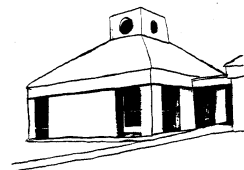


The Flaming Chalice

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



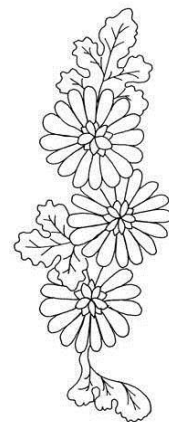
Please note that although individual personal contact information has been removed from this online newsletter, you can obtain more information on any event or ask questions by sending an e-mail to uuvaldosta@yahoo.com.

What's going on... **June 2014**

Sun	June 1	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Dr. Dick Saeger, "Political Scene in 2014" Meet & Greet after the service
W	June 4	6:00 PM	Board Meeting in the RE wing at the church
Sun	June 8	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Dr. Brett Hackett, "Language, Truth, and Meaning." Meet & Greet Coffee after the service
M	June 9	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
Sun	June 15	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - Dr. Bennie Calloway, "Spiritual Fugitives Fleeing From Religious Injustice." Meet & Greet Coffee after the service
Sun	June 15		<i>Deadline June newsletter</i>
Sun	June 22	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – "Summer Solstice and Lithia" <i>Share the Plate Sunday</i> Meet & Greet after the service
F	June 27	6:30 PM	Games Night!
Sun	June 29	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Dr. Rhonda L. Kelley, "Religious Freedom and the Muslim Veil: Shielding, Expressing, Covering, and Oppressing" Meet & Greet Coffee after the service

June...

Ahh... summer! It's hot, it's humid. People start moving at a little slower pace. People come and go for summer vacations and other travel. At the UU church, we switch gears a little bit, but we have a full schedule of summer services and activities, and a couple of special events, too! Join us when you can!



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, June 1 -Dr. Dick Saeger, "Political Scene in 2014"

The 2014 mid-term election cycle promises to be one of the most pivotal and interesting elections in recent years. With many voters not motivated enough to participate in these non-presidential year elections, only the most dedicated and partisan voters will decide the course of government for at least the following two years as Barack Obama enters his lame duck period as President. Is it possible that the U.S. Senate would change hands and the President, in his last two years, would face a Congress run entirely by the opposing political party. What would it mean for Washington gridlock and how will anything, including budgets, which are tolerable enough for the president to sign ever get passed. Could repeated vetoes be the new norm in national politics in 2015 and 2016? Join us for a discussion by Dr. Dick Saeger, Professor Emeritus in Political Science from Valdosta State University, who visits to discuss local, state and national political issues and current trends.

Sunday, June 8: Dr. Brett Hackett, "Language, Truth, and Meaning."

As a logician, I use the words 'truth' and 'meaning' in a very narrow way. Naturally then, as a logician, my search for truth and meaning turn out to be very humble endeavors. As a philosopher (through the study of metaphysics), however, I seek a grander connection between i) what I say, ii) what I mean, and iii) the world that I take myself to describe when I speak. It is my goal in this brief discussion to connect truth and meaning in the narrow sense of the logician, to the broader world that concerns the metaphysicist. Dr. Hackett is an instructor in the Philosophy and Religious Studies Department at Valdosta State University.

Sunday, June 15 – Dr. Bennie Calloway, "Spiritual Fugitives Fleeing From Religious Injustice."

The emphasis of the message is how once we have had a spiritual epiphany that frees us from religious dogma and domination, we flee in pursuit of higher consciousness and a deeper sense of the divinity within. I will use a few examples of men who have had great spiritual epiphanies such as Martin Luther, St. Paul, and others who were fugitives in a sense because the religious system they separated themselves from engaged in so much injustice and wanted to do them harm for fleeing. I will use those examples for present application today how we as Unitarians or other religious free spiritual groups are fleeing from the injustices of fundamentalism. We have to know when to flee confrontation of religious injustice and when to engage it head on with our new spiritual experiences. Dr. Calloway has served as a minister for 22 years and is President of Kingdom Truth Ministries & Blogger of The Calloway Commentary (drbenniecalloway.blogspot.com)

Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will be donated to the South Georgia Migrant Farmworkers' Clinic. The clinic

provides health care to the farmworkers in the area who are harvesting crops and working the fields. We will also collect food and clothing to be distributed at the clinic. These items may be brought to the church any time (please let Kimberly or Carol know....). 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.

Sunday, June 22 - "Summer Solstice and Lithia"

Sunday June 22nd is the Summer Solstice and the pagan festive Lithia. Come join us for a special service celebrating the Summer Solstice the longest day of the year and the beginning of the Summer season. We will also honor the traditional pagan festival of Lithia. Lithia, the midsummer festival in pagan traditions is the most powerful day of the year for the Sun God. Since this Sabbat glorifies the Sun, fire plays a prominent role in the festival. Fire, as a symbol of the light and heat from the sun, can burn, consume, cook, shed light or purify and bonfires still figure prominently at modern Midsummer rites.

Sunday, June 29- Dr. Rhonda L. Kelley, "Religious Freedom and the Muslim Veil: Shielding, Expressing, Covering, and Oppressing"

The veiling of Muslim women in public spaces has been a thorny topic amongst feminists for decades, and accompanying the sharp rise of Islamophobia in countries hit hard by Islamic terrorism, pundits and policy makers join the debate. The mission both to empower the oppressed and to protect religious liberty becomes problematic when the focus is on policies and not people. In this discussion, we will explore the hypocrisy of the West in regard to women's rights and examine the reasons behind the donning of the veil. Dr. Kelley is a professor in the Humanities Division at South Georgia State College.

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.

Notes from the RE Director – Sue Bailey

We've been having lots of fun in RE as we explore our Unitarian Universalist Principles. In addition to our beautiful Easter action painting, we've worked on a variety of other creative projects including colorful UU chalices made from Styrofoam cups and plates and a mural of cloud patterns. Summer time is coming so we will turn our attention to our 7th Principle - We believe in caring for our planet Earth, the home we share with all living things - but we will continue to reinforce all the principles. If you would like to volunteer to assist in RE, please see Sue Bailey.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

CAROL STILES

It's summer and we do change gears a little bit here at UU. Our part-time minister, Rev. Fred Howard, is on leave during the summer months; this means he will not be speaking for his regular Sunday services, but he can be reached. He will also represent UU Valdosta at the UUA General Assembly in late June.

Doug Tanner, our vice-president / program chair has a full schedule of great services planned for June! For those of you who may be new or just recently visiting us, note that we are a completely lay-led congregation in the summer. Also, Games Night will continue – let's keep up the energy for that event!

In July, we plan to continue a tradition of sharing a service with Serenity Christian Church, and who knows, maybe we'll have a special pizza and a movie or a potluck some Sunday afternoon. Keep in touch!

In community,
Carol

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.

Worship Team!

Our newly organized Worship Team consists of lay-leaders, musicians, meet-n-greet hosts and visitor greeters, organizers of services, and so on! Valerie Webster will be chairing this new effort. There are many ways to be involved in our services and/or our other activities – just contact Valerie Webster or Carol Stiles. The purpose of the Worship Team is to give more deliberate and intentional direction to the planning of each Sunday service through the coordination of a pool of volunteers. Volunteers will be asked to identify their area(s) of expertise or interest then the chair, Valerie Webster, will group the volunteers to work on various aspects. No one person will be in charge of a huge task; we will share and spread the work so that all can engage with energy as often as their schedules permit.

Some of the areas of worship include lay-leading, providing or coordinating music, assisting with religious education for children, greeting visitors, preparing for meet-n-greet, preparing the sanctuary for the service, and getting the sanctuary ready for the next group to use our beautiful facility.

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Keep in your thoughts

- ❖ Our members and friends who are dealing with difficult health issues of their own or of family members.

UU Valdosta Caring Committee Contact Carol Stiles or Kimberly Tanner if you would be able to help out with this committee. Several of this committee's core members are themselves in need of care right now. Get in touch too if you or someone you know needs the services of this committee.

Fred Howard is our part time minister. He is on leave during the summer months but 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.

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

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.



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.

Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday: Beginner's 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

PFLAG Meeting – 4th Tuesday each month, 7:00PM

Contact: Doug Tanner. The web page for PFLAG Valdosta: <http://community.pflag.org/Valdosta>

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.

Worship in Nature, Led by our Youth

On Sunday, May 25, with the theme "Imagine," the congregation gathered out in nature, near the firepit. Fred Howard provided the message, but our youth provided lay-leading, the story for all ages, and other elements of the service as noted here: Mackenzie was lay leader, Devin passed the collection plate, Skyler read the story for all ages, and Teagan did readings and such. The younger children with the assistance of Sue Bailey, RE Director, did the chalice lighting and opening words.



FRED AND MACKENZIE



ENJOYING THE OUTDOOR SERVICE!

Thank You! Thank You!

First of all, a request – please send thank you's to Carol for the newsletter!

To our regular contributors to the newsletter: Doug Tanner, Sue Bailey, Fred Howard, Carol Stiles, and others.

For sending photos for the newsletter: Kimberly Tanner

To those who participated in the Youth-Led service!

For sweeping sidewalks: Richard Schofield, Devon Neel, McKenzie Neel.

For providing music at services: Rhett Watson

For coordinating the book discussion: Tom Aiello

For lay-leading services: Doug Tanner, McKenzie Neel

For helping prepare for services, meet-n-greet, and cleanup afterwards: Rose Baker, Tim Dunn, Rosie Asbury, Mary Ellen Adams, Doug Tanner, Dee Tait, and others.

For submitting articles to the Valdosta Daily Times about our services: Dee Tait

For delivering Break Bread meals in May: David Rodgers

Action Painting!

The RE youth and adults, too, created an action painting that adults under the artful direction of our RE Director, Susan E. Bailey. The action painting is posted in the sanctuary – take a look! It's also available on Facebook and on our website (below).

What comes to mind when you look at this work of art? Please contribute your ideas for a title based on the themes of Easter, equinox, spring, rebirth, rejuvenation – whatever “speaks” to you about the spring time of year.

After we've collected some title suggestions, we will let the youth go through them to pick the “winner” for the action painting.

Electronic Newsletter Available!

Please contact Kimberly Tanner if you would like to receive this newsletter electronically! Saves money and paper! The newsletter is also available on our website, but note that the publicly available newsletter there does not include personal phone numbers, etc.

Do visit our website for other information, updates, links, and other great stuff! You can even ask a question there! <http://www.uuvaldosta.net/>

UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News May 7, 2014

(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:

- Our bench advertisement on Patterson has been moved to Bemiss Rd.; Carol will contact the Exchange Club.
- UUA General Assembly is the last week of June in Providence, RI. Fred Howard will attend and will be our voting delegate.
- Registration for South Georgia Pride Festival, scheduled for Sep. 20, is available
- Next meeting, Wednesday, June 4, 6:00 p.m.

Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles, uuvaldosta@yahoo.com

April 15: Deadline for the May 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: Carol Stiles

Facebook: Kimberly Tanner

Local Publicity: Dee Tait

General Assembly, A Meeting of Congregations, June 25-29, 2014, Providence, Rhode Island

From the UUA website: <http://www.uua.org/>

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend; congregations must certify annually to send voting delegates.

The theme for General Assembly 2014 is **Love Reaches Out**. Religious life in America is changing dramatically and rapidly. Fewer people are identifying with specific denominations and most mainline religions are losing members in droves. People now find many outlets and places of engagement for their spiritual lives. Current studies of faith in America show that there is a movement toward a liberal, fluid kind of faith that doesn't fit with traditional denominational identity and structure. We already know that for every adult member of Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations, there are at least three non-members who also consider themselves to be Unitarian Universalist.

A core purpose of our faith is to help people grow in spirit and in service. We believe that our faith provides a path for each of us to unlock our transformational capacity to serve the world with love. We want to expand our faith not just to grow Unitarian Universalism, but also to better achieve this transformational purpose. Therefore, the General Assembly Planning Committee, the UUA Board of Trustees and the Administration want the General Assembly in 2014 help our association live into a future where our “Love Reaches Out” to share our faith both within and beyond our congregations' walls.

Treasurer's Report – Rosie Asbury March, 2014

Receipts

Plate	\$ 76.91
Pledge	760.00
Rent	100.00
Share the Plate	0.00
Total Receipts	\$ 936.91

Disbursements

Minister Expense	\$ 536.27
Pest Control/Termite	35.00
Speakers' Fees	200.00
Repairs/Maintenance	
Newsletter	
Donations	0.00
UUA Dues	577.00
Insurance	1537.00
Utilities	315.49
Advertising	
Others (recycling)	20.00
Total disbursements	\$4,220.76
Net receipt	\$-3,283.85

The Greatest Gift of All

by the Rev. Carlton Elliott Smith

UUA Southern Region Congregational Life Staff

Thursday, May 15, 2014

I don't cry often while watching television, but this morning the tears fell as I saw the dedication of the 9/11 Museum at the site of the World Trade Center Towers. Hearing and seeing the survivors and the first responders, listening to the last voice messages of those who perished in flight ... I was moved beyond words.

If I were certain my life was ending in a few minutes, who would I call? What would I say? If someone I loved called to say they were about to leave forever, what would I say? What would I do? I ask these questions, then multiply them times the hundreds and hundreds of lives lost on that clear September morning.

I was living in Boston at the time of the attacks. My partner called me from his office and told me to turn the television on. I watched transfixed until both of the towers collapsed, then I was completely overwhelmed and turned the news off, feeling the weight and the loss of those lives that day.

Seven years later, I began an interim ministry at the Central Unitarian Church of Bergen County in Paramus, New Jersey. It was there that I met long-time members Herb and Andrea Ouida (oh-WEE-da), whose 25-year-old son Todd died at the World Trade Center. As a child, Todd suffered with debilitating anxiety disorder. After his death, his parents founded The Todd Ouida Children's Foundation (www.mybuddytodd.org), a nonprofit organization that supports psychological services for children from low-income families and works to end the stigma of depression. The Foundation has raised more than a \$1 million to date for projects such as an art-therapy center and a summer camp for children who lost loved ones on Sept. 11.

Some of the conversations that take up our time and energy seem abstract. As we debate about the value of a new UUA logo or the advantages of moving our Association's offices off Beacon Hill in Boston, the work

of saving lives, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and loving beyond belief goes forward. While we attend our meetings, join together in worship and advocate for justice, may we remain aware of the fragility of each of our lives. Every day, we have the chance to radiate as much love as possible to each person we meet. When tragedy strikes, may we follow the example of the Ouidas and reach out in love to others who are in need, just as we are.

*Life is the greatest gift of all the riches of this earth
Life and its creatures great and small, of high and lowly birth
So treasure it, and measure it, with deeds of shining worth**

In faith,
Carlton

*Singing the Living Tradition, #331

UUA Headquarters has moved!

On and after May 19th, the UUA address will be 24 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210. Watch for more information to come about the relocation of our UUA headquarters.

The Mountain Retreat and Learning Centers

offers a number of different campus, retreats, workshops. Located near Highlands, NC, this retreat is a UUA affiliate and it's a beautiful place – ask Carol! She's been there....

SWUUSI 2014: SAVE THE DATE!

20-25 July, 2014, Ft. Gibson Lake, Oklahoma

Join us for our annual all-ages summer camp on Fort Gibson Lake in Oklahoma. Fun on the lake, golf-course, and trails will be complemented by spiritual growth with theme speaker, Rev. Meg Barnhouse, and artist in residence, Rev. Dr. Leon Dunkley. Learn more [here](#).

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.