



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

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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

What's going on... **March 2016**

Sun	Mar. 6	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - Rev. Fred Howard, "I Will Survive" Meet & Greet after the service
Sun	Mar. 13	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. George Bennett, "New Beginning" Meet & Greet after the service
M	Mar. 14	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
T	Mar. 15		Deadline – April newsletter
Sun	Mar. 20	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - Rev. Mary Louise DeWolf, "Rational Spirituality" 50th Anniversary Celebration!
Fri	Mar. 25	6:30 PM	Games Night and Fire Pit!
Sun	Mar. 27	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service - Rev. Fred Howard, "Paradigms of Resurrection from Many Faiths – Perhaps Even No Faith At All" Meet & Greet after the service

March, 2016

Our 50th Anniversary Celebration is here! Join us on March 20th, for a special service and dinner following the service on the grounds. In addition, we will celebrate our recognition by the UUA as a Welcoming Congregation! More details inside this issue of the Flaming Chalice!

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, March 6 – Rev. Fred Howard, “I Will Survive”

Stories shape our lives. Some of you may recognize that sentence as the opening line to my book. In the past year I’ve discovered yet another aspect to that truth. The story that shapes our lives more than any other one is the story we tell ourselves about ourselves. This morning I’ll invite you to examine with me the story you’re telling yourself as we consider together which elements in these stories are life affirming and which ones we might want to discard.

Sunday, March 13 – Rev. George Bennett, “New Beginning”

In the old Celtic world there is the tradition of setting sail from one's homeland as a pilgrim. By leaving behind what is known and comfortable into what is unknown and challenging. Martha and I are preparing for spiritual pilgrimage to the Isle of Iona off the coast of Scotland to study with John Philip Newell in June.

Sunday, March 20

50th Anniversary Celebration!

Rev. Mary Louise DeWolf, “Rational Spirituality”

In my experience, Unitarian Universalists don't often talk about spirituality, and when asked about it they do not know what to say. What does spiritual mean? Not logical but meaningful? Feeling, not thinking? Can Unitarian Universalists be spiritual? Are other denominations spiritual?

Rev. Mary Louise DeWolf was one of the founding members of the Unitarian Universalist church of Valdosta – see her biography elsewhere in this issue.

Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will be donated to Lowndes Area Crisis Care (LACC). LACC is organized by area churches to provide short-term financial help for those in emergency need. Individuals seeking assistance will be referred to LACC to help determine the best way to help during financial crises. LACC is in the middle of a major fundraising campaign: nearly \$10,000 was utilized last year to help individuals in

need, but LACC needs to raise more funds to be able to re-open the office at Lowndes County Social Services Building, 601 N. Lee St. on a regular schedule. Rev. Fred Howard is involved in this endeavor along with other ministers from the Valdosta Area Ministerial Association (VAMA).

Sunday, March 27 – Rev. Fred Howard, “Paradigms of Resurrection from Many Faiths – Perhaps Even No Faith At All”

Many Unitarian Universalist ministers are challenged by the prospect of preaching an Easter sermon. It seems daunting to them to deal honestly with the resurrection paradigm while also remaining in good standing with the skeptics and scientific minded. I relish the challenge. This morning we'll be hearing voices from four traditions about this paradigm – Christianity, Paganism, Atheism, and Unitarian Universalism - and the positive messages each tradition can glean from it.

50th Anniversary!

We're throwing a party for our 50th Anniversary on Sunday, March 20th! That day, we will host a special service, with Rev. Mary Louise DeWolf, as our speaker. After the service, we will have dinner on the grounds and a special celebration. Dee Tait has agreed to chair the organizing committee, please let us know if you're willing to help!

Mary Louise DeWolf and Harold M. (Bud) Evans were founders of the Unitarian Fellowship of Valdosta (which is actually our official name) in 1965. In December, 1965, application for formal membership in the Unitarian Universalist Association was filed with 14 charter members, including Jim and Josette Ingram. The membership was accepted by the UUA in early 1966. For a full history of the church, please see the article on our website:

http://www.uuvaldosta.net/?page_id=87

A Welcoming Congregation!

Congratulations to UU Valdosta!! We have received notification from the UUA that we have earned Welcoming Congregation status! This designation is the result, specifically, of our work together in after-service sessions with the Living the Welcoming Congregation UUA Curriculum last year, as well as the multicultural curricula we are using this year, Examining Whiteness: An Antiracism Curriculum and Building the World We Dream About.

But, to us, this designation is also recognition of our *decades* of work in outreach to the LGBTQ community here in Valdosta. In future issues, we will share some portions of our application that will describe this outreach.

Meanwhile, here is a short excerpt from the letter from Annette Marquis, UUA LGBTQ and Multicultural Programs Director: "It was a pleasure to read about what you have accomplished and the powerful work you have done. I'm always struck when a small congregation such as yours takes on this important mission. UFV has done the work of becoming a Welcoming Congregation with dedication and purpose. You can be quite proud of your efforts."

Welcome back, Rev. Mary Louise DeWolf!

The Reverend Mary Louise DeWolf is a second generation native Floridian. After receiving her BS in Science Education and Master of Education from the University of Florida, she spent thirty-three years teaching biology and chemistry in the public schools of Florida, Georgia, California, England and the Florida Community College in Jacksonville. This was followed by eight years as a Co-District Executive in the Florida and Mid-South Districts of the Unitarian Universalist Association. During this time Rev. DeWolf began her preparation for ministry. She later received a MA in Religious Studies at the University of South Florida and Final Fellowship from the Unitarian Universalist Association. She served as part-time minister at Nature Coast Unitarian Universalists in Citrus Springs, Florida for seven years, retired from ministry in 2010, and was awarded Minister Emerita. Reverend Mary Louise lives in Crystal River, FL. She will be our guest minister on March 20th for the 50th Anniversary celebration.



Ministerial Musings

Rev Fred Howard

We have many special happenings at the church this month! Among them:

Sunday, March 20 will be our 50th Anniversary celebration. I hope everyone can make it. Many former members have contacted us and plan to be there, so it will be much like a homecoming. Please plan to stay for the meal afterwards and take this opportunity to connect with our congregation's past, present and future.

Sunday, March 27 will also be a special service. It's Easter Sunday. I've always wondered why attendance is always so good at Unitarian Universalist services on Easter. I think part of the allure is for the entertainment value of watching the minister struggle as she/he swims against the strong current of improbability contained in the traditional Easter message. I won't discourage anyone from coming for that reason, but if that's your hope, I'm afraid the service this year may be a disappointment. Rather than take on the grand myth-miracle-mystery that is Easter by myself, this year I'm inviting other faith perspectives to join with me in offering reflections on this season's high drama. Deborah Marine-Hill and I have been collaborating on this service and I'm excited about the possibilities of the innovative worship experience we're planning. So much looking forward to seeing everyone there!

As a sort of meditation in preparation for this worship experience, I offer the following excerpt:

"The Easter story is just that—a story. It was likely meant to bring hope to a community caught in a seemingly hopeless situation. Easter, however, isn't something that might or might not have happened two millennia ago. Easter happens every day when people act in the world as agents of hope. When people live their lives in this way, they bear witness to Easter. When they act in ways that put hope and possibility before another human being, they're plotting a resurrection. Maybe it's the possibility of a full stomach, a better tomorrow, or that one day the moral arc of the universe will bend toward justice. Perhaps it's the possibility that something good can come from what today appears hopeless.

To bring hope is to bring life—new life where once there was none. Bringing hope requires we remain faithful to our commitments and that we enter into community with each other with a sense of expectancy, knowing that sometimes it's going to require us to be creative and flexible. Resurrection is not merely about one human overcoming death. Resurrection is more

about all humanity overcoming darkness and despair to emerge from these things that entomb the soul into the light of hope and courage and purpose.” 1

¹ F. Howard, “Transforming Faith,” p. 203

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.

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.

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Keep in your thoughts...

- ❖ Our members and friends experiencing health concerns or the loss of family members.

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.



.... coming soon, to our sanctuary! Keep reading!

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

February 7, 2016

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Discussed African-American Recognition Banquet on Feb 26 which is a fundraiser for the Black History Museum at Serenity Christian Church – UU board voted to sponsor a table.
- Carol completed our UUA certification, with 34 members (certification is necessary to ensure that we can send official delegates to General Assembly each year).
- Next Meeting: Sunday, Mar. 6, 9:30 a.m.

Games Night / Fire Pit

Friday, March 25, 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.

Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles,

Worship Team Chair: Carol Stiles

March 15: Deadline for the April 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 or Kimberly Tanner

Facebook: Kimberly Tanner

Local Publicity: Dee Tait

UU Treasurer's Report Dec., 2015

Outstanding Debt \$ 0.00

Receipts

Plate	\$ 93.00
Pledge	3620.00
Rent	0.00
Share the Plate(GAYT)	<u>50.20</u>
Total receipts	\$ 3763.20

Disbursements

Minister Expense	\$ 1027.62
Pest Control/Termite	35.00
Assoc. Min/Interpreter	560.00
Donations (GAYT/SGPEH)	110.20
Supplies (OWL textbooks)	217.00
Insurance	0.00
Utilities	270.50
Advertising	0.00
Total disbursements	\$ <u>2220.32</u>
Net receipt	\$ 1542.00

Thank You! Thank You!

For helping at clean-up day: Carol, Tom A., Lars, Sue, Doug, Kimberly, Rosie, Dee, Megan, Deb, Stirling and their son

For cleaning up after the clean-up day: Doug Tanner, who moved all of the items we left in the hallway!

For lay-leading services: Doug Tanner, Carol Stiles, Dee Tait, Cliff Adams

For providing music at services: Rhett Watson, Nephtali Santiago, Daniel Peveto, Molly and Doug

For Meet & Greet: Carol Stiles, Mary Ellen Adams, Dawn Renner, Rosie Asbury

For assisting with RE: Teagan Dunn, Diane Holliman, Dawn Renner, Kimberly Tanner, Lars Leader, Doug Tanner

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, Carol Stiles

For coordinating the Caring Committee: Dee Tait

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

Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday, Beginners Class, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Continuing class, 7 – 8 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.

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/>

Welcome New Member!

Tanya McDowell



...And, here is the official Welcoming Congregation logo! We will receive a couple of posters for the sanctuary and will include the logo on our website and Facebook page.



Doug Fraser and Molly Scholz perform at the service on Feb. 14, A Sunday of Music. Thanks to all who participated and returned for the potluck gathering to visit with Molly and Doug!



Molly and Doug return!

Old and new friends gathered for the service and later in the evening for a potluck on Feb. 14th to visit with our former musicians, Doug and Molly, who had returned for a visit. Long-time friends of UU Valdosta returned from north Georgia, Jacksonville, and Portland, OR. We hear there was a long game of dominoes that lasted well into the night!

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.

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.

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.