; and he produced this 2010 film. Balmès invites the viewer to witness four babies learning to manipulate fundamental building blocks with which they construct intimate relationships with their mothers, fathers, siblings, fellow animals, and communities. Scenes unfold uninterrupted by neither a narrator providing voice-over translations, nor subtitles. Instead, we see babies relying on body language and hear their coos, gurgles, grunts, and cries as they effectively communicate their needs and discoveries following birth. Balmès often places his camera at each baby's level where we see and hear and almost smell, taste, and feel stimuli affecting rapidly emerging personalities coming to terms with the capabilities or their individual right and left brain's respective creative and intellectual resources. Soon, we join them as they learn to negotiate potentials of differently contrasting social and physical environments.

As each unscripted visual journal entry unfolds, we become acquainted with Ponijao, her mother and other members of her Himba tribe living in Namibia's Namib Desert; the only boy child, Bayarjargal who lives with his semi-nomadic parents and siblings who follow cattle on open range Mongolian steppes; Mari whose parents introduce her to the abundance of middle class urban life in Tokyo; and Hattie whose parents

pamper her in San Francisco. However, as anthropologist D. F. Lancy critically comments, the film lacks realism on some levels, including absence of scenes of working mothers taking their infants with them as they labor hard to bring income or food into their homes, a major role they play in most of the world. Lancy also notes Mari's atypical Japanese and Hattie's elite, upper income American fathers substantively share more first year early childhood parenting with their wives than in most typical upper income households globally (www.psychology.com, cited: 07.01.2012). And three of Balmès four babies begin life in very hygienic obstetrical settings featuring high technology at the ready. However, Ponijao's birth and babyhood present alternative paradigms to babies living in constrained urban settings as she rummages through the earth near her wattle and daub home watched by her mother and by other women who also nurse her and her peers. Secure in the embrace and surveillance of her village, she unearths a bone to nibble and splashes happily in a stream to bathe and drink. Similarly, Bayarjargal responds comfortably with cattle and other domestic animals who treat him as they do each other: with respect. As is often the case, Balmès juxtaposes early childhood development and exposure to risk that may remain feasible in such shrinking but healthy ecosystems as portions of Ponijao's Namib Desert and Bayarjargal's Mongolian steppe, with material richness of typical of homes enjoyed by financially secure, metropolitan families living in rich Japanese and American industrial societies. To his credit, Balmès resists whatever temptation may have felt to comment on his apparent respect for emerging inherent human dignity regardless of the origins of each of the babies whose births and first steps he respectfully records and follows. Instead, he steps back and evidently encourages his film's viewers to draw their own conclusions about the universality of different possibilities of love and nurture releasing innate potentials and wisdom in the lives of four of the world's babies.

BOOK DISCUSSION AND POTLUCK

Friday, July 27 - 6:30 PM - At the church

The book this month is "The Orphan Master's Son" by Adam Johnson. The book jacket describes this book as "an epic novel ... part breathless thriller, part story of innocence lost, part story of romantic love. [It] is also a riveting portrait of a world heretofore hidden from view: a North Korea rife with hunger, corruption, and casual cruelty but also camaraderie, stolen moments of beauty and love." One reviewer has said the book is "a timely reminder that anonymous victims of oppression are also human beings who love." Bring a dish to share. Coffee and tea will be provided. You are welcome to bring other beverages. We socialize over our potluck meal for the first hour and then promptly begin our book discussion drawing to a close with the selection of our next book by about an hour later. We have been selecting books that deal with difference. Contact: Betty Derrick.

Notes from Kids' RE - Sue Bailey

We've continued our focus on Principle 7: We believe in caring for our planet Earth, the home we share with all living things. We've talked about pets, farm animals, and ocean creatures and read some great stories about our fellow creatures on land and in the air and sea. Some of our crafts and activities have included making tree art, octopuses (octopuses out of socks), fish and jellyfish, and origami whales. In honor of summer solstice, we also make paper plate suns. During one recent RE session, we pretended to be trees and animals and enjoyed animal races. Zaylee taught us yoga poses and we played a variety of games. As always, we welcome visitors and helpers to join us in RE. See Sue Bailey if you would like to be on the schedule rotation to help.



Zoe and Sophie in RE making Mother's Day Gifts

UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News June 6, 2012

- Participation in Valdosta-Lake Park Farmworkers Health Clinic in June requested by Dr. Miryam Espinosa Dulanto, one of our Sunday speakers and a partner in the Accepting Difference Project
- Establish new website hosting service on DreamHost – preliminary report by Carol Stiles
- GA delegate Lars Leader will request input on Congregational Study / Action Issues
- Amy Wells has accepted the position of Secretary on the UU board, replacing Christine Clay who has moved to Seattle. Amy's appointment will be confirmed by the UU board at the July board meeting.
- Next meeting, Thursday, July 5, 6:00 p.m.

(Note that some matters appear in articles and announcements elsewhere in this newsletter and are not repeated here.)

Treasurer's Report – Rosie Asbury

May 31, 2011

Receipts	May	July -present (11 mos.)
Plate	\$ 83.00	\$1757.10
Pledge	1140.00	17816.00
Rent	100.00	2270.00
Share the Plate(So GA Pride)		
	<u>94.00</u>	<u>557.75</u>
Total Recpts	\$ 1350.00	\$ 16363.85
Disbursements		
Speakers' Fees	200.00	1675.00
Minister Exp.	1740.55	9223.30
Maintenance	0.00	821.73
Newsletter	0.00	77.10
Pest Control	285.00	635.00
Building Ins.	0.00	1425.00
Postage	0.00	579.04
Supplies	0.00	238.42
Utilities	240.45	2948.53
RE Program	50.00	67.12
Ads/Website	0.00	525.00
UUA Dues	0.00	2050.00
UU Conference	0.00	354.27
Donations (So GA Pride)		
	94.00	587.75
Others	<u>15.00</u>	<u>85.00</u>
Total Disburs	\$ 2625.00	\$ 21892.26
Net Receipt	\$ -1208.00	\$ 508.59

Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Betty Derrick
Website Manager: Carol Stiles, uuvaldosta@yahoo.com
e-Mail List: Contact Carol Stiles
Facebook: Kimberly Tanner
Local Publicity: Dee Tait

July 15: Deadline for August newsletter.

If you prefer reading this newsletter on the website, e-mail the editor to remove your name from the mailing label list.

At the Church-in-the-Woods

New Hope Christian Community Church- Sunday evenings: Choir practice at 4:30 PM. Service at 6:00 PM.

<http://www.wix.com/nhccc1/nhccc>

Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday: (Summer Hours) Continuing Class: 6:00-7:30 PM. Watch for a New Beginners Class in August. Contact Dennis Bogyo or Luana Goodwin

PFLAG Meeting – 4th Tuesday each month, 7:00PM
Contact: Doug Tanner The web page for PFLAG Valdosta:
<http://community.pflag.org/Valdosta>



UUA TRUSTEE TIDBITS

Joan Lund
jlund@uua.org

July 2012

Since the monthly Trustee Tidbits must be written before leaving for General Assembly, columns about GA will be written in subsequent months. As always I will write a report for the District following GA. Hopefully you are already aware UUA President Peter Morales has written *Congregations and Beyond*, a document that talks about UU relevancy in the future; he believes our faith must begin to think of our UUA not just as bricks-and-mortar congregations but perhaps as a way to engage with other religiously grounded UU groups, in other words, to extend beyond congregations as we traditionally know them.

It is known that there are about 500,000 people who say they are UUs but are not members of a congregation. Our membership numbers are slowly declining, despite sincere, ambitious growth efforts. We have always addressed the problem of attracting UU membership as solvable by finding ways to get them into congregations. How can we engage with people who share our values, want to be a part of our faith, but are not willing/ready to join a congregation? These folks may include individuals in groups who were once affiliates, UU college students, and persons who find us through groups such as Standing on the Side of Love. We know we have the successful Church of the Larger Fellowship, a no-walls congregation with approximately 3500 members. In our future President Morales envisions a variety of other structures such as small groups that may be "identity" based.

His ideas do not mean the demise of bricks-and-mortar congregations as our base but they do mean the expanded use of social media, relevant and "alive" worship experiences accessible through the internet, and more social justice witness activism and volunteerism opportunities. Rev. Morales is convinced our faith has great potential to involve more people and have a greater impact than we do now.

My suggestion: interested persons in your congregation hold a discussion centered on *Congregations and Beyond*. The document can be found at uua.org and by linking into its name. I know through group discussion ideas for the future of our Association will be forthcoming. Send your reactions to the paper and suggestions to Rev. Teresa Cooley, Director, Congregational Life (tcooley@uua.org). In addition I always look forward to hearing from Florida District UUs. Happy hot summer one and all!

Notes & Comment by Our Florida District Executive: Rev. Kenn Hurto



"Change at the speed of church" usually suggests that congregations can be ... well ... slow to adapt to emerging issues and challenges. Our Association's broader work turns that around: we are moving very rapidly to new ways of conducting our many ministries. Remote live-streaming is just one illustration. Nearly everything our UUA publishes these days is on-line for free use by our congregations. Audio & video conferencing have become as commonplace as the telephone and e-mail.

The good news is that emerging technologies free us up to do our work in ways never before dreamed of, with increasing accessibility and less expensive delivery of services. As some of you may be aware, our Florida District is now part of the Southern Region, a new strategy for uniting the delivery of services across four districts. The practical meaning of that is instead of one District Executive and a very partial time Lifespan Program Consultant, the Florida District has six (with a seventh to be added in the next year) talented people upon which to draw for all kinds of consultation.

In the coming months, you will learn more the direct applications. For now, anticipate seeing our district e-mails and Connections e-news taking on a broader focus. Before summer's end, we hope to have a regional website in addition to the Florida District's. We are in the midst of merging administrative offices for the four districts. And the field staff each will be the direct contact for a similar number of congregations, more equitably and responsibly providing direct support to our over 230 congregations and 30,000 Unitarian Universalists.

I am honored to have been chosen to the Regional Lead Executive, working across District boundaries. My colleagues will serve generally and specifically portfolios for faith & leadership development, evangelism & strategic planning, administration & stewardship. I will coordinate professional religious leaders transitions work. This fall, we will hire our first regionally based staff person, an emerging faith communities director to give us concentrated staffing for new congregational work. We'll introduce you to all these good people in a future dedicated communication.

These developments are a direct outgrowth of The Orlando Platform (2010). In the next year or two, we will more fully develop our "Smart Church" consultants and the newly conceived Elders Leadership program. So, more changes are yet a'coming.

All this is exciting if often baffling. Rest assured, you can always call me or the District Office directly to obtain the assistance you seek.

Meanwhile, one immediate change is the Reverend Randy Becker's service as the FLD acting Program Consultant comes to an end this month. He has provided wonderful service to our congregations and has been an exceptional colleague to work with. We thank Randy profoundly for his gracious and wise service these past two years.

Randy will honor all commitments that go into the next year; he also will continue to be available as one of our consultants as we move ahead with these many changes. For any future engagements, please call me directly.

Feel free to write or call as you have questions or comments. I look forward to our new ways of serving you, our leaders and our congregations.

UU Activities and Announcements

July 8-13 - RE Week, The Mountain, Highlands, NC

A UU Summer Experience: Information, Camp Descriptions at www.mountaincenters.org or (828) 526-5838

July 15-21 - Southeast UU Summer Institute (SUUSI), Radford, VA