



# The Flaming Chalice

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

Located at: 1951 East Park Avenue

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Minister: Rev. Fred Howard

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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](mailto:uuvaldosta@yahoo.com)

### What's going on... **January 2016**

Sun	Jan. 3	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service - Rev. Fred Howard, "The Light of the World"</b> Potluck and Un-Decorating! After the service!
Sun	Jan. 10	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service - Rev. Bennie Calloway, "The Nowness of Life Is the Newness of Life"</b> Meet & Greet after the service Welcoming Congregation
M	Jan. 11	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
Fri	Jan. 15	6:30 PM	Pizza and a Movie!
F	Jan. 15		Deadline - February newsletter
Sun	Jan. 17	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service - Rev. Bennie Calloway, "Only A King Can Unite America"</b> Meet & Greet after the service Welcoming Congregation
Sun	Jan. 24	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service - Dr. Cristobal Serran-Pagan, "Thomas Merton: Cultivating Seeds of Contemplation in Everyday Life"</b> Meet & Greet after the service
Fri	Jan. 29	6:30 PM	Games Night and Fire Pit!
Sun	Jan. 31	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Dr. Carol Stiles, "Plants, Genes, Ethical Eating, and the Humanist Tradition"</b> Meet & Greet after the service

## January 2016

"For though my faith is not yours and your faith is not mine, if we are each free to light our own flame, together we can banish some of the darkness of the world." -- Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

## Sunday Services

### Sunday, January 3 – Rev. Fred Howard, “The Light of the World”

“What is the meaning of life?” is perhaps the greatest of all the philosophical questions. Well, I think I’ve discovered it. I thought it would be appropriate to share this personal “epiphany” with you on Epiphany Sunday as we gather to celebrate and bring in the New Year together.

### Sunday, January 10 – Rev. Bennie Calloway, “The Nowness of Life Is the Newness of Life”

Now that we have approached a significant year in many respects, it is a continuation for the spiritual seeker in making progress and forever evolving in our spiritual, mental, and physical lives. Our lives are eternally and invisibly unlimited, therefore, we are not living by calendar days, months, or years. We are in fact living in the nowness of life whereby constantly creating moments and events that are constantly new. We must live our best lives now for the rest of our lives. Your now life is your new life and your new life is your now life. We are created beings and should live lives as creative beings.

### Sunday, January 17, Rev. Bennie Calloway, “Only A King Can Unite America”

As we commemorate the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., his prophetic words in his speeches and sermons concerning America over 50 years ago, brings our nation to a strategic inflection point. Either we are reaching our doom by ignoring his words or we are reaching our destiny by receiving his words. I want to examine many segments of Dr. King's speeches and sermons that bear such accuracy and exactness to 2016 that will help realign our nation politically, socially, economically, and most of all relationally. A King is our only hope in uniting America.

*Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will go to The Haven. The Haven provides training and education, services and safe space to victims of domestic violence in the Valdosta area.*

### Sunday, January 24 – Dr. Cristobal Serran-Pagan, “Thomas Merton: Cultivating Seeds of Contemplation in Everyday Life”

In this talk I will invite the participants to ruminate upon the importance of finding the right balance between the contemplative life (Mary) and the active life (Martha). For Merton, Mary and Martha are sisters. Thus, contemplation and action go hand in hand. Why is it important to cultivate a contemplative life in the midst of a very busy and noisy life? Inner peace, love and compassion is the ultimate answer to all human problems.

CRISTÓBAL SERRÁN-PAGÁN y FUENTES is currently an Associate Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Valdosta State University. He received his Ph.D. in Religious Studies from Boston University. He is a member of The International Thomas Merton Society and is a regular contributor to Merton conferences in Europe and the United States. His publications include articles on Merton and the Spanish mystics in *Thomas Merton: A Mind Awake in the Dark* (Three Peaks Press, 2002) and *Seeds of Hope: Thomas Merton's Contemplative Message* (Cistercium-Ciem, 2008), Merton on Dr. King and D. T. Suzuki in *The Merton Seasonal*, and is the editor of Fons Vitae volume on *Merton and the Tao*.

### Sunday, January 31 – Dr. Carol Stiles, “Plants, Genes, Ethical Eating, and the Humanist Tradition”

On February 12th, some humanist groups will observe Darwin Day, in honor of Charles Darwin, whose scientific theory on the evolution of life underlies the unity and diversity of all living things - “the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part,” our Seventh Principle. Nearly 100 years later, Watson and Crick described the structure of DNA, another landmark scientific achievement. Today, we will learn about the relatively new technology, genetic transformation, which is used along with traditional breeding to create plant cultivars that provide various benefits such as reduced pest and pathogen damage, among others. The general public knows these cultivars as GMO’s, an acronym which has come to imply in the minds of many – unfortunately and without scientific basis – something inherently unsafe. Join us today, as we put in practice our

fifth UU source, "Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science..." and follow up on the 2011 UUA Statement of Conscience, "Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice."

Dr. Carol Stiles is Professor of Biology and Chair of Natural Sciences at Georgia Military College, and she holds graduate degrees in Plant Pathology. This year, she serves as our Vice-President / Program Chair.

## **Potluck Luncheon and Un-Decorating, Sunday, Jan. 3, after the service!**

Bring a dish to share and plan to stay to help take down the holiday decorations and put them away, as we welcome the New Year, 2016!

## **Guest at Your Table**

We will collect Guest at Your Table (GAYT) contributions on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in January (Jan. 3 and 10). Please convert cash contributions to a check made payable to UUSC and bring that with you or get the contribution to Lars Leader, our UUSC representative. Thank you for supporting our annual GAYT campaign!

## **ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS**

*Keep in your thoughts...*

- ❖ Betty Derrick
- ❖ Kathy Howard
- ❖ Members and friends experiencing health concerns.

## **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.

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.

## **Pizza and a Movie**

**Friday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m.**

Our feature for January will be "Selma," starring David Oyelowo as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The immediacy of this film will startle you if you haven't seen it. For even though the background and the wardrobe is circa 1965, the horror and the injustice conveyed in the paradigm of the images could just as easily be that we've recently seen in Ferguson or Baltimore. "Selma" is a poignant reminder both of how far we're come in the last fifty years and how regrettably little things have changed. The words of Dr. King's speeches (which, interestingly, had to be paraphrased in the film due to copyright issues), speak even more strongly to our world today.

Come and join in the spirit of MLK Jr. Weekend on Friday, Jan. 15, as we view this film together and converse over its themes. The film is rated PG-13. We will begin the movie promptly at 6:30 pm. A \$5 donation toward pizza and drinks is suggested. See you there.

## **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.

## **Welcoming Congregation**

Our Welcoming Congregation conversations are based on the UUA curriculum, "Examining Whiteness: An Anti-Racism Curriculum." We will continue these sessions on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays in January, after the services and a brief meet-n-greet. 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.

## **South Georgia Pride Gathering**

All are invited to join SGP for fun at the monthly get together, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at **Buffalo Wild Wings, 1553 Baytree Rd.** For more info, contact Raynae Jones.

## 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.

## UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News

December 3, 2015

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Discussed planning for another "All About UU" class early in the new year.
- Dawn Renner and Sue Bailey will attend OWL training in January at St. Pete UU.
- Next Meeting: TBD

## UU Treasurer's Report Nov., 2015

### Fund Balances at November 30, 2015

General Fund	\$8,905.97
Restoration Fund	\$4,021.51
<b>Total (Cash in Bank Account)</b>	<b>\$12,927.48</b>

### Operating Receipts and Disbursements

#### Receipts

Plate	\$308.00
Pledge	\$1,070.00
Rent	\$300.00
Donations (printing/website)	\$0.00
Share the Plate (GAYT)	
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$1,678.00</b>

#### Disbursements

Minister Expense	\$700.00
Building Insurance	\$0.00
Assoc. Minister & Speakers' Fees	\$550.00
Newsletter	\$0.00
Donations (GAYT)	\$0.00
Termite Bond & Pest	
Ctrl	\$35.00
Utilities	\$271.21
UUA Dues	\$640.00
<b>Total disbursements</b>	<b>\$2,196.21</b>
<b>Net Receipt (Disbursement)</b>	<b>(-518.21)</b>

## 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](mailto: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.

### 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](mailto:valdostaoakencircle@gmail.com) or on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/oakencircle/>

## Thank You! Thank You!

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

**For providing music at services:** Rhett Watson, Nephtali Santiago, and all who participated in the Moravian Love Feast!

**For Meet & Greet:** Doug and Kimberly Tanner, Beth Hallman, members of the CUUPS chapter, and any others who brought treats in December!

**For assisting with RE:** Teagan Dunn, Diane Holliman, Kandyce Peveto

**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, David Rodgers, Carol Stiles

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

# From Rev. Bennie Calloway

## A Compliment That Builds Confidence

Let me impose two questions, the first, "Have you given someone a compliment today?" The second question is, "Have you been a recipient of a compliment today?" Mark Twain said "I can live for two months on a good compliment. When it comes to pursuing a dream, achieving a goal, or accomplishing a task, compliments often give you the assurance that you are on the right track personally and professionally and that you are reaching your maximum and optimal potential in your particular field of endeavor. Now in order to understand what a compliment is, we have to know what it is not. A compliment is not mere flattery uttering kind words to a person to avoid hurting their feelings or breaking their spirit simply because they are not good at a task they have aimed for. King Solomon warned us about flattery in Proverbs 29:5 when he said "A man that flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet." Flattery sets a person up for failure rather than success when you don't take a gentle and honest complimentary approach. A compliment is a polite expression of praise or admiration that boosts another person's morale when they accept it. As a result, confidence arises, which is a feeling of self-assurance arising from one's own appreciation of abilities or qualities. I do believe that compliments are not designed to give people confidence, but they are fact designed to reinforce confidence already existent and discovered in the life of an individual. I believe that there are three benefits of offering compliments. First of all, compliments benefit others, we remind people of their value and talents and that they are noticed for what I call their "DIQ" distinctive individualized qualities. You will always be known for your difference and being set apart from everyone else. Secondly, compliments benefit yourself. Offering compliments are self-revealing, it gives others an opportunity to discern how we really feel about other people when you speak well of them concerning abilities you don't have and their achievements take nothing away from you. It forces us to think less of ourselves and more about others and we will experience the law of reciprocity. As you extend compliments you will

receive compliments. You remind yourself of the power of your own words and how they have a long lasting and life changing effect in other people's lives. Thirdly, compliments benefit your environment. It fosters a culture of encouragement and empowerment and it challenges us to be and to do our absolute best. The world around us begins to change because we change other people's lives with a compliment that builds confidence. Mark Twain said "I have been complimented many times and they always embarrass me, I always feel that they have not said enough."

(First published March 13, 2015 on Rev. Calloway's blog, *Calloway Speaks*, online at <http://callowayspeaks.blogspot.com/>)

## 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.

## Games Night /

Friday, January 29, 6:30 p.m. – until ?

All are welcome! Bring a snack to share and your choice of beverages. (Please keep in mind that several of our members are gluten-free.)

If you have a game suitable for several to many players and people of all ages, bring it along.

Contact: Susan Bailey.

## Photos....



Dawn, decorating for the holidays



David, decorating for the holidays



Impromptu choir for the Moravian Love Feast, Dec. 20, 2015. Thanks to all who offered their musical talents!

#### 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, [uuvaldosta@yahoo.com](mailto:uuvaldosta@yahoo.com)  
 Worship Team Chair: Carol Stiles  
 January 16: Deadline for the February newsletter.  
 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.*

#### 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.*