

# The Flaming Chalice

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

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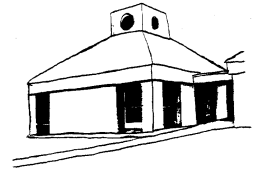
Valdosta, GA 31604

Minister: Rev. Fred Howard

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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](mailto:uuvaldosta@yahoo.com) to contact us!

### What's going on... **February 2015**

Sun	Feb. 1	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service - Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, "Dorothy Day: Pilgrimage to Hospitality, Community, and Peace"</b> Meet & Greet after the service
Sat	Feb. 7	7:00 PM	<i>Rainbow Mixer!</i>
Sun	Feb. 8	9:30 AM 10:45 AM	UU board meeting in the RE wing Religious Education for children <b>Service – Rev. Fred Howard – "AMOR!"</b> Meet & Greet after the service
M	Feb. 9	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
F	Feb. 13	6:30 PM	Pizza and a Movie
Sun	Feb. 15		<i>Deadline March newsletter</i>
Sun	Feb. 15	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Rev. Fred Howard, "Syncretism: A Path to World Community or Religious Identity Theft?"</b> Meet & Greet after the service
F	Feb. 27	6:30 PM	Firepit and Games Night!
Sun	Feb. 22	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Dr. James LaPlant, "Political, Racial, and Geographic Polarization in the United States: Who Gets Heard in Contemporary American Politics?"</b> Meet & Greet Coffee after the service

### February....

Join us for the Sixth Annual Rainbow Mixer on Feb. 7 as we observe National Standing on the Side of Love Day! Details inside!

#### 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, Feb. 1 – Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, “Dorothy Day: Pilgrimage to Hospitality, Community, and Peace”**

Dorothy Day was a writer, an activist, and the co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement in the 1930s that continues to follow the precepts of voluntary poverty, non-violence, hospitality, and intentional community. Her pilgrimage was rooted in the mystical union of the spiritual with the physical, the love of God with the development of human dignity. In the midst of human suffering and misery, Dorothy responded not only with a personal form of hospitality but with a political form of resisting the institutional forces leading to poverty and war. We will trace the contributions of Dorothy Day to the broader American peace movement and to the development of a society where it is easier to embody love, reconciliation, and basic human decency.

### **Sunday, Feb. 8 – Rev. Fred Howard – “AMOR!”**

Romantic love is an interesting paradox. Often it is an illusion, fostered by fairy tales of beautiful maidens and handsome princes and living happily ever after. However, romantic love, or amor, is also one of the greatest energy systems on the planet and can be a wonderful guide to what has meaning and purpose in life. How do we embrace this paradox and learn its lessons? The mythic story of Tristan and Isolde may be helpful to us. This morning in honor of Valentine’s Day, I’ll elaborate.

### **Sunday, Feb. 15 -- Rev. Fred Howard, “Syncretism: A Path to World Community or Religious Identity Theft?”**

Syncretism is the attempt to reconcile two or more different and distinct religions and meld their beliefs and practices. On several online forums, Unitarian Universalism is listed as a syncretic religion. Is this a correct classification? Is syncretism something we should be fostering or discouraging? This morning I’ll share some thoughts on this interesting and complex topic. *Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as*

*pledges, will go to South Georgia Partnership to End Homelessness. (SGPEH). SGPEH is a non-profit organization working to end homelessness in 18 South Georgia counties. SGPEH works with federal, state, and local agencies as well as various organizations to provide services and support to those in poverty without homes.*

### **Sunday, Feb. 22 – Dr. James LaPlant, “Political, Racial, and Geographic Polarization in the United States: Who Gets Heard in Contemporary American Politics?”**

A speaking engagement by Ben Carson, a potential presidential candidate, last fall at VSU raised much debate about free speech and about which individuals are given a platform to espouse their views. Dr. James LaPlant will speak about the political, racial, and geographic polarization in America and who is fundamentally heard in contemporary American politics. Dr. LaPlant is a professor of Political Science and serves as Interim Dean of the Graduate School at VSU.

## *Rainbow Mixer*

*Saturday, Feb. 7, 7 - 11 p.m.*

A time to gather to Stand on the Side of Love! Music, dancing, conversation, light refreshments....and this year, during the evening, we will have a special commitment ceremony to celebrate the continued progress the “freedom to marry” campaign has made over the past year! All couples (gay, straight...) are invited to participate in this ceremony of commitment, which will be led by Rev. Fred Howard.

Not just for couples, though, the evening will celebrate our commitment to each other and to our community. As a congregation, this will be our sixth year of observing National Standing on the Side of Love Day. The event is co-sponsored by South Georgia Pride who are making arrangements for great door prizes and awards! Join us and invite your friends and family as we further our commitment to supporting the community and loving relationships of all kinds!

Sue Bailey will be seeking volunteers to help with refreshments, decorating, etc. Please contact her if you can help!

Standing on the Side of Love is a UUA-sponsored social justice and public advocacy campaign: <http://www.standingonthesideoflove.org/about/>



## MINISTERIAL MUUSINGS

Rev. Fred Howard, February 2015

Peacemakers Camp in Macon, GA happens every summer the third week of June. The camp teaches peacemaking skills to children ages 8-13. Through the generosity of sponsors and donors and community fundraising events the children are allowed to participate free of charge. The acceptance process for participants includes a process to insure that the group is multiracial, multiethnic, and religiously diverse.

I've been a counselor there for the past seven years. It's one of the most rewarding things I've ever done. The curriculum we use focuses on character development and mentoring. Each child is assigned to a group designated by the name of a great peacemaker, like Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., or Sojourner Truth, and assuming this group identity facilitates the mentoring and learning process. Each camper wears a name badge with his group name. On the back of the badge are the Seven Steps to Conflict Resolution:

- 1) Stop. Think. Remain Calm.
- 2) Identify the problem.
- 3) Brainstorm possible solutions.
- 4) Evaluate all possibilities
- 5) Choose your solution.
- 6) Implement: Do it!
- 7) Evaluate: How did it work?

In the course of living together at the camp, attending classes, doing projects, going on field trips, eating and playing together, conflicts do occasionally arise as you might imagine with forty or so bright, energetic children. These conflicts are opportunities for the children to learn experientially. The camp counselors make use of the Seven Steps to engage the campers in resolving their own disputes. It's so gratifying to watch ten and twelve year olds resolve their issues with each other using the steps. How many times can you say you've seen adults come to terms with each other in this way? Almost always, when conflicts arise and the campers are encouraged to work through the steps, within a few minutes they have made up and are playing together again and laughing as if nothing happened. But much did happen! They learned the fine art of getting along with each other. They learned peacemaking. These little instances are what make the experience so rewarding.

Our camp has openings for counselors (adults), counselors in training (teens), and campers (age 8-13). We have a beautiful facility for the camp – the Wesleyan College campus. Room and board are provided. Please contact me if you or any member of

your family would like to participate this summer. I can promise you a wonderful experience!

Fred

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

### 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.

## 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 through Valerie Webster and the Worship Team or let Sue Bailey know if you can help on a given Sunday.

### ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

*Keep in your thoughts*

- ❖ Keep in your thoughts our members and friends who are dealing with health issues of their own or of family members.

## UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News Jan. 11, 2015

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Lowndes Area Crisis Care (LACC) is operating now; UU will continue our support of \$100 per month.
- approved a donation of \$100 to the AAUW Sister-to-Sister Summit, March 7, 2015, from the Accepting Difference Project fund.
- VSU Continuing Education will rent the building for another class on March 11.
- Next Meeting: Feb. 1, 9:30 a.m.

## **Pizza and a Movie Friday, Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m.**

The film for the Friday, February 13, 2015, UU Pizza and Movie Night is: "Rabbit-Proof Fence." Please contribute \$5.00 to cover pizza and refreshments. The showing begins at 6:30 p.m.

"Rabbit-Proof Fence" Rated PG (for emotional thematic material)

The British First Fleet first introduces rabbits to Australia in 1788 to supplement food supplies. In 1859, land owner Thomas Austin releases 24 rabbits to support his hunting pleasures. By the end of the 19th century, the invasive species becomes a seemingly unstoppable plague numbering in the millions. In a futile attempt to contain them, in 1907 the Australian government builds one of many fences in Western Australia between the Indian Ocean in the north and the Southern Ocean in the south thousands of kilometers long. As rabbits proliferate, coincidentally white railroad worker fathers and others abandon their half-caste children as they help settle Australia's frontier. They become known as quadroons and octoroons. In the 20th century government agents relocate Aboriginal and mixed-race children by force to "re-education camps" in order to separate the races initiated under terms of the 1869 Aboriginal Protection Act. Director Robert Noyce and screen writer Christine Olsen base Rabbit-Proof Fence (2002) on Doris Pilkington Garimara narrative, Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence (1996). Garimara picks up the story of government approved efforts in the 1930s to erect segregation and ethnic cleansing barriers equivalent to rabbit-fences between Whites and Aboriginals when government agents take into custody her mother, 14-year-old Molly, Molly's half-caste sister, 8-year-old Daisy, and their 10-year-old cousin Gracie. Relocated to a re-education camp in 1931 at Moore River built in the Northern Territory, they fall victim to policies of Protector of Natives Dr. Cecil Cook. The White supremacist writes, "Generally by the fifth and invariably by the sixth generation, all native characteristics of the Australian Aborigine are eradicated. The problem of our half-castes will quickly be eliminated by the complete disappearance of the black race, and the swift submergence of their progeny in the white." The girls now belong to "The Stolen Generation." Despite hundreds of miles separating them from their families, they decide to escape their fate to become laborers and domestics in service to Whites by ironically following the failed rabbit fence as a lifeline for as long as it takes back to their desert

homes at Jigalong. The film follows their determined escape attempt and equally committed efforts to recapture and "protect" them from their innate humanity and native culture; and, not incidentally, to prevent their further alleged dilution and contamination of White Australian blood lines.

David L. Rodgers  
January 15, 2015

## **Games Night and Fire Pit Friday, February 27 6:30 p.m. – until ?**

If weather permits, we'll begin the evening around a nice fire in the firepit, then move indoors for games later on. 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.

**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.

### **Thank You! Thank You!**

**For special music in December at the Moravian Lovefeast:** Rhett Watson, Nephtali Santiago, Tom Phillips, Tamara Hardesty, Jim Ingram, Tammy McDowell, and Cindy Quick

**For providing music at services:** Rhett Watson, Nephtali Santiago, Doug Tanner, Kimberly Tanner, Valerie Webster

**For lay-leading services:** Valerie Webster, Betty Derrick, Dee Tait, Cliff Adams, Carol Stiles

**For serving as UUSC representative and coordinating the GAYT annual campaign:** Lars Leader

**For Meet & Greet:** Doug Tanner, Dawn Renner, Mary Adams, Diane Holliman

**For assisting with RE:** Teagan Dunn, Sean Richardson

**For sweeping sidewalks:** Richard Schofill

**For delivering Break Bread meals in December:** Kimberly Richardson

**For coordinating the Caring Committee:** Dee Tait

**For photos for the newsletter:** Kimberly Tanner

## Potluck and Book Discussion Friday, March 6, 6:30 p.m.

The book for March 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!

## “All About Unitarian Universalism” Small Group Experience Saturday, March 7, 9:00 a.m.

Kimberly Tanner and Fred Howard will be facilitating an All About UU small group at the church on Saturday, March 7 from 9 am to 12 pm with lunch provided. This is an opportunity for newcomers, as well as those who are considering becoming members, to learn more about our faith tradition, join in a dialogue on liberal faith and values, and ask questions. 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 through mutual sharing of our stories and conversations about where we are on our faith journey.

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:

What brought you to Unitarian Universalism?

What is Unitarian Universalism?

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 (fredhoward3622@gmail.com) and let them know. The group will be limited to eight people, so commit early. Come and be a part of the fun as we learn together and build community!

### Communicating at UU Valdosta

Worship Team Chair: Valerie Webster

Newsletter Editor: 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

Facebook: Kimberly Tanner

Local Publicity: Dee Tait



Book group after discussing Janet Mock’s book, *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love, & So Much More*.

Photo and a message was sent to Janet Mock’s Facebook page!

## 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. Please let David Rodgers know if you are available to deliver meals. It is helpful to have two people on the route.

## Treasurer's Report for Dec., 2014

Outstanding Debt	0.00
Receipts	
Plate	\$134.10
Pledge	1,730.00
Rent	100.00
Share the Plate	59.00
Total Receipts	2,023.10
Disbursements	
Minister Expense	\$700.00
Pest Control/Termite Bond	35.00
Speakers' Fees & Expenses	250.00
Repairs & Maintenance	0.00
Newsletter (postage)	0.00
Donations (GAYT)	59.00
Utilities	288.72
Total disbursements	1,993.72
Net Receipt	\$29.38



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

**Taoist Tai Chi – 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](mailto: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.

**PFLAG Meeting** – 4th Tuesday each month, 7:00PM  
Contact: Doug Tanner. The web page for PFLAG Valdosta: <http://community.pflag.org/Valdosta> **Note: PFLAG will begin meeting at Christ The King Episcopal Church in downtown Valdosta, January 27, 2015.**

### 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](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.

## Carol's Comments:

An update on the Welcoming Congregation program: over the past few months, we have held sessions after the services on several Sundays. The first sessions were conversations and exercises drawn from the UUA's Living the Welcoming Congregation curriculum. These sessions focused on learning some basic concepts and terms about diversity. We had small group discussions to help us discern where we have been and where we are now – for individuals, for the congregation, and for the community. We have also had three excellent guest facilitators: Em Elliott of Georgia Equality, who focused on welcoming people who are trans; John Rogers, South Health District, who led a discussion on stigma and awareness of oppression; and Dr. Colleen Baxter, a professor of biology, who described to us the biological development of sex and gender. Attendance at most of these events have been between 15 and 20 people.

In addition, the Friday movie nights have included two pertinent films, *Chely Wright: Wish Me Away*, in November, and *Philomena*, in January. And most recently, the book group (see photo in this issue) read and discussed Janet Mock's book, *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love, & So Much More*.

Welcoming Congregation continues in February with additional guest speakers and with one of our annual highlight events, the Rainbow Mixer, on February 7! The Rainbow Mixer is our way of recognizing National Standing on the Side of Love Day. Why, you ask? I'll let the Standing on the Side of Love campaign answer that question: "No one should be dehumanized through acts of exclusion, oppression, or violence because of their identities. In public debates on immigrant justice, LGBTQ equality, and more, we stand on the side of love and call for respect, inclusion, and compassion."

<http://standingonthesideoflove.org/about/>

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.*