

The Flaming Chalice

Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

Located at: 1951 East Park Avenue

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2342

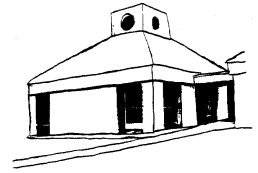
Valdosta, GA 31604

Minister: Rev. Fred Howard

<http://uuvaldosta.net>

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Tom Aiello - President	Carol Stiles – Vice President
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 send email to uuvaldosta@yahoo.com to contact us!

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

Sun	Dec. 6	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - Rev. Fred Howard, "Toying with Greatness" Potluck and Holiday Decorating! After the service
Sat	Dec. 12	5:00 PM	South Georgia Pride Holiday party – at the church!
Sun	Dec. 13	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - Rev. Bennie Calloway, "The Gift of Kindness" Meet & Greet after the service
M	Dec. 14	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
T	Dec. 15		Deadline - January newsletter
Sat	Dec. 19	7:00 PM	Yule Ball, hosted by Oaken Circle Pagans!
Sun	Dec. 20	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - Rev. Fred Howard, "The Moravian Lovefeast" Meet & Greet after the service
Sun	Dec. 27	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Oaken Circle Pagans, "Celebration of Light" Meet & Greet after the service

December 2015

Celebrate the warmth and peace of the holidays with us at UU! We begin a new tradition, on Dec. 19th, the Yule Ball, hosted by our new CUUPS chapter, Oaken Circle Pagans, and we continue an annual tradition, the Moravian Lovefeast, on December 20th. We also continue our participation in the UUSC Guest at Your Table program, be sure to get your GAYT box!

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, December 6 – Rev. Fred Howard, “Toying with Greatness”

Unitarian Universalists aspire to some pretty lofty ideals. Racial and gender equality. Environmental justice. World peace. There’s no shortage of vision in our ranks. What we do often seem to miss is the inspiration to carry them forward. This Christmas I’d like to offer the gift of story to the congregation in the form of a new twist on an old story – a story that has been inspiring romantic idealists for centuries.

Sunday, December 13 – Rev. Bennie Calloway, “The Gift of Kindness”

In this message, we will examine what it means to be kind and that every human has been divinely wired to possess and be a dispenser of kindness. The holiday season should accelerate our kindness toward all humanity of various faith traditions. We should exhibit kindness out of our divine character in every setting and not allow it to be dictated by a holiday setting only.

Sunday, December 20 – Rev. Fred Howard, “The Moravian Lovefeast”

This is our sixth year celebrating the Lovefeast as a part of the holidays. It is a simple service consisting of traditional Christmas music, food and warm drink, and lessons in humility, grace, and communal spirit taken from stories of the Moravian community. The sweetness of the roll and the warmth of the cocoa are physical reminders both of our common human need for food and drink and the comfort and satisfaction we enjoy when we are all a part of a covenanted community. Come and be a part of this tradition – sure to delight your taste buds and rekindle a warm holiday spirit.

Share the Plate Sunday: Contributions to the plate, not otherwise designated as pledge, will go to UUSC’s Guest at Your Table program, as part of our annual congregational contribution. Please see Lars Leader if you need a UUSC GAYT box or other materials for this program.

Sunday, December 27 – Oaken Circle Pagans, “Celebration of Light”

We will be discussing the symbolism of light as a ray of hope and beacon of faith for all manner of traditions, and the miracles that this season represents. Regardless of the practices of your family or your faith, candlelight is widely used at this time of year, carrying over humankind’s deep regard for, and reliance on, the simple flame throughout our history. Be it the miracle of the oil when the Temple in Jerusalem was rededicated following the Seleucid desecration, or the Pagan tradition of lighting a fire to show the sun where to return, the light of a single candle is rich in symbolism and hope. These days, our holidays have lost so much of the old ways and the season is so busy we have lost a lot of the “family and faith” in what we do, and those are the feelings we seek to rekindle this year within our church and hearts. We hope you will join us as we pass the flame to one another and then fan the flames of hope that binds us in the 7 principles of the Unitarian Universalist Church.

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.

Holiday Luncheon and Decorating, Sunday, Dec. 6, after the service!

Bring a dish to share and plan to stay to help decorate the sanctuary for the holidays. Please bring new small items for the gift bags for those on our Break Bread Meal route - contact Sue Bailey for more information.

<p>Rev. Fred Howard is our part time minister. You may contact him by email (preferable) at fredhoward3622@gmail.com should you need to reach him. He is available for weddings and rites of passage ceremonies by prearrangement.</p>
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ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Keep in your thoughts...

Our members and friends experience health concerns or the loss of loved ones.

Note: Pizza and a Movie and Games Night

are on hiatus for the month of December – but see the invitations below from South Georgia Pride for two activities and to the Oaken Circle's Yule Ball to kick off the holidays! There's something going on for the first three Saturdays of the month – lots of fun for the holidays!

South Georgia Pride Holiday Activities!

All are invited!

Saturday, December 5th - Join South Georgia Pride as we participate in the **Valdosta Christmas Parade**. The Parade starts at 5 pm but we will be assembling the float from 12-3pm. You can park at the SGMC Professional Building. The float (truck with a trailer) will be in the parade line on Woodrow Wilson Dr. We will need to people to walk and ride on the float. If you would like to donate candy (individually wrapped) we would appreciate that. The people walking will be giving out the candy.

Saturday, December 12th, 5:00 p.m.- You are invited to the **South Georgia Pride Christmas Party** to be held at UU Valdosta. SGP will provide the ham and we ask that you bring a side dish, drink or desert for the potluck. We will also be accepting unwrapped toys for our toy drive for the toys to be donated to the needy children. You can also participate in the "Ugly Sweater Contest" for prizes. This will be a night to be Merry & Gay!

Yule Ball

Saturday, Dec. 19th, 7:00 p.m.

Come one,

Come all,

Come join your friends,

At the new Yule Ball!

Please join us on December 19, 2015 in our beautiful church in the woods at the UU, at 7 pm for a Yule Ball celebrating light, community, family, and joy! The Oaken Circle Pagans of the CUUPS Chapter invite the entire church to join us for an evening of food, music, fun, revelry, and pageantry as we share our celebration, our favorite foods, musical talents, and joy for the season. This is not only a lovely vegan/vegetarian aware feast, it is also music, singing, dancing, storytelling (if it isn't too loud – we will try), and the giving of small symbolic gifts. We invite you to dress the part too, wear something that makes you feel festive and fancy! It is a Ball y'all! At the end of the feast we ask you to join us for a small, quiet, ceremony outside by the bonfire as our Crones and Sages symbolically speak the thanks for the year that has passed, put out all of the lights, and then the youngest of the young adults kindle the bonfire and we all light candles from it to light us on our way as we head home. Children are not only welcome they are encouraged, so bring the little ones, we have heard a rumor that Father Christmas will also be attending! We hope to see you there!

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

Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday, Beginners Class, 7 – 8 p.m. Continuing class 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.

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.

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.

Welcoming Congregation

Our Welcoming Congregation conversations this fall will focus on the UUA curriculum, "Examining Whiteness: An Anti-Racism Curriculum." We have reflected on the history of white supremacy in the U.S. (facilitated by Tom Aiello, professor of history at VSU). We have discussed the emotional lives of white people and learned about racial identity development. For more information and to receive announcements about readings, etc., please contact Carol Stiles. Carol and Kimberly, along with Tom Aiello and some possible guests, will co-facilitate these sessions.

UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News

November 8, 2015

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Board voted to pledge \$100 from the Accepting Difference Fund to a small church in West Virginia, the Unitarian Fellowship of Huntington, which was damaged by fire.
- Discussed recruiting new volunteers for helping with Sunday services.
- Next Meeting: Dec. 6, 9:30 a.m.

Thank You! Thank You!

For bringing food and participating in the Habitat for Humanity renovation in November: Jim Ingram, Rosie Asbury, Lars Leader, Doug Tanner, Kimberly Tanner, Ray Perez, Fred Howard. Special thank you to Dee Tait who coordinated the lunch for those working at the site.

For speaking at services in November: Rev. George Bennett, Lars Leader

For lay-leading services: Doug Tanner, Carol Stiles, Tom Aiello

For providing music at services: Rhett Watson, Nephtali Santiago

For Meet & Greet: Dawn Renner, Doug and Kimberly Tanner, Lars Leader, Rosie Asbury

For assisting with RE: Teagan Dunn, Carol Stiles, Diane Holliman, Deborah Marine, Jennifer Dawson

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

For taking out trash and recycling: Richard and Rhett Watson, Sue Bailey, Dee Tait and others.

For delivering Break Bread meals: David Rodgers

For photos for the newsletter: Kimberly Tanner, Ray Perez

For coordinating the Caring Committee: Dee Tait

UU Treasurer's Report Oct., 2015

Outstanding Debt	\$	0.00
Receipts		
Plate/books	\$	362.00
Pledge		3680.00
Rent		0.00
Share the Plate(Habitat)		85.00
Total Receipts	\$	4127.09

Disbursements

Minister Expense	\$	1599.83
Pest Control/Termite		35.00
Assoc. Minister		350.00
Repairs/Maintenance		
Donations (Habitat/LACC)		185.00
OWL (Conf. Materials)		152.00
Utilities		312.63
Advertising		0.00
Total disbursements	\$	2634.46

Net receipt \$ **1492.63**

Oaken Circle CUUPS Chapter

Oaken Circle is now an official chapter, affiliated with CUUPS, the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans. The chapter meets at the UU Church, 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday evenings, with the officers' meeting on the first Wednesday. You can contact the group by e-mail at: valdostaoakencircle@gmail.com or check out the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/oakencircle/>

Our UU Sources...

Every month the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism are printed in our newsletter; they are also on the back of our weekly order of service on Sunday mornings. But we usually don't have space in either venue to include our Six Sources. These were adopted by the Unitarian Universalist Association in 1984 and amended in 1995. Here they are:

Unitarian Universalism (UU) draws from many sources:

Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;

Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;

Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;

Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;

Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;

Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

These principles and sources of faith are the backbone of our religious community.

This fall, we have been fortunate to have Sunday services which focused specifically on two of these sources: Rev. Fred Howard, who spoke in September on "What is the Voice of Paganism within Unitarian Universalism?" Rev. Fred related to us how the sixth source, "spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions," was not added until 1995 – after "years of dialogue, deliberation, and education went into the discernment process leading up to that addition." Rev. Fred's message provided excellent background on the tradition of paganism and UU and welcomed our many new members who are part of the Oaken Circle CUUPS Chapter.

In October, Rev. Jack Ford, of Buckman Bridge UU, presented a sermon that was part of a series on our UU sources that he did for Buckman Bridge, which he titled, "'I Know You Are But What Am I?'" The sermon he presented to us was "Part 2: Christianity." For this sermon, Rev. Jack received the Clarence R. Skinner Award for the best sermon in the Florida District in 2014.

Another way to experience our Six Sources? Check out our hymnal, *Singing the Living Tradition*: the hymns and readings are organized by themes taken from the Six Sources.

Welcome New Member!

Although **Rob Kester** has been attending UU Valdosta for years, he officially signed the membership book recently!



Welcome New Member!

Rachel Gardiner



Habitat for Humanity Building on Faith Week

UU Valdosta provided lunch and participated in the renovation of a house on November 20th. In the photo below, L-R, Ray Perez, Doug Tanner, Fred Howard, Lars Leader, and 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 with the task and date(s) and she will put you on the list for that task.

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.

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: Dee Tait

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.