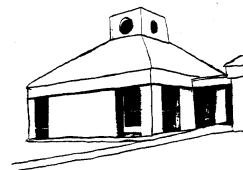


# *The Flaming Chalice*

## *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](mailto:uuvaldosta@yahoo.com)



Please note that although individual personal contact information has been removed from this online newsletter, you can obtain more information on any event or ask questions by sending an e-mail to [uuvaldosta@yahoo.com](mailto:uuvaldosta@yahoo.com).

### What's going on... **August 2014**

Sun	Aug. 3	9:30 AM 10:45 AM	Board Meeting in the RE wing at the church Religious Education for children <b>Service – Dr. Bennie Calloway, "I Am Created To Be, To Do, And To Have, Part 2"</b> Meet & Greet after the service
Sun	Aug. 10	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service - Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, "Buddhist Eight Fold Path: Mindfulness and Concentration"</b> Meet & Greet after the service
M	Aug. 11	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
F	Aug 15		<b>Deadline August newsletter</b>
Sun	Aug. 17	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Dr. Patricia Marks, "The Raven and the Sun, Moon, and Stars"</b> Meet & Greet Coffee after the service <i>Share the Plate Sunday</i>
F	Aug. 22	6:30 PM	Games Night!
Sun	Aug. 24	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service - Doug Tanner, "Diversity in Early Christian Belief, One Person's Christianity is Another's Heresy"</b> Meet & Greet after the service
F	Aug. 29	6:30 PM	Potluck and Book Discussion
Sun	Aug. 31	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Carol Stiles, "Becoming a Welcoming Congregation..."</b> Meet & Greet after the service

### August....

Summer is winding down, but still we have a busy month ahead! If you are going on a late summer vacation, consider bringing back a sample of water for the annual water communion (to be held in early September; but don't worry, other water can be used to represent earlier summer experiences). Join us when you can!

#### 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, Aug. 3 – Dr. Bennie Calloway, "I Am Created To Be, To Do, And To Have, Part 2"** The second of a two-part series, the emphasis of the message is to discover and recover our divine worth and notable contributions we have yet to make in the world. We must live up to our divine potential and live intentionally and not accidentally. Once we recognize our own divine worth we with recognize it and celebrate that worth in all humanity and promote its expression in the most life giving way.

**Sunday, Aug. 10 – Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, "Buddhist Eight Fold Path: Mindfulness and Concentration"**

We will wrap-up our four part discussion of the Eight Fold Path by focusing on the Buddha's teaching of mindfulness and concentration. Both of these practices involve the cultivation of grateful states of mind-body awareness and focusing one's energy on present moment experience. The Eight Fold Path as a whole is not a set of teachings but a way of life. It is up to each of us to integrate wisdom, compassion, and concentration in all that we do.

**Sunday, Aug. 17 – Dr. Patricia Marks, "The Raven and the Sun, Moon, and Stars"**

Almost every culture has a creation story, and many of them overlap. The Alaskan Tlingits speak of the Raven, a trickster who creates the world we live in. The story, which has interesting parallels with the Genesis creation stories, poses a number of questions about how symbols develop. Dr. Patricia Marks, a recently retired Episcopal deacon, is Professor Emerita in the Dept. of English, Valdosta State University. She enjoys traveling and writing poems, meditations, and academic articles.

*Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Our contributions this month will go to Hopes and Dreams Riding Facility, Inc., near Quitman, GA, which offers therapeutic services for veterans and their families, through horseback riding, camping, fishing, and other activities. The mission statement includes "to restore peace to their lives and heal the battle wounds that can't be seen." <http://www.hopesanddreamsridingfacility.com>*

**Sunday, Aug. 24 - Doug Tanner, "Diversity in Early Christian Belief, One Person's Christianity is Another's Heresy"**

If you are surprised today by the lack of agreement among Christians from various denominations about how to worship, what to believe or the form Christianity should take in general, you would be utterly shocked by the wide variety of beliefs in the earliest Christian churches. During the first centuries following the execution of Jesus by the Romans, Christians took many different paths and had many different viewpoints of his ministry, the world and, ultimately, God. Many of these early groups and their leaders were later condemned by the Catholic Church as heretics. They were driven underground, their holy texts burned and their members forced to recant their beliefs of be

excommunicated or killed. Join us to learn more about these early Christian groups and the religious and political movement which crushed them.

**Sunday, Aug. 29 – Carol Stiles, "Becoming a Welcoming Congregation..."** Almost 2/3 of UUA congregations in the U.S. are recognized as "Welcoming Congregations." The Welcoming Congregation program is a volunteer program for UU congregations that "want to take intentional steps to become more welcoming and inclusive of people with marginalized sexual orientations and gender identities." UU Valdosta has long been recognized in the Valdosta area as a leader in LGBTQ social justice issues, but we do not have Welcoming Congregation status. What does it mean to be a "Welcoming Congregation?" To the Unitarian Universalist Association? To us, here in Valdosta? What could it mean for our congregation and our community? Carol Stiles will introduce the Welcoming Congregation program, a series of conversations and outreach, planned for our congregation for the upcoming year. We also hope to include elements of the "Building the World We Dream About" – a UUA curriculum which helps congregations and individuals develop "antiracist, antioppressive, and multicultural habits and skills" The key to all of this is involvement – yours! This is a challenging series of conversations that truly will "take a village" to continue on our path of building the beloved community!

## 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.

## Notes from RE – Sue Bailey

The RE kids have enjoyed exploring our 7th principle this summer – We believe in caring for our planet Earth, the home we share with all living things. We will continue on this theme through August as we learn about endangered animals. So far we have talked about some of the reasons animals become threatened, endangered, and potentially extinct. We made handprint elephants during one lesson and stand up animals out of poster board during another. Lately, the RE kids have been choosing to take their artwork home, but we will have some group projects soon to display. On Shared Service Sunday, the RE class continued the tradition of creating twin RE works of art – one to send home with the folks from Serenity and one to keep at the UU to commemorate our annual coming together to worship and fellowship. We painted colorful peace doves using dots of paint made with their fingertips and signed the canvases with our names and thumbprints. The quote on the canvases comes from Nelson Mandela: "It always seems impossible until it's done."

## New Worship Team!

Please contact Valerie Webster with any questions or comments for the newly organized Worship Team, or one of the team members listed here to volunteer. Valerie Webster, Chair, Cliff Adams, Rhett Watson (music), Dawn Renner (meet-n-greet), Doug Tanner (Vice-President/Program Chair), Kimberly Tanner.

## 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.

### Kids Are People Too Fair

The UU Church is one of many organizations and businesses partnering with The South Georgia Partnership to End Homelessness. SGPEH will host the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Kids Are People Too Fair on August 2 at Pinevale Elementary School, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Families that pre-registered will be able to pick up backpacks with school supplies for the kids. We purchased approximately \$200 worth of crayons (24-pack, many on sale at \$.50 each) to be placed in each backpack, with funds from our Accepting Difference Project Fund.

## ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

*Congratulations to:*

- ❖ Ed. Note!!! Please send news to Carol for the September newsletter!

*Keep in your thoughts*

- ❖ Our members and friends experience ongoing 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.

### 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.

## E-mail list?

If you are not on our Yahoo e-mail announcements list yet, contact Carol Stiles. It is low volume and moderated, for announcements and reminders.

Please contact Kimberly Tanner if you would like to receive this newsletter electronically! Saves money and paper!

Do visit our website for other information, updates, links, and other great stuff! You can even ask a question there! <http://www.uuvaldosta.net/>

### Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles,

August 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

## UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News July 9, 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:

- plans for South Georgia Pride Festival, which will be Sept. 20, John Saunders Park – hand fans will be purchased and sold with net proceeds going to SGP.
- discussed plans for the Welcoming Congregation program for next year, to start in September
- Next Meeting: Sunday, Aug. 3, 9:30 AM. (note the change in day and time due to board members' schedules.)

# Let's Have Some Fun!!

## Games Night

**Friday, Aug. 22 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, Aug. 29 – 6:30 PM**

The book group has selected *How to Read the Air* by Dinaw Mengestu for the next discussion, which will be held on Friday, Aug. 29, at 6:30 p.m. 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. The group will have a potluck beginning at 6:30 and then will begin the discussion. Here's a description:

With both our national and local UUs emphasizing immigration as of late, and with the stories of immigration littering the headlines, our next book discussion group selection will take on African immigration. *How to Read the Air* by Dinaw Mengestu is a novel that traces two generations of Ethiopian immigrants and the physical and psychological problems they face in the United States. As Publisher's Weekly has noted, "Mengestu draws a haunting psychological portrait of recent immigrants to America, insecure and alienated, striving to fit in while mourning the loss of their cultural heritage and social status." Not only will this month's selection give you an opportunity to read one of the masterworks of a contemporary literary star, but it will also better acquaint you with that insecurity and alienation that is a near-universal part of the immigration experience.

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

### 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.



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.

**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>



## SHARED SERVICE WITH SERENITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH



## GREETING EACH OTHER AT THE SHARED SERVICE

## MORE PHOTOS ON NEXT PAGE!



## Thank You! Thank You!

**For speaking at Sunday Services in July:** Carol Stiles, Dennis Marks, Bennie Calloway, and Rev. Fred Howard and Rev. Floyd Rose (special Shared Service with Serenity Christian).

**For coordinating the potluck for the Shared Service with Serenity Christian:** Dee Tait (UU) and Bess Shear (Serenity Christian Church). And thanks to all from both congregations who brought food!

**For providing rides for Governor's Honors Program students to attend services:** Lars Leader (coordinator) and Doug Tanner

**For helping with the special RE project for the Shared Service:** Teagan and Emma

**For providing music at services:** Rhett Watson, Valerie Webster

**For lay-leading services:** Valerie Webster, Tom Aiello, Lars Leader

**For Meet & Greet:** Dawn Renner (coordinator), Crystal and Kim Richardson, Sue Bailey

**For coming up with great projects for RE!** Sue Bailey

**For taking and providing photos of the Shared Service:** Tom Phillips

**For sweeping sidewalks:** Richard Schofill

**For delivering Break Bread meals in July:** David Rodgers

**For coordinating the book discussion:** Tom Aiello

## Treasurer's Report – Rosie Asbury

July, 2014

### Outstanding Debt

Air Conditioner Loan	\$ 0.00
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### Receipts

Plate	\$ 194.53
Pledge	2890.00
Rent	100.00
Share the Plate(SOC)	140.00
Total Receipts	\$3,324.53

### Disbursements

Minister Expense	\$ 350.00
Pest Control/Termite	35.00
Speakers' Fees	400.00
Repairs/Maintenance	
Newsletter	
Donations (SOC)	140.00
Membership	29.47
(offering envelopes)	
UUA Dues	0.00
Insurance	0.00
Utilities	266.99
Advertising(bench)	350.00
Others	127.00
(So GA Pride/mailbox)	
Total disbursements	\$1,698.46
<b>Net receipt</b>	<b>\$ 1,626.07</b>

## Mr. President, Tear Down This Wall by The Reverend Kenneth Gordon Hurto, Southern Region Congregational Life Staff

TUESDAY, JULY 15, 2014

*Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
The New Colossus, 1883; Emma Lazarus (1849–87)*

In her 2012 UUA GA Ware lecture in Phoenix, NPR journalist Maria Hinojosa spoke movingly of "two Americas," one which moved about freely and another always in fear of being detained, harassed, or arrested because of color or accent. A Mexican born American, she noted having a New York drivers license was not sufficient to prove her citizenship. She then asked the assembled whether we felt the need to bring our passports to travel to Arizona.

A line stayed with me: No human being is illegal. Entering our nation without a visa is an illegal activity; it violates our law.



However, she warned, breaking a law is an action, not a state of being. To say you are an “illegal” means you have no dignity, no rights. Hinojosa spoke of Nazis declaring Jews, Gypsies and homosexuals “illegal” to provide legitimacy for hatred, violence, and murder. She warned this was happening in our immigration debate.

“No human being is illegal.” I confess: I am no expert on immigration. I respect the notion that a nation ought to have borders that ensure its integrity. Yet, seeing the faces of thousands of children yearning to be free of violence or poverty, risking death in the desert — truly the wretched refuse of central America’s dysfunction — troubles my soul. These are kids, not “illegals.” Truly, these are the huddled masses? Do we welcome them to our shore?

Our nation’s immigration history has always discriminated as to who is “ok” and who is not. Immigration quotas are biased toward white, northern Europeans, less welcoming of southern Europeans, let alone Africans. If you are Cuban, you are granted amnesty the moment you set foot on US soil; if you’re from Haiti, you’re sent back asap.

We value people differently. No doubt, this is a sign of “my tribe” in opposition to yours. At its best, “my tribe” is a source of identity and pride. At its worse, “my tribe” leads to spiritual xenophobia and justification for treating those different as of less or no worth. Our immigration policy is driven by such fear.

President Obama has deported more people than any other President, ever. The pressure to seal our borders with a ghastly, thousand miles long fence is immense. But it does not address the problem of global inequality. My ancestors left Norway in mid-19th century seeking a better life on the prairies of the Dakotas. So, too, today, with any poor and oppressed. As long as we are a free people, others will want to come here.

Secure borders, compassion for the poor? There are competing goods in this debate; it is cheap grace and cheaper law to ignore that. Finding a balance is what we all must seek.

Immediately, Unitarian Universalists can stand on the side of love and argue compassion as a first value in the immigration

debate. We should work to ensure those who cross our border be treated decently. We should confront the oft-repeated, obfuscating use of “illegals.” Our compassion should include those trying to cope with the immense challenge of what to do with the over 50,000 unaccompanied children who have arrived in Texas.

Good news, if there is such, is that faith-based groups from around the country are pulling together to lend a hand and a heart. True reform of our fear-driven policies will not come soon or easily. I have no “do this now” prescription for my fellow Unitarian Universalists, save to encourage your engagement in the debate and to lend a hand where you can.

In her 2014 Ware lecture last month, lawyer, poet Sister Simone Campbell — organizer of the “Nuns on the Bus” protest decrying the effects of the so-called “Ryan Budget” on people in need — called us to “walk towards trouble” as a core part of our spiritual life. She offered this poem to encourage us:

#### INCARNATION

*Let gratitude be the beat of our heart, pounding Baghdad rhythms, circulating memories, meaning of the journey.  
Let resolve flow in our veins, fueled by Basra’s destitution, risking reflective action in a fifteen-second world.  
Let compassion be our hands, reaching to be with each other, all others to touch, hold heal this fractured world.  
Let wisdom be our feet, bringing us to the crying need to friends or foe to share this body’s blood.  
Let love be our eyes, that we might see the beauty, see the dream lurking in the shadows of despair and dread.  
Let community be our body warmth, radiating Arab energy to welcome in the foreign stranger—even the ones who wage this war.  
Let us remember on drear distant days, we are a promised Christmas joy we live as one this tragic gifted life— We are the Body of God!*

Love is our core teaching. It calls us to tear down walls, to reach out. May we do so.

<http://uuasouth.blogspot.com/2014/07/mr-president-tear-down-this-wall.html>

*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.*