



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

What's going on... **March 2017**

Fri	Mar. 3	7:00 PM	Betty Derrick Memorial Lecture and Panel Discussion!
Sun	Mar. 5	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. Fred Howard, “Challenging Islam” Meet & Greet after the service
Sun	Mar. 12	11:00 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Joyce Rapiet, “The African Diaspora: Chosen Children of the Migration” Meet & Greet after the service
M	Mar. 13	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
Sun	Mar. 19	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service -- Rev. Fred Howard, "Adjusting Our Spiritual Spam Filters" Meet & Greet after the service
Fri	Mar. 24	6:30 PM	Games Night and Bonfire!
Sun	Mar. 26	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Lars Leader, “UUSC Justice Sunday: Supporting Communities Under Siege” Meet & Greet after the service

March 2017...

The second Betty Derrick Memorial Lecture and Panel Discussion will be held on March 3, 2017, at 7:00p.m.! We will have a panel to discuss Election 2016 – bring a snack if you wish and plan on an interesting evening! Azalea Festival is March 11 and 12 in Drexel Park – we need volunteers for our UU table! See Kimberly Tanner.

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, Mar. 5 – Rev. Fred Howard, “Challenging Islam”

You know what they say about those who go where angels fear to tread. I hope that label doesn't apply to me as I do just that this morning in attempting to find some common ground between our faith tradition and Islam. For reasons both obvious and obscure this search can be treacherous, but also vital if we are going to contribute to making the world a more peaceful place. In my presentation I'll be using some material from my recently released book, “Children of Covenant.”

Sunday, Mar. 12 – Joyce Rapier, “The African Diaspora: Chosen Children of the Migration.”

My topic with touch on the movement of mankind out of the Fertile Crescent of Africa, touching on possible route and settlement, thus becoming the nationalities and races we know today. A special highlight on a few unknown individuals/groups that help shape parts of the world.

Sunday, Mar. 19 – Rev. Fred Howard, "Adjusting Our Spiritual Spam Filters"

There is so much nonsense in the world today. Yet, in the midst of all this noise, I have to hope there is real wisdom to be found. How are we to discern what is deserving of our attention, energy, and focus? This morning I'll share some of the spiritual spam filters that I employ and some thoughts on exercising good spiritual discernment.

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 has an office in the Lowndes County Social Services Building, 601 N. Lee St. and is open (by appointment) on Tuesday and Saturday. Rev. Fred Howard is involved in this endeavor along with other ministers and volunteers. Appointments can be made by calling 506-5540.

In addition to this month's Share-the-Plate collection, the UU Board has pledged \$100 per month in support of LACC – please help out as you can, as we receive many calls here at the church for short-term financial help from people in the local community.

Sunday, Mar. 26 – Lars Leader, “UUSC Justice Sunday: Supporting Communities Under Siege”

For this year's Justice Sunday, UUSC is “asking you to join with us in support of marginalized communities targeted because of who they are: people under particular threat because of religion, race, and immigrant or refugee status.”

Justice Sunday is UUSC's “annual program to engage us in reflection and specific action tied to one of three core program areas: Economic Justice, Rights at Risk, and Environmental Justice and Climate Action.”

Betty Derrick Memorial Lecture and Discussion March 3, 7 p.m.

The second Betty Derrick Memorial Lecture will focus on “Election 2016” and events since last year's election season. We will have a panel of political scientists on hand: Dr. Dick Saeger, Dr. James LaPlant, and Dr. Bernard Tamas, all from the VSU Political Science Department. Please bring a snack if you wish, we will have soda and tea on hand.

Dr. Dick Saeger, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, has been a speaker for us over the years, especially during election years, and is a past-president of UU Valdosta.

Dr. James LaPlant is Dean of the Graduate School and Assistant Vice President for Research, as well as Professor of Political Science. Among other topics, Dr. LaPlant has an interest in conspiracy theories and their role in politics and society.

Dr. Bernie Tamas is an Assistant Professor in Political Science, having joined VSU fairly recently. His research interests include political parties, electoral systems, and research methodology. Dr. Tamas is currently writing a book on the decline of third-parties in United States over the twentieth century.



Ministerial Musings

Rev. Fred Howard

I was intrigued by an article I came across in the current issue of UU World Magazine called “Class Background, Unitarian Universalism’s Hidden Diversity.” The article is basically a book review of three recent works that explore the white working-class experience in America. Two of the books are written by “class crossovers,” professional class authors who were raised in working class families. What particularly caught my eye was a line near the end of the article, “These chapters may be of special interest to UU congregations, many of which, I suspect, contain more class crossovers than they realize.” The more I thought about that statement, the more I wondered how individual members of our congregation would feel about being described using that term “class crossover,” and what those feelings say about some important dynamics within our congregation.

Are we a congregation that contains more class crossovers than I realize? Or does class crossover describe, not an identity our individual members claim, but rather a particular standard that many in our congregation feel they must measure up to? Or is our church just an anomaly among the other congregations in our association with few if any members that can relate to this designation “class crossover?” These are questions that I’m particularly intrigued by and still wrestling with. And I wonder if any of you might be wrestling with these questions also – even if perhaps only subconsciously?

Doug Muder, the author of the article, speaks of “the special pressures faced by class crossovers, either to reject their working-class roots or to live two parallel lives, each hidden from the other.” He could not have described the pressures I sometimes feel more perfectly. Raised by working class parents myself I was continually urged to “make something of myself,” and I eventually found my place in the system and supported it throughout my life. But even as I outwardly attained a ranking in a professional class, a part of me has and will continue to think of itself as working class. It’s sort of a cultural no man’s land,

if you will forgive the gender biased term. I’m now inextricably a moving part in a system that often, as Muder says, “marks [me and my] famil[y] and friends as inferior.”

This marking happens in countless ways, many of them subconscious and unintentional I’m sure, but nevertheless, hurtful to some parallel part of me. In spite of some effort by these authors to “portray working class culture as different from professional class culture, but not necessarily better or worse,” a part of me remains unconvinced. Despite all my efforts to be a more fully integrated person, I own that part of me identified as working class with some mixture of both pride and vexation.

I have to wonder if these feelings are shared by or are distressing to anyone else out there in the culture of our UU community? I welcome conversation on this topic.

In Community and Faith,
Fred

Rev. Fred Howard is our part-time minister. He may be contacted by email (preferable) at fredhoward3622@gmail.com. He is available for weddings and rites of passage ceremonies by prearrangement.

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Keep in your thoughts...

- ❖ Our members and friends experiencing health concerns...

Congratulations to ...

- ❖ Rev. Fred Howard, whose second book was released at the end of January. It is titled *Children of Covenant* and it is a novel in which “Residents of a Southern town are confronted with their religious bigotry in this deeply felt story of justice, regret, and forgiveness.” (Amazon.com).

Azalea Festival!

It's that time of year! We will have a table at the Azalea Festival in Drexel Park, March 11-12. We will need many volunteers to help cover the table on Saturday and Sunday. Set up is Friday afternoon. Please contact Kimberly Tanner if you can help.

UU Valdosta Caring Committee

Members of this committee include Dee Tait, David Rodgers, Kimberly Tanner, and Carol Stiles. If you are able to help when assistance is needed please see a member of the committee.

Religious Education

For Children: The RE program for children under 15 years of age meets at 10:45 AM concurrent with the Sunday morning service. Older young people will remain with the adult service. Two adults are needed each Sunday to help with RE. Sign up on the volunteer list at the church or through Carol Stiles and the Worship Team.

Social Action Activities

Break Bread Together

We deliver meals with the Break Bread Together program on the 2nd Monday (and 5th when there is one) of each month. Let David Rodgers know if you are interested in helping with this service. Several volunteers make it possible to adjust to changing personal schedules. Please let David know if you are available to deliver meals. It is helpful to have two people on the route.

Games Night & Bonfire

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



UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News

February 5, 2016

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Discussed calendar events – Betty Derrick Memorial Lecture (Mar. 3), Shared Service with Serenity Christian Church (May 21)
- Next Meeting: Mar. 5, 9:30 a.m.

INVITATION TO MEMBERSHIP

If you are interested in becoming a member of our fellowship, we encourage you to talk with our minister, Rev. Fred Howard or Membership Director, Kimberly Tanner. We welcome your questions, and we extend an open invitation to all who want to join our liberal community of faith.

Worship Team

Each Sunday, there will be a sign-up sheet on the table at the back of the sanctuary for sign up for the upcoming services. You can also send an e-mail to Carol Stiles and she will put you on the list for that task.

Thank You! Thank You!

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

For speaking at Sunday Services: Tom Aiello, Rev. George Bennett

For resolving telephone and internet issues: Doug Tanner

For providing music at services: Rhett Watson

For Meet & Greet: Dee Tait, Dawn Renner, Rosie Asbury,

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

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

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

For delivering Break Bread meals: Dee Tait, David Rodgers

For photos for newsletter: Kimberly Tanner

UU Treasurer's Report January 2017

Outstanding Debt	\$	0.00
Receipts		
Plate	\$	131.00
Pledge		1002.20
Rent		100.00
Share the Plate(Haven)		74.00
Total receipts	\$	1307.20
Disbursements		
Minister Expense	\$	700.00
Pest Control/Termite		45.00
Speaker's fees		0.00
Repairs/Maintenance		0.00
Newsletter		
Donations (Haven/LACC)		174.00
Supplies /RE		80.00
UUA Dues		440.25
Utilities		194.31
Advertising		0.00
Total disbursements	\$	1193.31
Net receipt	\$	113.89

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

Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Contact Dennis Bogyo or Luana Goodwin. You can e-mail the group at georgia@taoist.org

Sangha Tuesdays

6:00-7:30 PM at the church

The KTD Buddhist reading and meditation group meets on Tuesday evenings at the church. Everyone interested in Buddhist practice and meditation is welcome. Tea, 6:00 – 6:30; Buddhist shamata meditation, 6:30 – 7:00; Discussion of reading, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.

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/>

Recent messages from UUA

President Rev. Peter Morales:

“To our transgender youth: You are loved and welcome here.”

“I am dismayed that the Trump administration has rescinded the previous guidance issued jointly by the U.S. Education and Justice Departments to allow transgender students to use bathrooms based on their gender identity. It is now more important than ever that the Supreme Court rule in favor of transgender rights in the Gloucester County (VA) School Board case. The Unitarian Universalist Association has signed on to an amicus curiae brief in support of transgender rights in this case. The Unitarian Universalist community will fight for equal protection for transgender people at all levels of our society. To our transgender youth: You are loved and welcome here.” – Rev. Peter Morales, UUA President, Feb. 23, 2017, posted on UUA Facebook page.

UUA President Rev. Peter Morales following the rise of anti-Semitic acts nationwide:

"Over the past several months we have witnessed a deeply disturbing rise in anti-Semitism, including the vandalism of a Jewish cemetery, bomb threats targeting Jewish community centers, and an increase in hate speech. On behalf of the Unitarian Universalist Association, I strongly condemn these vile acts of hatred and bigotry...We must be vigilant and compassionate during these troubling times. Unitarian Universalists remain committed to the ongoing struggle to recognize and affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person." Rev. Peter Morales, UUA President, Feb. 22, 2017, posted on UUA Facebook page. [Read the full statement on our website.](#)

Children now enjoy meet-n-greet at their new small bright green picnic table, courtesy of Rosie and Frank Asbury.

Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles
Newsletter deadline is the 15th of the previous month!

If you prefer reading this newsletter on the website, e-mail the editor to remove your name from the mailing label list.

Worship Team Chair: Carol Stiles
Website Manager: Carol Stiles
e-Mail List: Contact Carol Stiles or Kimberly Tanner
Facebook: Kimberly Tanner
Local Publicity: Dee Tait

From *UU World* Media Roundup for 2/21/17, by Lauren Walleser

On February 15, Jeanette Vizguerra, a mother of four and a longtime leader in the immigrant and labor movements, entered sanctuary at First Unitarian Society of Denver, Colorado. Her decision came as she faced the uncertainty of deportation after her stay of removal from the country expired. For over a week, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents have raided immigrant communities in a dozen states. Vizguerra plans to remain in sanctuary at the church as she and her lawyer discuss next steps. ([CNN](#) – 2.16.17)

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.