



# The Flaming Chalice

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

Located at: 1951 East Park Avenue  
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 Minister: Rev. Fred Howard  
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### What's going on... April 2014

W	Apr. 2	6:00 PM	Board Meeting in the RE wing at the church
Sun	Apr. 6	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – <b>Rev. Fred Howard, “The Life Force Power of the Universe”</b> Meet & Greet Coffee after the service
F	Apr. 11	6:30 PM	Pizza and a Movie!
Sat	Apr. 12	9:00 – noon	Spring Clean Up!
Sun	Apr. 13	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – <b>Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, “Eightfold Path: Compassionate Speech, Action, and Livelihood”</b> Meet & Greet Coffee after the service Annual Congregational Meeting!
M	Apr. 14	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
T	Apr. 15		<i>Deadline March newsletter</i>
F	Apr. 18	6:30 PM	Potluck and Book Discusison
Sun	Apr. 20	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - <b>Rev. Fred Howard, “Resurrection Power”</b> <i>Share the Plate Sunday</i> Meet & Greet after the service
F	Apr. 25	6:30 PM	Games Night!
Sun	Apr. 27	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – To be announced Meet & Greet after the service

### April ...

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Betty Derrick, for the many years she has edited this publication, our UU newsletter. She has taken on this task every month since the year 2000, nearly 15 years! She has provided the basis for our outreach to recent visitors, to our members and friends, to our collaborators in social justice efforts, and our UU neighbors in the region, over those many years. She has cajoled board members and speakers for blurbs, maintained the mailing list and coordinated the calendar - in short, kept us ‘on track’ for all those years, in addition to her service as a layleader and a board member in previous years. Thank you, Betty!

#### Mission Statement

*The Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta* is committed to building a community of acceptance and love, where all people may strive for intellectual, moral, and spiritual enlightenment. We offer a place to celebrate life’s passages and to join in social action on behalf of local and global communities.

## Sunday Services

**Sunday, April 6 – Rev. Fred Howard, “The Life Force Power of the Universe”**

The focus of my sermon today will be on mystical experiences and what, if anything, they have to teach us. In particular, I'll be elaborating on the extraordinary experience of Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor. To get the most from this fascinating subject, I'd suggest that you watch a short video before the service as Dr. Taylor describes what happened to her several years ago and where that experience has subsequently taken her in her life's journey. It's only 18 minutes long and is available either at [http://www.ted.com/talks/jill\\_bolte\\_taylor\\_s\\_powerful\\_stroke\\_of\\_insight](http://www.ted.com/talks/jill_bolte_taylor_s_powerful_stroke_of_insight) or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTrJqmKoveU> I will host a short time of conversation on this subject after meet and greet today.

**Sunday, April 13 – Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, “Eightfold Path: Compassionate Speech, Action, and Livelihood”**

This will be the second of a series of three talks on the Eightfold Path of Buddhism. The teaching seeks to combine wisdom, compassion, and concentration in each present moment. The focus in April will be on the three elements of the path associated with compassion or speech, action, and livelihood. We will try to figure out how to be more compassionate human beings.

**Sunday, April 20 – Rev. Fred Howard, “Resurrection Power.”**

This is Flower Communion Sunday! Please bring a flower to share with the congregation as a part of our annual ritual. Today is Easter Sunday - the holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus, an idea foundational for the Christian faith. Many Unitarian Universalists have a rather uneasy relationship to this holiday since its supernatural connotations seem totally inconsistent with enlightened spirituality. Who's missing the boat here? Is it the dogmatic Christians or is it us? Join me this morning as I share some rather provocative thoughts on the matter.

*Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will go to Break Bread Together. The Break Bread program has been in existence since 1973 and is organized by the First Presbyterian Church. Our participation in delivering the meals once (or twice) a month to low-income, home-bound seniors is coordinated by David Rodgers, and the program is supported through donations.*

**Sunday, April 27 - to be announced.**

### 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.

## Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting of the membership of UU Valdosta will be held on Sunday, April 13, after the service for the purpose of election of the Board of Trustees and approval of the proposed budget, for 2014-2015. All voting members should plan to attend. From the bylaws: “Any member, who is at least seventeen years old, who has been a member for a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the vote and has made an annual monetary contribution of record to the congregation, is eligible to vote.”

Report of the Nominating Committee - Valerie Webster (chair), Dawn Renner, and Betty Derrick. The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of officers to stand for election at the annual congregational meeting to be held Sunday, April 13th:

President - Carol Stiles  
Vice President - Doug Tanner  
Secretary - Tom Aiello  
RE - Sue Bailey  
Treasurer - Rosie. Asbury  
Membership - Kimberly Tanner  
Bldg & Grounds - Jim. Ingram

**Remember, UU Valdosta is self-governing!** All members are encouraged to arrange schedules to attend the meeting. Our thanks to those who have agreed to stand for election!

## Religious Education

**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. Sign up on the weekly e-mail volunteer list or let Sue Bailey know if you can help on a given Sunday.



Richard Schofield and Rhett Watson, just after signing the membership book, along with Rev. Howard (center).  
Welcome to UU Valdosta!

## ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

*Keep in your thoughts*

- ❖ Our members and friends who have lost loved ones or who are dealing with difficult health concerns.

**UU Valdosta Caring Committee** Contact Carol Stiles or Kimberly Tanner if you would be able to help out with this committee. Several of this committee's core members are themselves in need of care right now. Get in touch too if you or someone you know needs the services of this committee.

### Spring Clean Up-Lunch-Discussion

Our annual spring cleaning event at the church will be held Saturday, April 12 9 AM to noon. Afterwards lunch will be provided. During lunch we hope to have an informal time of conversation around current and ongoing planning for the future of the congregation.

Come out and be a part of making our facility shiny and welcoming to all who enter our doors! Please bring extra mops, brooms, and other cleaning supplies with you.

We look forward to seeing you there.

### Sangha Tuesdays

**5:30-7:00 PM at the church**

The KTD Buddhist reading and meditation group meets on Tuesday evenings at the church. Everyone interested in Buddhist practice and meditation is welcome. Tea, 5:30-6: Buddhist shamata meditation, 6-6:30; Discussion of reading, 6:30-7. Participants should supply their own pillow for sitting, although using a chair for those unable to sit on the floor is allowed. The group shares books and the liturgy.

### S·O·S VALDOSTA

#### VALDOSTA SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE SUPPORT GROUP

This support group hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta is facilitated by Tamara Hardesty. The group meets at the church on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8 P.M. Contact via e-mail at [sosvaldosta@yahoo.com](mailto:sosvaldosta@yahoo.com) or connect online at **VALDOSTA SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE SUPPORT GROUP** or 'Like' us on **facebook** for online support, daily affirmations, links to resources, and information on upcoming meetings.

Fred Howard is our part time minister. You may contact him by email (preferable) at [fredhoward3622@gmail.com](mailto:fredhoward3622@gmail.com) should you need to reach him. He is available for weddings and rites of passage ceremonies by prearrangement.

## MINISTERIAL MUUSINGS

Rev. Fred Howard

April 2014



Our congregation is growing! Several new members have joined in this past year and the numbers of visitors grows each month. It's exciting to see so many new faces on Sunday mornings as well as the faithful return of so many of our regular members and friends. There seems to be more palpable energy in our worship services now as well as in our other Sunday events. This energy is invigorating to me - especially on the Sundays I'm in the pulpit.

I hope we can build on this momentum. Part of the reason for this new growth and new energy is, I think, due to an improvement in the quality of the worship experiences we are offering. But we can do even better! Our board has organized a worship team which will certainly facilitate a broader inclusion and participation from our membership in worship.

I plan to offer a workshop on "Wonderful Worship" on three successive Sundays in May during the second hour - after meet and greet. I'll be using several resources, including the book "The Worship Workshop" by Marcia McFee, as well as some of the material I've used previously in the sermon writing workshops I've offered. This workshop will be for new lay leaders, the members of the worship team, and for anyone who wants to get more involved in worship - in whatever capacity you might want to participate. I hope some of our musicians and some of our youth will participate as well.

This should be a timely initiative for several reasons. Our youth have agreed to lay lead a service in May, which I'm very excited about. This summer all our services will be lay lead as I'll be on sabbatical for a couple of months. And we'll have the newly formed worship team that is bringing a lot of fresh ideas and fresh energy to the creative endeavor that worship is.

The word worship means "to shape worth." That's what true worship does - every week it renews us in the ongoing process of shaping and honoring the meaning and worth of our individual lives and our collective life in community here at Valdosta UU. May it continue to be so. Thanks to everyone for all that you do in and through our community. It continues to be such a privilege for me to serve as your minister.

Fred

## Social Action Activities

### Break Bread Together

We deliver meals with the Break Bread Together program on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday (and 5<sup>th</sup> when there is one) of each month. Let David Rodgers know if you are interested in helping with this service. Several volunteers make it possible to adjust to changing personal schedules. Please let David know if you are available to deliver meals.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER CAROL STILES

On Wednesday, March 12, we hosted a panel and discussion at the church on "Immigration and Migrant Farmworkers." Dr. Stephanie Hinnershitz, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Valdosta State University gave an introduction to "A History of the Migrant Laborer Experience in the United States," in which she emphasized the pattern of welcoming – and then *not* welcoming – migrant workers to various parts of the U.S. at different times in the country's history. Israel Cortez, Coordinator, Region 2 Migrant Education Program Office, Georgia Department of Education, then told us his story – how he came to the U.S. with his family when very young and worked for several years as a migrant worker, before obtaining a permanent residence card and then – many years later – citizenship. He graduated from college, and as he said, he "broke the cycle" of migrant worker status. All who spoke or asked questions focused on the fact that undocumented workers "live in fear" at all times – unable to be visible for fear of being deported, unable to report crimes or even seek medical treatment; a circumstance that leaves them vulnerable to the kind of exploitation Stephanie described as happening over and over in our history.

The panel was announced in a headline story at the top of the Religion page of the Valdosta *Daily Times*, March 8 (I know that people read this page as even my director saw the article!). We personally invited as many congregations as we could think of to send representatives (and a couple of Episcopal churches in town were represented...). But, disappointingly, there were only 11 people there, ½ of them UUs.

As one of the attendees, after listening to Israel Cortez' story, said: "The room should have been full." What does this turnout say about the concern of human rights of immigrants and migrant workers in South Georgia? We still have a lot of work to do... and it is a daunting task.

In the meantime, we can participate by keeping up with immigration reform efforts and the actions of our UUA leaders at the national level. Visit the Standing of the Side of Love blog at: <http://standingonthesideoflove.org/>

In community,  
Carol

### Special note from Carol:

Please re-read my message of gratitude to Betty Derrick for her many years of editing this newsletter. Some of you may have noticed the blank page in last month's newsletter – emblematic of this role we now need to fill. Although there are elements that are prepared by others for the newsletter, there is certainly room for creative expression – adding clip art, photos, news and views from the larger UU denomination, etc. There is also an opportunity to prepare submissions to *The Breeze*, the UU cluster newsletter. Both are great opportunities to get involved in the connections of this congregation, both locally and in the greater UU world! Let me know if you're interested and thank you in advance!

## Thank You! Thank You!

**For delivering Break Bread meals in March:** Rosie and Frank Asbury

**For serving on the Nominating Committee:** Valerie Webster (chair), Dawn Renner, and Betty Derrick

**For providing transportation needs to medical appointments:** All those who responded to a request from the Caring Committee

**For speaking at Sunday services:** Dr. Lily Vuong, Dr. Lars Leader

**To Recent Volunteers for various tasks:** Rhett Watson, Bill Webster, Valerie Webster, Tom Aiello, Sue Bailey, Lars Leader, Kimberly Tanner, Doug Tanner, Rosie Asbury, Rose Baker, Dawn Renner, Teagan Dunn, Zachery Williams

**For sending photos for the newsletter:** Kimberly Tanner

### Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles, [uuvaldosta@yahoo.com](mailto:uuvaldosta@yahoo.com)

April 15: Deadline for the May newsletter.

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

Website Manager: Carol Stiles

e-Mail List: Contact Carol Stiles

Facebook: Kimberly Tanner

Local Publicity: Dee Tait

## Let's Have Some Fun!!

### Pizza and a Movie

#### Friday, April 11

Our feature for April will be "My Left Foot" starring Daniel Day Lewis. This is the story of Christy Brown, an exceptionally gifted writer and painter born with severe cerebral palsy. The movie derives its pathos and drama from the tension between Brown's gifts and his physical limitations, his artistic merits and his cantankerous personality. As Roger Ebert comments, "The story of Christy Brown is one of the great stories of human courage and determination. He belongs on the same list with Helen Keller, and yet it is hard to imagine Christy being good company for the saintly Miss Keller, since he was not a saint himself but a ribald, boozing, wickedly gifted Irishman who simply happened to be handicapped." A story of great human interest and a wonderful character study. Please join us on Friday evening, April 11. A \$5 contribution is suggested toward pizza and drinks. Hope to see you there.

Fred

### Games Night

#### Friday, April 25

6:30PM - until at the church

Often we play Mexican Train (dominoes), but we enjoy learning new games. If you have a game that is not limited to small numbers of players, please bring it along! Contact: Susan Bailey.

## Potluck and Book Discussion

Friday, April 18 6:30PM

The book for this month is *The Roundhouse* by Louise Erdrich. Bring a dish to share and join in the fellowship and discussion. It's always better if you have read the book but we welcome you whether you have or not. During the first hour we fellowship over our potluck meal and then move into a circle to have a discussion. We try to wind up by about 9 PM at the latest. We continue to choose books about difference, with the members of the group discussing the next choice.

### Notes from Kids' RE - Sue Bailey

The RE kids have been working on learning our UU Principles and how they help us live our lives and treat each other and our world the way we would want to be treated. We have focused on the first and second principles for several weeks and are now exploring the third principle, "We believe that we should accept one another and keep on learning together." One of our recent lessons centered on the story "Mrs. Rose's Garden." Mrs. Rose learned several lessons from her experiences with growing her garden. She learned that winning isn't the most important thing and sometimes trying to win can take the fun out of what you are doing. She also learned that sharing the winner's circle as well as the bounty of her garden made her efforts much more enjoyable. The kids made window box flower art to represent that we are learning and growing together. The kids have been taking all their creations home lately, but we hope to have more art projects on display in the near future for everyone to enjoy. As always, we welcome volunteers to help in RE. If you are interested, please see Sue Bailey.



RE kids with their flower box art.

## At the Church-in-the-Woods

**Taoist Tai Chi** – Monday and Thursday: Beginner's class 5:30- 6:30 PM; Continuing class 6:30-8 PM. Contact Dennis Bogyo or Luana Goodwin. You can e-mail the group at [georgia@taoist.org](mailto:georgia@taoist.org)

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

## UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News March 5, 2014

*(Note that some matters appear in articles and announcements elsewhere in this newsletter and are not repeated here. The full minutes are posted on the RE wing bulletin board after approval by the board.)*

The UU Board discussed:

- voted to establish a "Worship Team," an expanded team of volunteers that will participate in worship services – layleaders, musicians, RE assistants, meet-n-greet coordinators, and so on. There's room for everyone! Valerie Webster has agreed to lead the team.
- voted to donate \$100 from The Accepting Difference Project to the Mary Turner Project for a commemoration event to be held in May.
- Next meeting, Wednesday, April 2, 6:00 p.m.

### IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR!

Got your attention? Now, have you returned your pledge for next year?? See the notice above about the annual congregational meeting. We appreciate everyone's pledge to support our beloved community. If you need a pledge letter or have any questions, please contact Rosie Asbury or Carol Stiles!

### Treasurer's Report – Rosie Asbury February, 2014

#### Outstanding Debt

Air Conditioner Loan \$ 250.00 plus interest

#### Receipts

Plate \$ 106.00  
Pledge 1,280.00  
Rent 200.00  
Share the Plate 226.00

**Total Receipts \$1,812.00**

#### Disbursements

Minister Expense \$ 700.00  
Pest Control/Termite 35.00  
Speakers' Fees 200.00  
Repairs/Maintenance  
Newsletter  
Donations(SGPEH/Migrant) 226.00  
Utilities 322.14  
Advertising (bench) 350.00  
Others (AC loan payment) 250.00

**Total disbursements \$ 2,083.14**

**Net receipt \$ - 271.14**



## UU Activities and Announcements

- *Mission Centered Congregations - What is at the Heart of Your Congregation?* April 12, All Faiths Unitarian Congregation, Ft Myers, FL Led by Connie Goodbread; all UU congregations are invited.

- *Florida District Annual Assembly*, Apr 25 – 27, 2014, Vero Beach Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

- *Come Grow a Faith Community* (led by Rev. Kenn Hurto) Saturday, May 10, 2014, UU Fellowship of Bay County, Panama City, FL

## The new UUA logo



The UUA has a new logo and a new marketing campaign! What's that, "marketing," you ask? Yes, it seems that we UU's don't do a very get job of getting our message out. Read below for an announcement from Rev. Peter Morales, President, UUA:

## Announcement: The UUA Brand Story

February 14, 2014

Dear Friends,

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) is making changes—changes to where we do our work, how we do our work, and how we tell the story of our Unitarian Universalist movement to the wider world.

The dramatic shifts in today's religious landscape demanded that UUA leadership take an in-depth look at our strategic communications and how effectively our voice is

breaking through the competing noise of our high-tech society. We examined our core values, our unique personality as a faith, and the impact Unitarian Universalists hope to make in the world. We asked UUs from across the country, of all ages with various levels of involvement in our faith, to answer three questions: Who are we? What do we do? And why it matters? From these conversations, and more, we began to form our brand identity for the future of our religious movement.

We engaged a top-notch branding agency to help us synthesize this information and explore ways to tell our story with more clarity and effectiveness. This is important for each of us, and it's crucial in our efforts to reach out to others who share our values. Today, I am excited to share with you one of the tools in an ongoing process of improved communication strategies, the Unitarian Universalist Association's new logo.

Our new logo, for many, will be the first introduction to who we are. It's meant to entice a person to learn more. And it's doing just that. Our random testing groups of UUs and non-UUs described emotions and images evoked by this logo with words such as brave, enlightening, warm, spiritual, energizing, having integrity, welcoming and determined. Our logo is the first innovation among many that the UUA plans to implement to better tell our story. Learn more about this process.

You will be seeing this new logo, and more components of our brand identity, being implemented across all UUA communication channels over the next few months. And many of these changes will be featured at our General Assembly in Providence, RI, this June.

We look forward to conversations with you, in congregations, districts, regions, and affiliated organizations, about your own brand identity and how it fits into the new direction of the UUA. This is the beginning of a transformative journey to tell the story of Unitarian Universalism and inspire individuals to join that journey.

In faith,  
Rev. Peter Morales  
President, Unitarian Universalist Association

P.S. Read the [UU World](#) feature article about UUA branding.

*We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote*

- The inherent dignity and worth of every person,
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations,
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations,
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning,
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large,
- 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.

*Grateful for the religious pluralism, which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations we enter into this covenant promising to one another our mutual trust and support.*