



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 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... **February 2017**

Sun	Feb. 5	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. Fred Howard, "The Redemption of the Broken Heart" Meet & Greet after the service
Sat	Feb. 11	6:30 PM	Rainbow Mixer!
Sun	Feb. 12	11:00 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Dr. Tom Aiello, "How To Talk About Ax Murders In Church" Meet & Greet after the service
M	Feb. 13	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
Sun	Feb. 19	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service -- Rev. Fred Howard, "The Make-Believe World of Religion" Meet & Greet after the service
Fri	Feb. 24	6:30 PM	Games Night and Bonfire!
Sun	Feb. 26	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. George Bennett, "Called Together in Love" Meet & Greet after the service

February 2017...

Rainbow Mixer returns on February 11, 6:30 p.m.!

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. 5 – Rev. Fred Howard, "The Redemption of the Broken Heart"

The problem with having a heart is that, sooner or later, it's going to get broken. And right now, it seems like so much is happening in the world to break our hearts. It might seem perverse to visit this subject with Valentine's Day approaching, a time we traditionally associate with stylized lacy candy hearts and romantic love. But it may be more appropriate than you think. This morning I'll elaborate.

Sunday, Feb. 12 - Dr. Tom Aiello, "How To Talk About Ax Murders In Church"

This talk will examine an incident in Memphis in 1932, wherein a white man killed his family then shot a black bystander so as to blame him for the crime. The bystander, however, lived long enough to tell the story. This was not only a rare occasion when black testimony convicted a white man in the South, but the responses of the black and white communities to the crime demonstrated that even in one dramatic incident with clearly established facts, two different groups interpreted the murders in very different ways. During Black History Month and in the early days of a polarizing new presidential administration, this talk will demonstrate how minority viewpoints are marginalized and how we can be allies for those viewpoints.

Sunday, Feb. 19 – Rev. Fred Howard, "The Make-Believe World of Religion"

The title of this sermon sounds a bit irreverent, but there is a sound theological basis to the idea of religion as play. Cultural theorists and anthropologists have noted with fascination the elements of human behavior that make us playful are also those that make religion possible. Religion only fulfills its purpose when it functions as a sort of sacred play.

Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will go to the South Georgia Partnership to End Homelessness. SGPEH partners "with federal, state, local, and private organizations...to provide

services and support to poverty-stricken and other disadvantaged individuals." More info:

<http://www.sgpeh.com/>

Sunday, Feb. 26 – Rev. George Bennett, "Called Together in Love"

The melody of the Universe is a song of love. We are drawn to each other with respect. Martin Buber shared that life is intimacy. We are in an "I-Thou" relationship. Scripture Matthew 4:12-23
(Re-scheduled from Jan. 22)

Rainbow Mixer *Feb. 11, 6:30 p.m.*

Come on out to the (usually) annual Rainbow Mixer at UU! After a hiatus last year, the Rainbow Mixer returns! This is a Standing on the Side of Love event – we can all use a little more love this time of year (or any time of the year)!

Please bring a snack to share and music (on CD or on your phone!) for dancing, listening, etc. We will have some soda and tea, but plan to BYOB, if there's something specific that you would like for a beverage.

Standing on the Side of Love is a UUA-sponsored social justice and public advocacy campaign:

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

SSL started initially as a campaign working toward same-sex marriage and LGBTQ equity, and quickly expanded into immigrant justice and racial justice. The goal is "harnessing love's power to challenge exclusion, oppression, and violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, race, religion, or any other identity."

SSL has bright yellow T-shirts available, which are worn by UUs participating in various social justice actions – bright and visible to all!

Please see also the message from Standing on the Side of Love about the "30 Days of Love" campaign on the last page of this newsletter.



Ministerial Musings

Rev Fred Howard

As a congregation, we have experienced more than our share of tragedy and sorrow these past few weeks. Words, any words, seem intrusive when someone we know and love is dealing with pain and loss. Often the best thing we can do is simply sit in silence with someone who is grieving and feel the pain with them, rather than saying something. When someone we care deeply about is hurting this makes us hurt too. We want to fix their pain so that we don't have to feel it either. We say something and, though it's well meaning, comes across as a platitude or advice.

"Compassion," to feel with another person, is sometimes the hardest thing we are ever called on to do as human beings. But to be a caring community, at times we must carry one another's sorrows.

Despite this admitted inadequacy of words, I want to share a few with you that have given comfort to me in times of pain and loss. Stephanie Ericsson, in her book *Companion Through the Darkness* says, "Grief is a tidal wave that overtakes you, smashes you up into its darkness, where you tumble and crash against unidentifiable surfaces, only to be thrown out on an unknown beach, bruised, reshaped."

Sometimes it's better to let our actions rather than our words speak for us. As Barbara Pescan wrote about grief, "It is very hard for us middle-class Americans to not do something. It even seems irresponsible to us to not do something, even when we don't know exactly what to do." A lot more is said in that casserole we fix than merely, "I know you're dealing with a lot right now and want to make sure you have enough to eat." Doing something is therapeutic. This is true whether we're talking about the person who attempts to offer comfort or the person who is directly experiencing the loss. Getting back in routine is often necessary for the person who is grieving, because it's something that feels "normal." When trying to support a bereaved person, it's important that we give them space to resume doing things for themselves. So, it's sometimes difficult to know

when to leave a grieving friend alone and when to impose. No matter how we go about it, navigating the space around suffering is hard work. Knowing this one thing always seems to help: Sorrow only comes where love abides. May it be so in our community of faith.

Grace and Peace,
Fred

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.

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Congratulations to ...

- ❖ Stephanie Taylor who graduated as an Honor Graduate as well as a National Technical Honor Society recipient with an AAS in Computer Programming from Wiregrass Georgia Technical College. She plans to enter the Information Technology program (online) at Kennesaw State University in the fall semester.

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 & Bonfire

Games Night and Bonfire (weather permitting!) returns on Feb. 24, 6:30 p.m. Please bring a snack to share (remember that some of our members are gluten-free and vegetarian / vegan).

UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News

January 8, 2016

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Discussed and voted to order 30 new chairs, blue with arm rests.
- Discussed calendar events – speakers for services, Rainbow Mixer in February, etc.
- Next Meeting: Feb. 5

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.

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, cmst@earthlink.net and she will put you on the list for that task.

Thank You! Thank You!

For lay-leading services: Lars Leader, Doug Tanner, Cliff Adams

For speaking at Sunday Services: Joyce Rapier

For resolving technical A/V issues: Doug Tanner

For providing music at services: Rhett Watson and Daniel Peveto

For Meet & Greet: Crystal Rapier, Joyce Rapier, Dawn Renner, Rosie Asbury, Amy Jackson, Doug Tanner, Mary Ellen Adams, Dawn and Teagan Dunn

For leading RE and nursery care: Sue Bailey and Teagan Dunn

For assisting with RE and nursery: Dawn Renner, Stephen O'Kane, Ashley Mills, Crystal Rapier

For taking out trash and recycling: Dee Tait, Lars Leader, and others.

For delivering Break Bread meals: David Rodgers

For photos for newsletter: Kimberly Tanner



Tammy and Tanya singing at the Moravian Lovefeast, Dec. 2016. (photo by Kimberly Tanner).

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.

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

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.

UU Treasurer's Report December 2016

Outstanding Debt

\$ 0.00

Receipts

Plate	\$ 87.00
Pledge	1840.00
Misc. contribution (RE)	20.00
Share the Plate(GAYT)	<u>75.00</u>
Total receipts	\$ 2022.00

Disbursements

Minister Expense	\$ 700.00
Pest Control/Termite	45.00
Speaker's fees	200.00
Repairs/Maintenance	433.33
Newsletter	
Donations (GAYT/LACC)	175.00
Supplies /RE	20.00
UUA Dues	440.25
Utilities	208.40
Advertising	0.00
Others	

Total disbursements	\$ 2221.98
Net receipt	\$ - 199.98

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/>



LGBTQ

Welcoming Congregation

30 DAYS OF LOVE - WHAT'S COMING IN 2017

From Standing on the Side of Love

"This winter, we are returning with 30 Days of Love. We know that many of us have met the last several weeks with rage, fear, cynicism, desperation, anxiety, and confusion. Many of us are looking at this moment and seeing that the stakes are as high as they have ever been - from climate justice, to LGBTQ justice, to gender justice, to economic justice, to Black liberation to immigrant justice - this moment is about everything we value, everything that matters to us, the very questions of who we are and our existence.

Many of us also feel that the moment requires more from us. That there will not be room for our pettiness, our egos, our impatience, our self-pity. There will not be room for doing things the way they have always been done, in the ways in which we are most comfortable. There will be no room for any of us to think we have the answers alone. As UUA President Peter Morales wrote about last week, this is not only about social justice (or our social justice ministries) this is about all we do and our deepest values."

.....

At Standing on the Side of Love, we believe we are entering a time where we need every ounce of spiritual muscle that we can muster (or find) to do the work ahead of us. We led Standing on the Side of Love in 2016 in a way that centered deep partnerships, developing leaders so they flourish, trust building, widening the circle, and sharing the wisdom we find in community organizing with the world. We use the theme of fortification because it centers the spiritual work at hand: not by any of us alone will it be borne, and it will need deep collaboration and support to thrive and grow now. The work will require us working deeply with one another: practicing what we preach, showing that the courage to face the time ahead can be as close the next pew over, or down the street if we are willing to do the face-to-face work.

We can be leaders in our communities in ways that seek to collaborate and long to see other aligned organizations and leaders succeed. We can lead in ways that are relentless because love is not a feeling but an action, and love will propel us towards building community, protecting those marginalized, and creating alternatives. Radical honesty and humility are needed because the beginning of 2017 is not a new chapter. It is a quite new journey.

In the face of that new journey, we are exploring what it means for Unitarian Universalism to be a nurturing, humble and steady hand on the side of justice in 2017. Each week we will share tools and resources to help congregations reflect, learn and act around themes of fortification. [Note: to access these materials, see the link below.]

Caitlin Breedlove, Campaign Director and
Nora Rasman, Campaign Coordinator,
Standing on the Side of Love

<https://www.standingonthesideoflove.org/ourstories/30-days-of-love-2017-update>