



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

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

Please contact us by e-mail at uuvaldosta@yahoo.com

What's going on... **April 2017**

Sun	Apr. 2	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Oaken Circle CUUPS Chapter, “Flower Communion” Meet & Greet after the service
Sat	Apr. 8	9:00-12:00	Spring Clean-Up!
Sun	Apr. 9	11:00 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. George Bennett, “A Spiritual Anchor in Valdosta” Meet & Greet after the service
M	Apr. 10	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
Sun	Apr. 16	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service -- Rev. Fred Howard, “Overcoming Death: Making Meaning Out of Easter” Meet & Greet after the service
Sun	Apr. 23	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. Fred Howard, “Blessing of the Animals” Meet & Greet after the service
Fri	Apr. 28	6:30 PM	Games Night and Bonfire!
Sat.	Apr. 29	9:00 – noon	All About UU – small group gathering, sign-up required
Sun	Apr. 30	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Carol Stiles and Kimberly Tanner, “Responding with Compassion and Action” Meet & Greet after the service <i>Annual Congregational Meeting!</i>

April, 2017

Annual Congregational Meeting! All members should plan to stay after the service on Sunday, April 30th, for the annual congregational meeting! Put it on your calendar!

Sunday Services

Sunday, April 2 – Oaken Circle CUUPS Chapter, “Flower Communion”

The UU Church of Valdosta has long been known for its loyalty to honoring and upholding the sixth principle of Unitarian Universalism: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. By making room and a warm home for groups such as CUUPS, Buddhists, and practitioners of Tai Chi, the church has created a glorious kaleidoscope of culture and color within its four walls and the hearts of its members. It is at this time of year that our church traditionally looks forward with joy to the Flower Communion, when we bring a little bit of our color in the door with us, in the form of flowers, and blend them all as the church herself has done, in a grand and joyous bouquet, that we then share and take home with us to celebrate our kaleidoscope of community. This year the CUUPS group is honored to speak during the service about how they have been included with peace, liberty, and justice as members of the Unitarian Universalist congregation of Valdosta, and as fellow flowers in the gardens of our respective God/Goddess belief systems. The guest speakers representing the CUUPS group at the Flower Communion, will be Amy Jackson, Stephanie Clark Taylor, and Deborah Marine-Hill.

Sunday, April 9 – Rev. George Bennett, “A Spiritual Anchor in Valdosta”

We are seeking to build a progressive agenda rooted in a moral framework to counter the ultra-conservative agenda that is trying to dominate our community. Resistance alone will not sustain us. We seek a shared life in Valdosta that is rooted in deep spirituality. We wish to spread the vision of a nation that is just and loving.

Sunday, April 16 – Rev. Fred Howard, “Overcoming Death: Making Meaning Out of Easter”

Stephen Jenkinson headed the counseling team of Canada’s largest palliative care program for many years, working with hundreds of dying patients and their families. He has made it his life’s mission to change the way we die. To turn it from

denial and resistance into an essential part of life. I found his perspective challenging but also quite lovely and moving. And it seems so appropriate to the occasion we celebrate today.

Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will be donated to Break Bread. 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 23 – Rev. Fred Howard, “Blessing of the Animals”

Come one, come all! Bring your pets, both great and small. Even if they like to roll, just be sure they’re under control. This event will be super duper – just be sure to bring your pooper scooper.

This morning as a part of our worship experience, weather permitting, we’ll do a blessing of the animals. The event will take place outside on the lawn behind the sanctuary. If you plan to bring your four legged friend, please check your email or our Facebook page Saturday pm. Should there be a likely chance of inclement weather, we may have to postpone. Please take responsibility for self-screening if you have allergies to animal dander. All pets should be as well behaved as the humans. That shouldn’t be a problem.

Sunday, April 30 – Carol Stiles and Kimberly Tanner, “Responding with Compassion and Action”

In today’s political and social climate, how can we, as a religious liberal community, respond? In a time when there’s an uptick in anti-Muslim, anti-Jewish, anti-LGBT and other incidents, how do we respond? Carol and Kimberly will provide some resources for how UUs across the country are responding to build community in this climate – in part a response to an encounter at our UU table at the Azalea Festival which is described in Rev. Fred Howard’s column in this newsletter.

After the service and a brief meet-n-greet, plan to stay for a continuing dialogue in the spirit of our Welcoming Congregation series of discussions.

Spring Clean-Up!

Saturday, Apr. 8 - 9:00 a.m. to noon

Bring cleaning tools and supplies for our semi-annual cleanup day, indoors and outdoors! Many hands make light work!

Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting of the membership of UU Valdosta will be held on Sunday, April 30, after the service for the purpose of election of the Board of Trustees and approval of the proposed budget, for 2016-2017. **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 2017-2018: A proposed budget prepared by Treasurer Rosie Asbury, revised, and approved by the UU Board will be placed on the agenda for the annual meeting.

Report of the Nominating Committee – Dee Tait (chair), Dawn Renner, and Cliff Adams. The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of officers to stand for election at the annual congregational meeting to be held April 30th:

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



Ministerial Musings

Rev. Fred Howard

If the size of the crowd is any indication of success, then this year's Azalea Festival certainly was one. During much of the three hours or so that I was there, people were shoulder to shoulder. Our church's tent had good visibility, being situated near the center of the park. Quite a few people stopped by, not just current members and friends, but a few old friends and backsliders, and a few curiosity seekers. I thoroughly enjoyed being a part of it.

But I was sorry to miss the born-again Christian that came by just before I got there around eleven am. According to those who were there, she created quite a scene. Apparently, she was incensed with our "coexist" flag. You know, the one made up stylistically of symbols of many of the world's great religions. Many UUs have "coexist" bumper stickers you might have seen also.

I don't know whether or not the incident would have turned out differently if I'd been there, but clearly there was a lot of energy in that moment - both in the "evangelizing" woman and in our staffers. Real happenings come from moments like that, especially if confrontation can be channeled into real dialogue. Could that have happened? Probably not, but it's possible. Was this woman in any way open to a conversation or just ranting? I have no way of knowing. But I do know that least one of the ingredients for this incident to potentially become a happening was there. The ENERGY.

In my experience, the best facilitators in groups, whether its small groups, congregations, or large organizations, are those that pay close attention to the energy in the room. A good facilitator will not only identify that energy but bring it to people's attention. Our natural tendency is to resist the energy, especially when it's conflictual. Most of us try to be polite at all costs, and do everything in our power to avoid highly charged situations. Good leadership means recognizing this and going against the grain. To do so is often uncomfortable, but energy, even if (especially if?) it's conflictual is often where the real opportunities for growth are. The kind of energy I'm referring to is generated when people with real differences bump into each other and rub against each other. A rarity in our well-ordered society.

Oh well, there's always next year. Hope you can make it to our tent then also. Who knows? You never know when or where a happening might occur.

In Community and Faith,
Fred

UU Valdosta Caring Committee

Members of this committee include Dee Tait, David Rodgers, Kimberly Tanner, and Carol Stiles. If you are able to help when assistance is needed please see a member of the committee.

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.

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.

Games Night

Games Night, April 28, 6:30 p.m. Please bring a snack to share (remember that some of our members are gluten-free and vegetarian / vegan).



Rev. Fred Howard is our part-time minister. He may be contacted by email (preferable) at fredhoward3622@gmail.com. He is available for weddings and rites of passage ceremonies by prearrangement.

UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News

March 11, 2016

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Scheduled annual congregational meeting for Apr. 23 and established nominating committee: Dee Tait, Chair, Dawn Renner and Cliff Adams.
- Scheduled spring clean-up for April 8, and discussed tasks to be completed.
- Shared Service with Serenity Christian Church will be May 21.
- Next Meeting: Apr. 9, 9:30 a.m.

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.

Thank You! Thank You!

For loading and moving furniture out of building: Cliff and Mary Ellen Adams, Joe Rehberg, Fred Howard
For serving on the Nominating Committee: Dee Tait (chair), Cliff Adams, Dawn Renner
For lay-leading services: Dee Tait, Doug Tanner, Cliff Adams
For speaking at Sunday Services: Joyce Davenport, Lars Leader
For resolving telephone and internet issues (again): Doug Tanner
For providing music at services: Rhett Watson, Daniel Peveto
For Meet & Greet: Carol Stiles, Mary Ellen Adams, the Rapier family
For leading RE and nursery care: Sue Bailey and Teagan Dunn
For assisting with RE and nursery: Dawn Renner, Kimberly Tanner, Stephen O’Kane, Crystal Rapier
For taking out trash and recycling: Dee Tait, Lawrence Rapier, Lars Leader, and others.
For delivering Break Bread meals: David Rodgers
For photos for newsletter: Carol Stiles

UU Treasurer's Report February 2017

Outstanding Debt	\$	0.00
Receipts		
Plate	\$	78.00
Pledge		415.00
Rent		100.00
Share the Plate(SGPEH)		67.00
Total receipts	\$	660.00
Disbursements		
Minister Expense	\$	1760.48
Pest Control/Termite		45.00
Speaker's fees		200.00
Repairs/Maintenance		0.00
Donations (SGPEH / LACC)		200.00
RE/childcare		100.00
UUA Dues		0.00
Utilities		273.61
Other (bookmarks)		72.80
Total disbursements	\$	2651.89
Net receipt	\$	-1991.89

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

Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Contact Dennis Bogyo or Luana Goodwin. You can e-mail the group at georgia@taoist.org

Sangha Tuesdays

6:00-7:30 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, 6:00 – 6:30; Buddhist shamata meditation, 6:30 – 7:00; Discussion of reading, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Oaken Circle CUUPS Chapter

Wednesday evenings, 7:00 p.m.

Oaken Circle, a chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, meets each Wednesday evening, with an officers' meeting on the first Wednesday of the month.

You can contact the group by e-mail at: valdostaoakencircle@gmail.com or on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/oakencircle/>

"All About UU" Small Group Event

Saturday, April 29 from 9 am to 12 pm

Kimberly Tanner and Fred Howard are planning to offer an All About UU small group at the church on Saturday, April 29 from 9 am to 12 pm with lunch provided. This is a wonderful opportunity for newcomers to learn more about us and what our faith tradition is all about. It's also a great opportunity to meet others who are new to our congregation and for all of us to get to know one another better. There will be a chance to dialogue on liberal faith and values, ask questions, and share stories about what brought us through the doors of our church and where we are individually on our faith journeys.

There will be both an informational as well as a personal sharing component to this time together and our time will be centered around three general themes:

1. What brought you to Unitarian Universalism?
2. What is Unitarian Universalism?
3. Where do I want to go on my faith journey, and how might this church be a part of that journey?

If you are interested in being a part of this experience, please contact Kimberly or Fred after a service or via email or phone. There will also be a sign up sheet on the table at the back of the sanctuary. Group size will be limited, so commit as soon as you can.

Come and be a part of the fun as we learn together and build community!



The Second Betty Derrick Memorial Lecture and Discussion was held Mar. 3, 2017. The panel included Dr. James LaPlant, Dr. Dick Saeger and Dr. Bernie Tamas, all from the VSU Department of Political Science, discussing Election 2016.

Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles
 Newsletter deadline is the 15th of the previous month!

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

Worship Team Chair: Carol Stiles
 Website Manager: Carol Stiles
 e-Mail List: Contact Carol Stiles or Kimberly Tanner
 Facebook: Kimberly Tanner
 Local Publicity: Dee Tait

Worship Team

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

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.

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.