

The Flaming Chalice

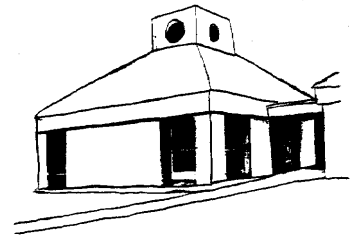
Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

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

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Please note that although individual personal contact information has been removed from this online newsletter, you can obtain more information on any event or ask questions by sending an e-mail to uuvaldosta@yahoo.com.

What's going on... **June 2013**

Sun	June 2	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - "Religious Basis for Stewardship of Creation," Dr. Jessica Crowe Meet & Greet Coffee after the service <i>Bring food and clothing for farmworkers-See Share the Plate for more information.</i>
W	June 5	6:00 PM	Board Meeting in the RE wing at the church
Sun	June 9	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - "South Georgia Farmworker Health Project," representative from the project Meet & Greet Coffee after the service <i>Share the Plate Sunday</i> <i>Bring food and clothing for farmworkers-See Share the Plate for more information.</i>
M	June 10	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
	June 15- 20		South Georgia Farmworkers Health Project
Sat	June 15		<i>Deadline for July newsletter</i>
Sun	June 16	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - "Of Quakers and Women's Rights," Dr. Carol Stiles Meet & Greet Coffee after the service
F	June 21	6:30 PM	Book Discussion and Potluck at the church
Sun	June 23	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - Dr. Tom Aiello Meet & Greet Coffee after the service
Sun	June 30	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - "The Rise and Fall of the American Ego," -Doug Tanner Meet & Greet Coffee after the service

June ... Summer arrives in mid-June. Lots of light. Lots of heat here in the south. Lots of folks taking vacations. Our church schedule changes a bit, but for a number of years now we continue to keep our doors open all summer. Welcome visiting GHP Students if you notice them in our services. We've found them interesting additions to our congregation in past years. We will miss our minister's regular sermons and presence at our services but look forward to welcoming him back to our pulpit in September. May his summer and yours be all you want it to be. Come when you can. We miss you when you are away.

Sunday Services

Sunday, June 2 – Dr. Jessica Crowe, “Religious Basis for Stewardship of Creation”

Demographic, institutional, cultural, economic and social factors have been found to have an impact on an individual’s environmental attitudes and behavior. More recently people of faith in increasing numbers have been studying sacred texts and other theological resources and acting as stewards of creation. Could this be the most powerful motivator of all? Dr. Jessica Crowe will focus on how spirituality and religion can be transformative in creating pro-environmental attitudes. Dr. Crowe is a biology professor at Georgia Military College, Valdosta.

Bring food and clothing for farmworkers-See below under Share the Plate for more information.

Sunday, June 9 – “South Georgia Farmworker Health Project”

Migrant farm workers and many employed in the agricultural industry face harsh working conditions, low wages and struggle against poverty and prejudice. The South Georgia Farmworker Health Project along with the Migrant Farmworker Clinic provide health care services that many participants could not otherwise access or afford as well as other basic necessities. Join us to learn more about the project, scheduled for June 14-21, and to find out how you can volunteer to assist during this project and beyond. Our speaker will be a representative from the project.

Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Share-the-Plate will move to the second Sunday for June in order to also collect food and clothing for the South Georgia Farmworker Health Project, SGFHP, which will be held June 14-21. SGFHP is a project of the Emory University Physician’s Assistant program and many local volunteers, in which PA students and faculty provide clinic services to local farmworkers. Food and clothing should be brought to church services on the first and second Sundays in June. Some suggestions include food staples such as rice, black beans and Maseca corn flour, household items, even small appliances (coffeemakers, etc.). Clothing items include men’s and women’s work pants, shirts, and small to medium size gloves. On June 9, donations to the plate not otherwise designated as pledges will go to the South Georgia Farmworker Health Project.

Sunday, June 16 - Dr. Carol Stiles, “Of Quakers and Women’s Rights”

Priscilla Hunt Cadwalader, who travelled the eastern U.S. in the 1820’s and 1830’s, was a Quaker minister whose messages to her fellow Quakers exhorted them to avoid judging others and to follow reason. But how did the details of her life influence the First Women’s Rights Convention in Seneca Falls in 1848? Dr. Carol Stiles, president of UU Valdosta, brings us the story. Carol is also a biology professor and chair of Natural Sciences at Georgia Military College.

Sunday, June 23 - Dr. Tom Aiello

Dr. Tom Aiello, the newest member of UU Valdosta, is an Assistant Professor of History at Valdosta State University. Tom teaches courses in the VSU African American Studies

Program. Join us as he presents his first message. Watch for later announcements about his topic.

Sunday, June 30 - Doug Tanner, “The Rise and Fall of the American Ego”

As early as the nineteenth century American Exceptionalism was growing. It is the belief that, because of its unique origins and freedoms, the US should play an exceptional role in world affairs. While the beneficial influences of America have been many, in recent years, a growing tide of Americans have come to believe that what is good for them is good for the world and because Americans are so exceptional we do not have to follow the rules that apply to ordinary countries and cultures.

This belief is so predominant today that it infiltrates the egos of leaders and individuals alike. Many today believe that it does not matter that others go without and are disrespected and discriminated against. All that matters is that the privileges they receive and expect are protected at all costs.

Can such a system be maintained indefinitely? I’m sure that many wealthy Roman Citizens thought their privileged lifestyles would last forever, but, sadly they did not. Join us to explore the similarities between the exceptional Americans and citizens of Imperial Rome. We will contemplate the consequences of ignoring the growing divide between the privileged and those in need. Doug is Vice President of our congregation.

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 weekly e-mail volunteer list or let Sue Bailey know if you can help on a given Sunday.

Governor’s Honors Students

We anticipate having some of the high school attendees of the Governor's Honors Program attend our services this summer, as they have in the past. The Georgia Governor's Honors Program (GHP) is a summer residential instructional program (four weeks in 2013) held at Valdosta State University designed to provide intellectually gifted and artistically talented high school students challenging and enriching educational opportunities not usually available during the regular school year. GHP students may be attending our Sunday services on June 30, July 7, and July 14. See Lars Leader if you wish to help with providing transportation for these students.

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.



MINISTERIAL MUUSINGS

Rev. Fred Howard

June 2013

Dear Members and Friends of UU Valdosta,

For the next 3 months I will be away from the church. Kathy and I will be traveling a bit in Europe, but mostly we want to have some quality time with our grandkids. I am deeply appreciative that the congregation and the board allow me to do this during the summer months.

Though being your minister is a deeply gratifying experience for me, so too is the experience of being a grandparent. Finding a balance for the primary things to which we are called, for those deep impulses that feed us and grant us our greatest joys, is not always an easy equilibrium to find. It is sort of like the discipline of creating a mandala, for those of you who are into traditions that make use of this spiritual device. With so many things competing for our time, attention, energy, and passion these days, it's certainly helpful when we find a practice that enables us to hone in on those things to which our life forces are best given. For me, it is these things – family and community.

And so, this has become my yearly routine – taking some time away from one so that I can devote it to the other. I have discovered that this is necessary if I am to find my proper center within the mandala of my life. I believe that the divine is present in all experience – if we are only alert to it. By ordering my life in this way, I feel that I can be more attuned to that divine presence in the midst of my sometimes hectic life.

I look forward to the fall when I can return with new perspectives and experiences, refreshed and ready to once again share in the life of our community. Hope everyone has a great summer!

In Faith and Community, Fred

Fred Howard is our part time minister. You may contact Rev. Howard by email (preferable) at fredhoward3622@gmail.com. He is available for consultations on Monday and Wednesday afternoons on most weeks from 2-5PM by appointment. Fred welcomes any questions you may have about membership in our congregation. He is also available for weddings and rites of passage ceremonies by prearrangement.



VALDOSTA SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE SUPPORT GROUP

This support group hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta is facilitated by Tamara Hardesty. The group meets at the church on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8 P.M. Contact via e-mail at 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.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

CAROL STILES

Over the past few months, Rev. Fred Howard and the board have made a couple of changes in the liturgy of the Sunday services. Rev. Fred suggested we include a "Passing the Peace" element, in which attendees would briefly greet those around them. The board decided to try this element at the beginning of the church service, prior to the announcements and the prelude. Some churches do this at the end of the service, but many on the board felt that would be too disruptive to the meditative environment at the end of the service. In keeping with this, the board also has decided it is best to wait to set up for the meet-n-greet until the postlude is completed. Meet-n-greet coordinators will set out as many of the non-perishable items as possible – coffee cups, etc., prior to the service. Then, as soon as the postlude is completed and the lay leader has ended the service, the coffee and food items will be brought out to the table.

As always, I seek your input about these changes and any other suggestions you have for our services, church activities outside our services, or social justice involvement in our community. Please contact me or see me after a service.

In community,
Carol



Annual Congregational Meeting: The annual congregational meeting was held on April 28. New officers were elected and a budget approved for the coming church year, which begins July 1, 2013. Carol Stiles announced that Fred Howard will be continuing his work with us in the new church year, although he will be taking a break during the summer, as has been his custom. We've made great progress, especially in the community, during his time with us and we should have good years to come! Congratulations to the newly elected Board of Director's members and thank you to many of them who agreed to stand for office for another year. We welcome Tom Aiello as a new Board member. Elected officers are: Carol Stiles (President), Doug Tanner (Vice President), Tom Aiello (Secretary), Rosie Asbury (Treasurer), Jim Ingram (Director of Building and Grounds), Kimberly Tanner (Director of Membership), and Sue Bailey (Director of Religious Education). A \$29,551.00 budget was adopted with a currently predicted short-fall of a little over \$2000.00. The Board has been "dipping" into our general fund monies this year to meet our bills and the congregation has recently had to install a new air conditioning unit. If you have not yet made a pledge for the coming church fiscal year, can increase your pledge, or make a one-time donation toward the air conditioning unit, the congregation will appreciate it. Contact our treasurer, Rosie Asbury, and thank you for your support. Thank you too to all of our current Board as they wind up this church year. You guys are great! (MED)

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.

Social Action Activities

Break Bread Together

Our date for meal deliveries with the Break Bread Together program is the 2nd Monday (and 5th when there is one) of each month. If you would like to help deliver meals beginning about 11:00 AM, please contact Frank or Rosie Asbury.

UU Valdosta Caring Committee Contact Dee Tait, if you or someone you know needs the services of this committee.

VAMA Interfaith Day of Prayer

May 2, 2013 at noon our UU congregation along with other churches, whose ministers participate in the Valdosta Area Ministerial Association (VAMA) participated, as we have for several years, in prayer for our country and our area on the National Day of Prayer. VAMA is an inclusive ministerial group in the Valdosta area. This year's event was held at the Valdosta MLK Memorial. Fred Howard is a past president of this organization but was unable to attend this year. Doug



Tanner very ably represented us at the event. Several of our members were able to attend. In case you may be unaware, another less inclusive day of prayer event was held at the Courthouse the same day. That event was thoroughly covered in the local newspaper with no mention of VAMA's racially and religiously diverse service. I was struck by the Valdosta Rabbi's comment, in his remarks during the service. He told us that when he came to

Valdosta 10 years ago he was told that the community was a diverse and accepting community. He expressed a hope that such would one day be true. May it be so. (MED)

Oklahoma Emergency Relief Fund

Rev. Kenn Hurto, Lead Executive, Southern Region UU Unitarian Universalists across the UU Southern Region send our care and prayers to those affected by Monday's devastating tornado in Moore, Oklahoma. As a generous people, we are eager to lend a hand to those whose lives have been so disrupted.

Accordingly, in cooperation with our national Association and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), the Southern Region UUA is establishing a relief fund through which concerned Unitarian Universalists may make donations. Your gifts will be disbursed to appropriate local relief agencies as soon as possible once things become clearer on the ground. We will advise you with updates as we

go. If you would like to make a donation, here's how: You may send a check to the Regional office, payable to:

UU Oklahoma Relief Fund
c/o P.O. Box 560246
Orlando, FL 32856-0246

The documentary "Bully" was attended by several of our members and friends. The movie was shown in late April at VSU, sponsored by PFLAG Valdosta, PRSSA, GSA at VSU, the Office of Social Equity, the South Georgia Geek Society, South Georgia Pride Festival, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta, and Women and Gender Studies. Studies show that 56 percent of students have personally witnessed some type of bullying at school. An interesting discussion followed the movie in which a young student many of our UUs know participated sharing some of his experiences with bullying.

Thank a Farmworker 5K and 1-Mile Fun Run

This fundraising event took place Saturday morning, May 25, at the VSU Student Recreation Center. Lars Leader has been involved in organizing the run to raise money for the Farmworkers Health Project. Last summer, members of our congregation helped serve food at a migrant worker camp and also provided clothing and food items at several migrant clinics in our area sponsored by students from Emory University Medical School. When the Farmworkers Health Project visits each summer they are funded, in part, by local donations. This 5K Race and 1-Mile Fun Run is a way to increase those donations. If you're not a runner, you can still donate. Talk with Lars if you would like to make a donation or have questions about this project.

Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Betty Derrick
June 15: Deadline for the July 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, uuvaldosta@yahoo.com
e-Mail List: Contact Carol Stiles
Facebook: Kimberly Tanner
Local Publicity: Dee Tait

Cleaning the Sanctuary-HELP!!!

Frank Asbury, who has cleaned the sanctuary each week for the past 11 years, was given a round of applause at the annual congregational meeting. We are looking for committed volunteers to help fill this role, **beginning immediately**. The KTD Buddhist group will do the cleaning the first week of each month. If you can help on other weeks as part of a rotation, please let Carol Stiles know ASAP. The best time to clean the sanctuary is between Monday and Thursday evenings, when the chairs are stacked for Tai Chi, but the kitchen and bathrooms can be cleaned at any time.

Thank You! Thank You!

For layleading services: Doug Tanner, Betty Derrick, Valerie Webster, Amanda Crossley

For speaking at Sunday service: Betty Derrick

For Sunday service music: Rhett Watson, Betty Derrick

For Stories for All Ages: Sue Bailey, Fred Howard,

For helping with Children's RE: Meredith Covert, Dawn Renner, Emma Bailey, and Teagan Dunn

For serving as Meet and Greet Hosts: Doug Tanner, Betty Derrick, Dawn Renner, Melanie Hubbard, Dee Tait, Sue Bailey, Rosie Asbury

For greeting visitors: Betty Derrick,

For delivering Break Bread meals: Frank and Rosie Asbury,

For cleaning the church: Frank Asbury for 11 years!!!

For cleaning RE building restrooms: Lars Leader

For their service during this church year on the Board of Directors: Carol Stiles (President), Doug Tanner (Vice President), Amy Wells (Secretary), Rosie Asbury (Treasurer), Jim Ingram (Director of Building and Grounds), Kimberly Tanner (Director of Membership), and Sue Bailey (Director of Religious Education)

For donating a refrigerator to the church: Anna Waddell

For helping with Spring cleaning in April: Lars Leader, David Rodgers, Carol Stiles, Valerie Webster, Rosie Asbury, Dee Tait, Holly Prall, Theresa Thompson, Anna Waddell, Amanda Crossley, Fred Howard and Doug and Kimberly Tanner who cleaned the carpet and Betty Derrick who did some kitchen cleaning earlier in the week .

For providing another nursery crib: A friend of Kimberly Tanner's

For working with the organization of the Farmworkers Fund raiser race in late May: Lars Leader

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Congratulations to

- ❖ Sean, Lars Leader's older son, finished in December at GaTech with a Master's in Electrical and Computer Engineering. In January he started working in Madison, WI, for Epic Corp., the largest of the electronic medical records companies. He will be traveling to hospital systems and clinics around the country to assist them in implementing use of the company's software. Kevin, Lars' younger son, will be a senior next year at GaTech. He is in the Aerospace Engineering program, studying in the Space Systems option.
- ❖ Emmilee has been selected as one of about 28 (out of 75) applicants for a week-long leadership training program at Wiregrass Technical School for the week of June 3 – 7.
- ❖ Tim Dunn who has just received his bachelor's degree in Business Management from St. Leo University.
- ❖ Skylar, who ran in his first 5K race and took overall 2nd place in the race. Way to go Skylar! The race was held in Madison, FL and was a fund raiser for the Martin Richards Fund. Richards was one of the Boston Marathon casualties.
- ❖ Julie Halter's daughter Dori is finishing up her medical residency

Keep in your thoughts

- ❖ Our members and friends who have lost family members or who are dealing with difficult health issues.

Thought you might like to know

- ❖ It was great to see Mya Storey and her sons back at UU Valdosta after too long an absence. Over recent years she was a student at VSU. She graduated last year and spent part of this past year in graduate school. She's back in Valdosta with her family and we hope to see more of them over coming months. Mya has served on our Board. We've missed them.



New crib



Jackson and Lilith working on the "Bee on Community" poster.

Notes from Kids' RE - Sue Bailey

A warm welcome to the new children that have been attending RE! We are continuing our exploration of our planet earth, the home we share with all living things. Over the last few weeks, we have learned about several different habitats and the creatures that live in them. The children played "pin the animal on its habitat," which was a big hit, and created owls out of toilet rolls. We have also been talking about our UU community, comparing it to the communities in which ants and honey bees live and work together. During recent lessons, we play acted "The Ant & the Grasshopper" and crafted ant hills and honey bees. Look for our "Bee in Community" poster and a group of wise owls perched on a branch watching over the sanctuary. There will be plenty more lessons and projects as we continue exploring the interdependent web of life. And now that the RE class is growing, we are looking for more helpers to assist as needed in both the nursery and the classroom. Please see Sue Bailey to volunteer or sign up on the sign-up sheets on the table at the back of the sanctuary.



Let's Have Some Fun!!

Book Discussion and Potluck

Friday, June 21 6:30 PM - At the church

The book is "The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet" by David Mitchell. One Amazon reviewer says this novel, which takes place in Japan at a time when that country was very much isolated from the rest of the world, "is immersive to the point one returns only reluctantly to the contemporary world. The prose is haunting and beautiful. The reader experiences the very exotic and strange world in which the devout and ambitious Jacob finds himself through his 18th century Dutch eyes. Part adventure story, part character study, Jacob de Zoet is all fascinating and rich in detail. The characters are vivid; the action suspenseful and thrilling. The stakes are high and the consequences steep. While a little slow to get going, the first section is necessary to get inside the novel, so that the reader fully understands the culture shock Jacob experiences and the dilemmas it creates as he makes the choices that drive the novel. Once past the first section, it becomes a page turner,...."

Bring a dish to share. Coffee and tea will be provided. You are welcome to bring other beverages. We socialize over our potluck meal for the first hour and then promptly begin our book discussion drawing to a close with the selection of our next book by about an hour later. We have been selecting books that deal with difference. Contact: Betty Derrick. *Please note the change in date from that discussed at the last book discussion.*

PIZZA AND A MOVIE: This event will be on vacation this month. Depending on interest it may be back in July, for sure by September. The contacts are Fred Howard and David Rogers. Let them know if you have suggested movies for the future.

Games Night: Games Night will take a vacation for the next couple of months. Watch for it to start up again, most likely in August when schools open.

UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News May 1, 2013

(Note that some matters appear in articles and announcements elsewhere in this newsletter and are not repeated here. The full minutes are posted on the RE wing bulletin board after approval by the board.)

The UU Board discussed:

- plans for summer programs
- possible fundraiser for next fall
- financing of new HVAC system
- weekly cleaning of church
- next meeting, Wednesday, June 5, 6:00 p.m.

Treasurer's Report – Rosie Asbury April 30, 2013

Receipts	<u>April</u>	<u>July -present (10 mos.)</u>
Plate	\$190.45	\$ 1463.32
Pledge	1210.00	15002.00
Rent	150.00	2260.00
Share the Plate(Break Bread)		
	<u>106.00</u>	<u>1487.40</u>
Total Receipts	\$1656.45	\$25212.72
Disbursements		
Speakers' Fees	200.00	2000.00
Minister Exp.	850.00	8113.78
Maint(Window)	220.81	4611.97
Pest Control	35.00	350.00
Postage	0.00	6.44
Supplies	0.00	306.42
Utilities	374.95	3274.00
RE Program	18.00	28.59
Advertising	0.00	700.00
UUA Dues	184.00	1944.00
Donations (Break Bread)		
	106.00	1487.40
Others	<u>0.00</u>	<u>204.17</u>
Total Disbursements	\$ 1988.76	\$ 23026.77
Net Receipt	\$- 332.31	\$ 2185.95

New HVAC system!

In April, we discovered that the compressor in our AC unit for the sanctuary had shorted out. The board voted to replace the system with a high energy unit, at a cost of \$6,930. An initial appeal was made for one-time donations – and we received over \$1,600! The board voted to finance \$5,000 – we are grateful to those who made it possible to finance this lower amount and we would be grateful for any additional donations above and beyond your pledge. Please designate on your check or with a note that the special donation is to help pay off this major expense for our small congregation. Thank you! Carol Stiles.

Spring Cleaning and Lunch Conversation

Ten people, including some members of the KTD Buddhist group, gathered April 27 at the church for a morning of cleaning, scrubbing, vacuuming, and organizing – even the windows were shiny by lunch time! Over lunch of soup, sandwiches, fruit, hummus, and bread, the group discussed a couple of topics for the upcoming year. The first topic was a possible fundraiser to be held in fall after the weather cools a bit – watch for opportunities to be involved! The second topic was to organize cleaning volunteers for weekly preparation of the sanctuary. The KTD Buddhist group volunteered to clean one week and was later assigned the first week of each month. Other groups that use the church will be approached as well, but see elsewhere for your opportunity to participate! Thanks to all who brought food and helped make the church sparkle on that day!

At the Church-in-the-Woods

New Hope Christian Community Church- Sunday evenings: Choir practice at 4:30 PM. Service at 6:00 PM.
<http://www.wix.com/nhccc1/nhccc>

Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday: Summer Schedule 6:00-7:30 PM; Contact Dennis Bogyo or Luana Goodwin.

HIV Support Meeting - The 2nd Tuesday: 7:30 PM. Contact: Dwight Rewis; Janice Price

South Georgia Pride –3rd Tuesday each month, 7:30PM
Contact Raynaé Jones

PFLAG Meeting – 4th Tuesday each month, 7:00PM
Contact: Doug Tanner The web page for PFLAG Valdosta:
<http://community.pflag.org/Valdosta>

UU Activities and Announcements

May 31 – June 1 (The Mountain, Highlands, NC) or June 7 – 9 (Dallas, TX) or June 7–9 (UU Fellowship of Marion County, Summerfield, FL) - President's Convocation

June 19-23-UUA General Assembly, Louisville, KY

July 21-27- SUUSI, Radford, Virginia.

Looking for a great, affordable value for your whole family, with lots of adventures and filled with friends? Then come to SUUSI! You'll be welcomed warmly and invited into our community. SUUSI is an intentional community of approximately 1,200 people who gather in the 3rd week of July near Roanoke, VA, to explore our interconnectedness, learn new ways of seeing our world and each other, delight in the joys of meeting old friends and making new ones, share outdoor adventures, dance, and sing. Together, we'll create a week of conversation, reflection, activity, nourishment, fun and family. "Let It Be A Dance" is this year's theme.



UUA TRUSTEE TIDBITS

Joan Lund

June 2013

jlund@uua.org

(As my Trustee term ends I will send one more column for June, 2013.)

Dear UU Friends,

This is the final Trustee Tidbits. How do I say farewell? After ten years on the UUA Board of Trustees and a column written each month during this time, I would be less than honest if I did not admit to being ready for my Board time to end. But more importantly, I also confess the support, commitment, love, and honest discourse you provided to and with me have made my service to our UUA a memorable and appreciated experience of a lifetime. Thank you from the depths of my being.

The challenges the Board has faced during this time are too numerous to document but we have also accomplished much during my tenure. When I joined the Board it was obvious to all of us serving at that time our UUA Board governance needed addressing.

After much consultation and training we now govern by policy which is driven by our Ends. The UUA Board expects and demands accountability to our congregations through monitoring reports from our UUA President as to how and if these Ends are being accomplished. These Ends were determined by much conversation over several years with UUs in many venues. Again through linkage with our congregations and conversations with our various UU groups the Board is in the process of revising the Ends to be voted upon at GA 2013.

But what else has been the work of your UUA Board in strong covenant with each other? Here comes a list of sorts, but by no account comprehensive or chronological: 1) Tremendous linkage work with our congregational leadership which has been going on for several years. Now we are partnering with our District Presidents Association to continue this linkage. 2) There has been a change in our UUA By-laws voted by GA delegates as to how a congregation is defined (might be time to look at the By-laws). 3) We have welcomed many new congregations. 4) There is now health insurance available to UUA employees both at our national administrative level and in the field. 5) The Board has restructured itself to be more democratic and effective. 6) There are now off-site voting GA delegates. 7) Our UUA in Boston will have new headquarters. 8) The Board approved public policy statements which demand equal rights for bisexual, gay, lesbian and transgender persons.

As a Trustee I have served in several roles and on various Board groups which I have reported on in the District Annual Report(s) and in this column. These are not to be noted now, but I am both humbled and grateful for the opportunity to lead in various ways.

I love this faith and believe the word "love" is what we are all about... in our congregations and in our Association. So I leave with deep feelings of hope and compassion for what is near and dear to my heart, the beloved Florida District and Unitarian Universalism. May we always strive in covenant with each other for our highest ideals and values among ourselves and in the world-wide community.

In appreciation and commitment, Joan

Unitarian Universalists get favorable television coverage

CBS News recently created a documentary called *Religion & Spirituality in a Changing Society* to explore the dramatic changes in Americans' religious behavior. They interview UUA President the Rev. Peter Morales and profile First Parish Cambridge, Unitarian Universalist to better understand what Unitarian Universalism offers to meet the spiritual needs of the growing population of "Nones," those individuals who have no religious affiliation. Watch the full video online from CBS News.

The changes in American religiosity were documented last year by the Pew Forum on Religion in Public Life, when they released a poll showing that 1 in 5 Americans do not identify with any religion. Despite this dramatic downward trend in religious affiliation, the number of people who identify as Unitarian Universalist has remained steady and some reports show growth. Rev. Morales has also seen this trend and written about the unique opportunity this presents for Unitarian Universalism.

