

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



Tom Phillips – 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 Aiello – Secretary	Carol Stiles – Newsletter Ed.

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

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

Sun	Dec. 3	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. Fred Howard, “The Moravian Lovefeast” <i>Soup Potluck! After the service!</i>
Sun	Dec. 10	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – “The Absolutely No Rehearsal Christmas Pageant” Meet & Greet after the service
M	Dec. 11	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
Sun	Dec. 17	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Patrick, Kimberly, and Sean Richardson and members of Oaken Circle CUUPS chapter, “The Winter Solstice” Meet & Greet after the service
Sun	Dec. 24	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Joyce Rapier, “Kwanzaa” “Soup Potluck” - after the service

December, 2017

Here we are well into the December holiday season – and the newsletter is running a little bit late, again. Remember that we have other options for communication with you – including our Yahoo e-mail list and Facebook. The Yahoo group list is a low volume (few messages per month), moderated e-mail list for announcements, reminders, etc. – contact Carol to be added to the list. If you're on Facebook, join our Facebook page, available at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/UUValdosta/>
Questions? Ask Carol or Kimberly!

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 3 – Rev. Fred Howard, “The Moravian Lovefeast”

This will be our eighth annual Moravian Lovefeast. It is a simple service consisting of the singing of Christmas carols, a brief homily, and the serving of a homemade sweet roll and hot drink. We hope to involve much of the new musical talent in our congregation. Come and be a part of this tradition – sure to delight your taste buds and kindle a warm holiday spirit.

Sunday, December 10: “The Absolutely No Rehearsal Christmas Pageant”

Back by popular demand, this Sunday we will have our second annual Christmas Pageant. The presentation will be multigenerational, with the children reenacting the Christmas story as narrated by our youth and adults. All the traditional story and trappings will be there, but with a distinct Unitarian spin as well as an invitation to a fresh interpretation. The spontaneity of children holds before us delight, entertainment, and insight into the better part of our nature.

Sunday, December 17 - Patrick, Kimberly, and Sean Richardson and members of Oaken Circle CUUPS chapter, “The Winter Solstice”

Patrick Richardson will share a brief history of the celebration of Yule, which is observed around the Winter Solstice each year.

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 pick up a booklet on the back table, along with a GAYT donations box or envelop.

Sunday, December 24 - Joyce Rapier, “Kwanzaa.”

Joyce Rapier will share with us the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa, which is observed from December 26 – January 1.

After the service, we will have another “Soup Potluck” – bring a pot of your favorite soup to share! Vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free soups are welcomed!

Toy Drive for Coretta's Christmas

This year we are participating in a toy drive to help parents that are in the Ryan White HIV Clinic with Christmas presents for their children, ages 1-10 years old. The HIV Clinic is a program of the South Georgia Health District, and this toy drive program is coordinated by John Rogers and Aylin Alvarado.

Please bring a toy (no clothes) suitable for a child age 1-10 years old to the church service on Dec. 9. Please do NOT wrap the gifts, so that they can be matched with a specific child. This program provides gifts for the younger children, so that parents can focus on getting gifts for teenagers.

If you do not have time to shop, never fear! We will also take cash donations and someone will get to go shopping on Monday, Dec. 11, before delivering the gifts to the Health District office.

Here is some additional background on this program, from John Rogers: “Coretta Bloom Rogers was the HIV Health Educator for Public for many years and started with the HIV program at the beginning. During her time with Public Health she started a toy drive to help parents that were in our Ryan White HIV clinic with Christmas presents for their children. Many of our clients struggle with their health and making ends meet. Many even do not have money for Christmas presents for their children as they sometime cannot work due to their health. Over the years Coretta worked with many community organizations to help these parents be able to give their children at least one gift on Christmas morning. In 2005 Coretta was diagnosis with cancer and lost her fight in 2008. The HIV program decided to continue this tradition and call it “Coretta's Christmas” in her memory. “

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.



Ministerial Musings

Rev Fred Howard

December 2017 Ministerial Musings

Songs sometimes have interesting stories behind them. "Do You Hear What I Hear" is certainly one of them. People born after 1962 probably think the song, like so many other familiar Christmas tunes, has been around for a hundred years or more. But it is actually quite modern, being composed that year, 1962, as a protest song against the Cuban Missile Crisis.

A Unitarian music director named Noel Regney wrote the lyrics and his spouse, Gloria Shayne, composed the music. Regney knew all too well the horrors of war, having been a member of the French underground during world War II, and he was consumed with worry when the United States and the Soviet Union reached the brink of nuclear war in late 1962 because of the missiles the Soviets had placed in Cuba. The US demanded removal of the missiles and tensions were high. There's no way to convey to people of this generation just how afraid people in this country were during those days of October 1962. Historians often say this was the closest humankind has ever come to annihilating itself.

Like most everyone at that time, the Crisis was foremost on Regney's mind when the familiar lyrics came to him. He had been asked to write a Christmas song by a record producer, but hesitated because of his distaste for the commercialization of the holiday. But as he walked the streets of New York City, he saw two mothers pushing strollers and the words came to him in a flash of inspiration. He considered his poetic words as a prayer for the future of these two infants and immediately went home and wrote them out. He gave them to Gloria and she wrote the score.

Regney and Shayne's protest song became an instant hit. Because of Regney's lyrical imagery of lamb, shepherd boy, and allusion to the baby Jesus, the song entered the Christmas carol repertoire. It was initially performed by the chorale that popularized "Little Drummer Boy," then Bing Crosby did a cover of the song and its popularity has soared ever since. Regney and Shayne often performed together, but they never could perform

this song, their own composition, because of the strong feelings it elicited in them.

Next time you hear this song, remember that it was a Unitarian's prayer for peace that became this Christmas standard now heard all over the world.

In Faith and Community,
Fred

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

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.

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Keep in your thoughts...

- ❖ Our members and friends experiencing health concerns.

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.

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.

Mark Your Calendars for Jan. 27-28!

Christopher D. Sims, from Fairhope, AL, will be our guest that weekend! Christopher is a social justice activist, UU speaker, and spoken word artist! He will speak at the service on Sunday, Jan. 28, followed by conversation over lunch. We are also organizing a coffee house event (details to be determined) for Saturday evening, Jan. 27. If you would like to be involved in the planning, please contact Carol Stiles.

More information about Christopher from his Facebook page, "UniverSouLove a.k.a. Christopher D. Sims" <https://www.facebook.com/UniverSouLove/> Or blog: <https://christophersims.wordpress.com/>

Here is Christopher's early description of his message for the Sunday service: "I'll be speaking about Black Lives Matter, my experiences in Charlottesville, VA, and the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through a sermon in southern Georgia."

Christopher's visit is sponsored in part by the Betty Derrick Accepting Difference Project fund.

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

Games Night

Games Night is on hiatus for November and December due to all the special events during the holiday season. Please check with Kimberly Tanner for more information.

Welcome New Member!

Please welcome Randy Collins as a new member of UU Valdosta!



Moravian LoveFeast!

Teagan Dunn serves Kimberly Richardson, left and David Rogers at right, during the Moravian LoveFeast service on Dec. 3.



UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News

November 1, 2017, 6:00 p.m.

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Set date for fall cleanup of Nov. 18.
- Discussed estimate to move the piano from Julie's house to the sanctuary.
- Discussed schedule for weekend of Jan. 27-28, for the visit by Christopher D. Sims, social justice activist and UU speaker from Fairhope, AL.
- Next Meeting: TBA

Thank You! Thank You!

To all those who helped with the fall cleanup on November 18!

To all who helped decorate the church for the holidays on December 3!

For lay-leading services: Crystal Rapier, Doug Tanner, Carol Stiles, Cliff Adams

For speaking at Sunday Services: Lars Leader, Dr. AJ Ramirez

For providing music at services: Nephtali Santiago, Molly Scholz and Betsy Thompson (these two musicians via mp3 recordings!)

For Meet & Greet: Mary Ellen Adams, Dawn Renner, and everyone else who organized snacks in November.

For leading RE: Sue Bailey

For assisting with RE and nursery: Doug Tanner, Dawn Renner, Teagan Dunn

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

For leading the Caring Committee: Dee Tait

December 1st - World AIDS Day

By Michael J. Crumpler, November 30, 2017

UUA LGBTQ and Intercultural Programs Manager

World AIDS Day is a day of mourning. We mourn the 35 million lives lost to the HIV and AIDS pandemic since 1984. We mourn the staggering rates of preventable HIV and AIDS infections. We mourn that 40% of those living with HIV and AIDS do not know it. We mourn the disproportionate impact among people who are poor, people who are of African descent, people who are of Latinx descent, and people who identify as bisexual and gay.

World AIDS Day is a moment of reflection. We pause to reflect on what the world would look like without this tragic loss of life. We pause to reflect on the loss of their contributions to the humanities, arts, sciences, medicine, philanthropy, commerce, and politics. We pause to reflect on the impact that stigma and silence continues to have as thousands are infected with HIV and AIDS but go untreated while living in the shadows.

World AIDS Day is a time of action. We must act to #EndAIDS. We must act to ensure that people living with HIV and AIDS have access to high-quality health care, housing, and HIV prevention and education. We must act to build a global multi-faith coalition that uplifts the lives of people living with HIV and AIDS by countering the painful narrative that HIV and AIDS is shameful and is no longer a death sentence.

On this World AIDS Day, as Unitarian Universalists we reaffirm our belief in "the inherent worth and dignity of every person." We reaffirm our commitment to remembering the 35 million lives lost to HIV and AIDS. We reaffirm our commitment to celebrating the lives of people living with HIV and AIDS. We reaffirm our commitment to building a world of zero new HIV and AIDS infections by 2030.

May it be so!

From: <https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/blog/december-1st-world-aids-day>

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

Oaken Circle CUUPS Chapter

Oaken Circle, a chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, meets each Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m., with an officers' meeting on the first Wednesday of the month.

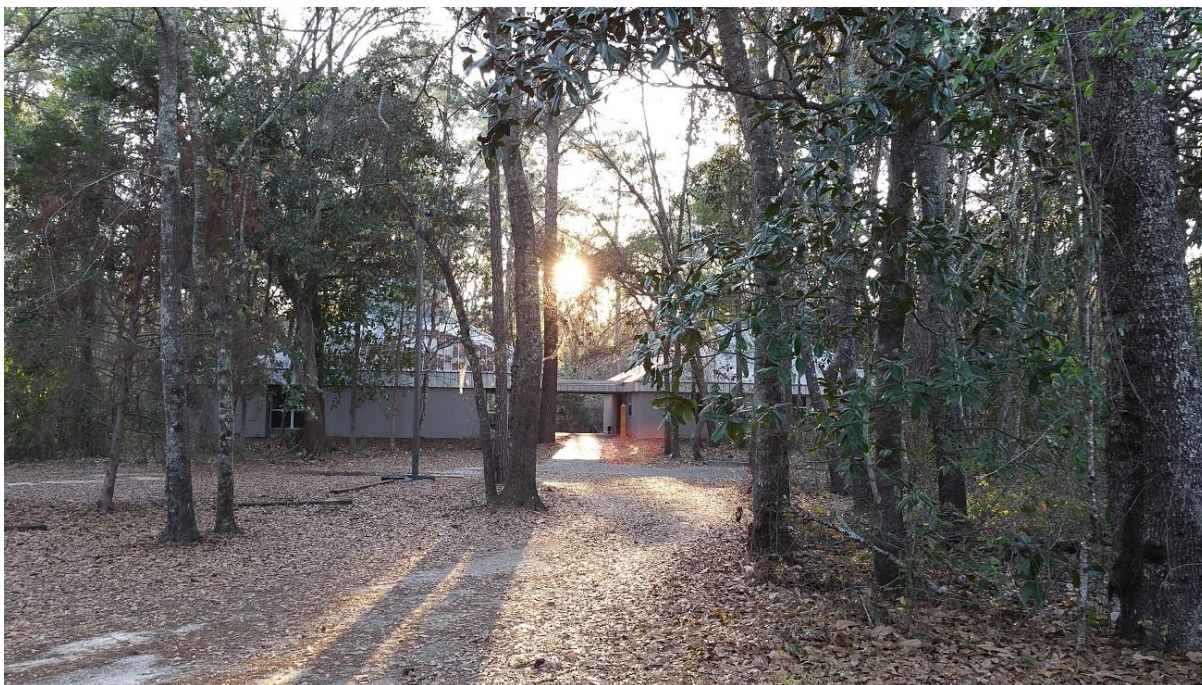
You can contact the group by e-mail at: valdostaoakencircle@gmail.com or on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/oakencircle/>

Sangha Tuesdays

The KTD Buddhist reading and meditation group is meeting this fall on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 p.m.

Guest at Your Table! Don't forget to pick up this year's GAYT booklet of stories and a box or envelop for your contributions. The theme for this year's Guest at Your Table program is *Small Change is Big Change*. Our congregation has a long history of supporting the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee as evidenced by the UUSC banner in our sanctuary. See Lars Leader or Carol Stiles if you have questions!

Photo of the month: The church-in-the-woods, nearing sunset, last spring!
(photo by Carol Stiles) Your photo, too, could be published here!



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.



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.