

The Flaming Chalice

Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

Located at: 1951 East Park Avenue

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2342

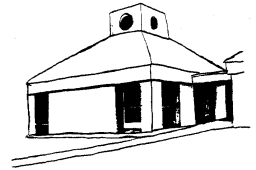
Valdosta, GA 31604

Minister: Rev. Fred Howard

<http://uuvaldosta.net>

229-242-3714

e-mail: uuvaldosta@yahoo.com



Carol Stiles - President	Doug Tanner – Vice President
Rosie Asbury –Treasurer	Susan Bailey -Director of R.E.
Kimberly Tanner – Director of Membership –	Jim Ingram –Director of Building & Grounds
Tom Aiello – Secretary	Carol Stiles – Newsletter Ed.

Please send email to uuvaldosta@yahoo.com to contact us!

What's going on... **April 2015**

Sun	April 5	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - Rev. Fred Howard, "The Great Gamble of Our Soul: Unitarian Universalists and Redemption" Meet & Greet after the service Welcoming Congregation
F	April 10	6:30 PM	Pizza and a Movie
Sun	April 12	9:30 AM 10:45 AM	UU board meeting in the RE wing Religious Education for children Service - Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, "Transforming Desire in Buddhism and Christianity" Meet & Greet after the service
M	April 13	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
W	April 15		Deadline March newsletter
F	April 17	6:30 PM	Potluck and Book Discussion
Sun	April 19	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. Fred Howard, "The Moral Roots of Liberals and Conservatives" Annual congregational Meeting! Potluck dinner after the meeting!
F	April 24	6:30 PM	Firepit and Games Night!
Sun	April 26	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – TBA Meet & Greet Coffee after the service

April...

This month brings our annual congregational meeting, Sunday, April 19th after the service! See details inside for this and many other activities.

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 5 – Rev. Fred Howard, “The Great Gamble of Our Soul: Unitarian Universalists and Redemption”

Today is Easter. On this day, according to Christian tradition and theology, the possibility of redemption for all of humanity is celebrated. But does the concept of redemption have any meaning in the Unitarian Universalist faith tradition? If so, what does redemption look like? This morning I'll explore these questions by way of a personal story.

Sunday, April 12 – Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, **Transforming Desire in Buddhism and Christianity**

Desire is the affective power or spiritual energy by which we relate to all that is. Buddhism and Christianity can be brought into a mutually enriching relationship through exploring the desire and its transformation. Both traditions, in different ways, depict a human condition distorted by self-enclosure and suggest that the path to spiritual cultivation involves a reorientation of consciousness that has direct moral implications. We'll explore the moral and spiritual implications of desire.

Sunday, April 19 – Rev. Fred Howard, “The Moral Roots of Liberals and Conservatives”

How is it that people of good conscience can come down at such opposite ends of many of the moral and political issues of our day? Today will be the second part of a thread that I began in the March 1 sermon, “What Happened to UU's Political Presence?” I'll be digging a little deeper into the subject to see if it's possible to uncover the underlying reason for some of the profound differences in the political sphere that so divide us as a nation. This sermon comes out of my contention that it's only as we begin to understand each other that real conversations will be possible.

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 26 – TBA - Watch for announcements for the speaker for this date.

New Member Ceremony

April 19th during the service

Rev. Howard and Kimberly Tanner (Membership Director) will conduct a new member ceremony during the service on April 19th. If you have recently joined the church, you are invited to participate!

Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting of the membership of UU Valdosta will be held on Sunday, April 19, after the service for the purpose of election of the Board of Trustees and approval of the proposed budget, for 2015-2016. ***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.”

Proposed Budget for 2015-2016: A proposed budget was prepared by Treasurer Rosie Asbury, revised, and approved by the UU Board to be placed on the agenda for the annual meeting.

Congregational affirmation to apply for

Welcoming Congregation status: Based upon the extensive participation and positive comments made about the Welcoming Congregation program we are completing this year, the UU board recommends a congregational vote to apply for and be publicly recognized by the Unitarian Universalist Association as a “Welcoming Congregation.” A “yes” vote will affirm that the Welcoming Congregation coordinators should submit the application for recognition.

Report of the Nominating Committee – Dee Tait (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 April 19th:

President	Tom Aiello
Vice-President/Program Chair	Carol Stiles
Secretary	Tom Phillips
Religious Education Director	Sue Bailey
Treasurer	Rosie Asbury
Membership	Kimberly Tanner
Bldg & Grounds	Jim Ingram

After the meeting there will be a **potluck dinner** to welcome new members (who will be recognized during the service) and the new board! Please bring a dish to share!



MINISTERIAL MUUSINGS

Rev. Fred Howard, April 2015

The Unitarian Universalist Association, central organization of our religious movement, is on the cusp of some major changes. I'll be attending the Florida District's Annual Assembly April 17-19 in Orlando where a vote will be taken to dissolve the governance structure of the district and, in effect, go out of business. This is all part of the "Regionalization" master plan that has been in the works for the past 5 years or so for the four Districts in the southern US to join together as the Southern Region.

Concurrent with the dissolution of the Districts, the creation of a new Council of Elders has been proposed. The Elders will have a distinctly different function than the previous District Boards. Whereas the Boards focused primarily on fiduciary and policy matters, i.e. governing, the new model, utilizes a Council of Elders whose primary responsibilities will be ministerial – strengthening congregational ties, developing leadership within our congregations, mentoring, and bolstering our faith development.

Under this new model, our Cluster groups will assume new importance as a primary way for members of our congregations to meet face to face, interact, collaborate, and develop shared ministries and actions of social witness. Our congregation is a part of the Northeast Cluster. Go to <https://neclusterfloridauua.wordpress.com/> to learn more. Clusters take much the form of small group ministry and help strengthen ties between local congregations. Clusters generally meet together twice a year and the meetings are usually held within easy driving distance.

Now could be a wonderful opportunity for you to become more involved in the further development of our faith tradition and the emergence of the new ways in which our members and congregations will be relating to one another. It would be great if our congregation could send delegates to this very important District meeting April 17-19. If interested, please see Fred or Carol. Come and be a part of these exciting new changes in the life of our faith!

Grace and Peace,
Fred

Rev. Fred Howard is our part time minister. He is usually in the pulpit on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. He may be contacted by email at fredhoward3622@gmail.com (preferable). He is available for weddings and rites of passage ceremonies by prearrangement.

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 volunteer list at the church or through Carol Stiles and the Worship Team.

Notes from RE:

Sue Bailey

The RE kids have been busy learning about a variety of creation stories and comparing and contrasting them. Look around the church for many of the projects the kids have made to represent these stories. We are currently working on great flood stories from the Bible and other faith traditions and mythology. The kids' group Ark project is on display at the back of the sanctuary. Our most recent lesson introduced us to Pandora and her box which we compared with the Bible story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. If you would like to help in RE, please talk with Sue Bailey and sign up on the volunteer sheet. We look forward to having you join us in RE!

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Keep in your thoughts...

- ❖ Our members and friends who are dealing with health issues of their own or of family members.

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 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.

Social Action Activities

Break Bread Together

We deliver meals with the Break Bread Together program on the 2nd Monday (and 5th 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. It is helpful to have two people on the route.

UU Church of Valdosta

Board of Directors Meeting News

March 8, 2015

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Shared Service with Serenity Christian will be moved to May so that more people from both congregations can attend.
- discussed repairing vs. replacing hymnals – Carol made requests for members and friends to “sponsor a hymnal” in March, when hymnals were on sale.
- discussed how to proceed with Worship Team and volunteers; Carol led a short meeting after the service on Sunday, March 15th.
- Next Meeting: May 3, 9:30 a.m.

UU Valdosta Caring Committee

Dee Tait chairs this committee. If you would be able to help, when requests for help are received, please let her know. Other members include David Rodgers, Betty Derrick, Kimberly Tanner, and Carol Stiles. Get in touch too if you or someone you know needs the services of this committee.

Worship Team

An update on the Worship Team: Valerie Webster has stepped down as chair, but she has a great team in place! We met briefly with volunteers after the service on March 15th, to reaffirm the process for involving volunteers in our worship services. Each Sunday, there will be a sign-up sheet on the table at the back of the sanctuary for sign up for the upcoming services. We also have a “volunteer e-mail list” that is a separate list from our announcements list. If volunteers are still needed for a given Sunday, this list will be used to ask for volunteers to fill those tasks. If you wish to be on this list, please let Carol Stiles know. The Worship Team has a few members that will coordinate specific areas (listed below) – if you are interested in lay-leading, music, meet-n-greet, or visitor greeter, please

Speak with those individuals for specific information. Then just let us know by signing up on the list at the church!

Another area where we really need continued volunteer participation is assisting with RE. A large pool of volunteers means that we can rotate this and let everyone participate! Sue Bailey, RE Director, will be happy to discuss with you what all is involved, and again, you can sign up on the list at the church.

You can also send an e-mail to Carol Stiles, with the task and date(s) and she will put you on the list for that task.

Worship Team members:

Carol Stiles - chair
Doug Tanner - lay leaders
Kimberly Tanner – visitor greeter
Cliff Adams
Rhett Watson - music
Dawn Renner – meet-n-greet

Thank You! Thank You!

For serving on the Nominating Committee: Dee Tait (chair), Betty Derrick and Dawn Renner

For organizing the Worship Team and volunteers over the last year: Valerie Webster

For lay-leading services: Betty Derrick, Cliff Adams, Doug Tanner, Dee Tait

For providing music at services: Rhett Watson, Nephtali Santiago, Tom Phillips

For Meet & Greet: Dawn Renner, Mary Ellen Adams, Doug Tanner, Tammy McDowell, and Tanya Thomason

For assisting with RE: Dawn and Evi Bodhi, Richard Schofill, Dawn Renner, Lars Leader, Kim Richardson, Ashley Mills

For sweeping sidewalks: Richard Schofill, who often makes a trip early Sunday a.m. to finish this task!

For delivering Break Bread meals: David Rodgers

For photos for the newsletter: Sue Bailey

For coordinating the Caring Committee: Dee Tait

For folding and mailing the newsletter: Betty Derrick

Pizza and a Movie Friday, April 10, 6:30 p.m.

The film for the Friday, April 11, 2015, UU Pizza and Movie Night is: *Dear White People*. Rated R for language, sexual content, and drug use. Please contribute \$5.00 to cover pizza and refreshments. The showing begins at 6:30 p.m.

The 2014 film title *Dear White People* arises from the name of a witty and critical radio show broadcast by Sam White at fictitious Winchester University. White is a young woman of mixed race descent who majors in film production. Her character parallels director and film writer Justin Simien's background when he too earned a film degree at a university where he began to think about his third film's storyline. Simien traces evolving commentaries by White on race relations at the predominately white school. Double entendres in her name typify satirical and ironic references Simien incorporates into his film. Sam's views on race reflect discoveries she makes as she continues to come of age during the progress of the film and must come to terms with prejudice both on and off campus. Particularly provocative issues arise when the Caucasian son of the school's president persuades a club he leads to host a blackface theme party as a vehicle to protest White's program. Not surprisingly, when African American students attempt to participate in the party, underlying racial tensions on campus flare. Recently exposed racism in well-practiced singing by members of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity and by their house mother at Oklahoma U. corroborates Simien's insightful portrayal of racism's continuing institutionalization in the social life of some American universities and colleges.

- Review by David Rodgers

Potluck and Book Discussion Friday, April 17th, 6:30 p.m.

Re-scheduled for April, the book is *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* by Muriel Barbery. We gather for fellowship and potluck at 6:30 and then about 7:30 begin discussing the book. It is helpful to have read the book, but not a requirement – join us! Contact: Tom Aiello

Games Night

Friday, April 24, 6:30 p.m. – until ?

All are welcome! Bring a snack to share and your choice of beverages. If you have a game suitable for several to many players and people of all ages, bring it along. Contact: Susan Bailey.

Treasurer's Report for Feb., 2014

<u>Outstanding Debt</u>	\$ 0.00
<u>Receipts</u>	
Plate	\$ 187.00
Pledge	1083.00
Rent	100.00
Share the Plate	210.00
Total Receipts	\$ 1580.00
<u>Disbursements</u>	
Minister Expense	\$ 700.00
Pest Control/Termite	35.00
Speakers' Fees/Interpreter	250.00
Repairs/Maintenance	333.98
Newsletter	
Donations (SGPEH)	210.00
Utilities	326.73
Advertising	350.00
Others	0.00
Total disbursements	\$ 2,205.71
Net receipt	\$ - 625.71

Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles,
 Worship Team Chair: Carol Stiles
 December 15: Deadline for the November 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 or Kimberly Tanner
 Facebook: Kimberly Tanner,
 Local Publicity:

At the Church-in-the-Woods...

Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday, Beginners 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

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.

Other community groups:

PFLAG Meeting – 4th Tuesday each month, 7:00PM
PFLAG is now meeting at Christ the King Episcopal Church in downtown Valdosta. The web page for PFLAG Valdosta: <http://community.pflag.org/Valdosta>

S·O·S VALDOSTA

VALDOSTA SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE SUPPORT GROUP

This peer-to-peer support group began **meeting at another location in December:** Hilton Garden Inn, 1702 Gornto Rd. Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month. The facilitator is Tamara Hardesty. Contact via e-mail at 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.

Carol's Comments:

Okay, this month, I'm going to ask you to go back to the "Thank You! Thank You" section of this newsletter and read through that list. Wow! Look at the diverse list of names who have volunteered for the tasks of layleader, meet-n-greet, music, and RE assistant! Thank you so much for embracing the Worship Team model, ably implemented by Valerie Webster over the past few months. I wish to thank Valerie for her time and energy in making this model a reality and I thank everyone who has or will volunteer to keep the momentum going!

This month, we practice our fifth principle: "The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large." Our membership has significantly increased this past year, and so we particularly encourage those new members to put the date of our annual congregational meeting, April 19th, on your calendars! This is the only regularly scheduled meeting of the membership that we have and it is important that all members participate. During the service on that day we will hold a new member ceremony and after the congregational meeting, all are invited to stay for fellowship over potluck dinner! I hope to see each of you there!

In community,
Carol

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.