

# The Flaming Chalice

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

Located at: 1951 East Park Avenue

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2342

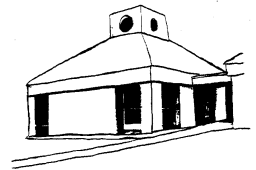
Valdosta, GA 31604

Minister: Rev. Fred Howard

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Carol Stiles - President	Doug Tanner – Vice President
Rosie Asbury –Treasurer	Susan Bailey -Director of R.E.
Kimberly Tanner – Director of Membership –	Jim Ingram –Director of Building & Grounds
Tom Aiello – Secretary	Carol Stiles – Newsletter Ed.

Please send email to [uuvaldosta@yahoo.com](mailto:uuvaldosta@yahoo.com) to contact us!

### What's going on... **May 2015**

Sun	May 3	9:30 AM 10:45 AM	UU board meeting in the RE wing Religious Education for children <b>Service - Rev. Fred Howard, “The Third Place”</b> Meet & Greet after the service Welcoming Congregation
F	May 8	6:30 PM	Pizza and a Movie
Sun	May 10	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service - Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, “The Qur'an: Themes and Understanding”</b> Meet & Greet after the service
M	May 11	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
F	May 15		Deadline March newsletter
Sun	May 17	9:00 AM 11:00 AM 12:15 PM	<b>Service at Serenity Christian Church, 1619 N. Lee Street</b> <b>Service at UU – Rev. Fred Howard, “Faith on the Frontier”</b> Shared Potluck at UU! Bring a dish to share!
F	May 22	6:30 PM	Games Night!
Sun	May 24	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Rev. George Bennett – “Heart Beat Journey”</b> Meet & Greet Coffee after the service
Sun	May 31	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – TBA</b> Meet & Greet Coffee after the service

### May 2015...

The Shared Service with Serenity Christian Church will be held on Sunday, May 17! See inside for more details. The next Welcoming Congregation session will be Sunday, May 3, after the service. 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, May 3 – Rev. Fred Howard, “The Third Place”**

The urban sociologist, Ray Oldenburg, contends that the spirit and psyche of human beings needs not only a place to call home and a place of work to achieve purpose, but also informal, public gathering spots in which to gain a sense of community. These so called “third places” are vital not only for the individual but also for the health and well-being of society itself. This morning I will explore Oldenburg’s intriguing thesis and its implications for the life of our church communities.

### **Sunday, May 10 – Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, “The Qur'an: Themes and Understanding”**

There may be no more misunderstood text in the Western world than the sacred text of Islam, the Qur'an. We will explore the Qur'an in basic terms of language, themes, sources, and its central significance and meaning to the 1.5 billion Muslims around the world. We will compare and contrast common themes found in the Bible and Qur'an like the story of Adam and Eve, gender roles, and resurrection. We will also call into question some of the efforts to misrepresent and demonize the Qur'an commonly expressed in Western media representations.

### **Sunday, May 17 – Shared Service with Serenity Christian Church! This event has been previously held in July, moved to May this year to allow more people to attend!**

8:30 AM - We will carpool the short distance from our church to Serenity Christian Church.

*Directions to Serenity Christian Church -- From our church, head towards the city on Park Ave. Turn left onto Lee St, heading towards downtown. (Lee Street is at the first traffic light past Ashley on Park, as you travel out of the city towards our church.) Serenity Church is about 1/3 mile down Lee, on the left at the corner of Lee and Moore. They have a large parking lot at the back of the church.*

9:00 - AM – Service at Serenity Christian church

10:30 AM - Members of the Serenity congregation will follow us back to our church to attend our service.

11:00AM - Service at UU Church

*(Note: Our service and RE will begin at 11:00 AM rather than 10:45 this day.) The Children’s RE kids have a special project planned that they will do along with Serenity children.*

12:15 PM – Fellowship Potluck Luncheon with Serenity at the UU Church.

**Sermon by Rev. Fred Howard, “Faith on the Frontier”** Today we know about virtually every corner of the planet, leading those of an adventurous bent to lament that there are no worlds left to explore. However, I’m of a completely different mindset. The frontiers are still there, frontiers where cultures, religions, and ethnicities clash. Frontiers that have been pushed back very little in the past 2000 years. And Jesus can function as a good guide for our journey. This morning I’ll elaborate using the story in Luke 17:11-19.

*Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will go to Peacemakers Camp. Peacemakers Camp is a week-long camp that teaches children peaceful ways of being with themselves and with the world. It includes children ages 8 to 13 at no charge regardless of race, economic or social status. The curriculum promotes ethical values common to all religions and denominations. Fred Howard has participated as a leader in this all-volunteer organization for many years.*

*The camp and other quarterly events works by:*

- *Bringing children of diverse backgrounds together in a nurturing environment*
- *Celebrating cultural diversity*
- *Practicing conflict resolution*

### **Sunday, May 24 – Rev. George Bennett – “Heart Beat Journey”**

Based on the writings of John Philip Newell. The historic religions of the world are given not to compete with each other but to complete each other.

### **Sunday, May 31 – TBA.**

Rev. Fred Howard is our part time minister. He is usually in the pulpit on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays. He may be contacted by email at [fredhoward3622@gmail.com](mailto:fredhoward3622@gmail.com). He is available for weddings and rites of passage ceremonies by prearrangement.



## MINISTERIAL MUUSINGS

Rev. Fred Howard, May 2015

It's hard to believe this is May! This church year has gone by so fast. Almost like it all happened out of time - like a transcendent experience. Or maybe time just seems to accelerate when you get old. I don't know about old age, since I've never been there before. (;-))

We've accomplished so much this year. Once again we hosted the Interfaith Pride Worship Service. Lowndes Area Crisis Care is now up and running, providing local citizens with emergency financial assistance when need arises. We hosted and advocated for the "Beyond Safe Schools" workshops, supporting efforts to prevent bullying, self harm and suicide in the school system. Our congregation provided a meal for the Habitat for Humanity Blitz build. Our care team continues to meet the physical and emotional needs of members and friends during times of crisis or changing circumstances. We continued our participation in the Break Bread Together ministry. Two of our regular small groups, the book club and movie night, have continued to include media concerned with issues of diversity. In February we hosted another wonderfully successful Rainbow Mixer, which provides the community a safe space for the celebration of love in the myriad ways it manifests itself. Quite notably, through Carol and Kimberly's leadership and efforts, this year we've completed the "Living the Welcoming Congregation" curriculum and are now positioned to become officially recognized as a welcoming congregation by the UUA. Kudos to Carol and Kimberly! And this year our congregation reported having 37 members to the UUA. Our attendance at worship just continues to grow. This is just a sampling of the things we've accomplished. I could go on and on as our members and friends are involved in so many worthy causes and ministries.

Looking ahead, one of my goals for next year is for us to be more visible in the community at large and to strengthen our ties to other congregations. I would especially like to see us begin some collaborative endeavors with Freedom Assembly, pastored by Rev. Bennie Calloway. Bennie and I have been in conversation about several initiatives, including the initiation of a small group with members from both our congregations. This group will initially focus on building stronger relationships and then it will begin work on some diversity projects. I'll be speaking about this more in the coming weeks. If this group piques your interest please let me know.

Though I'll be out of the pulpit this summer, the congregation will remain quite prominent in my heart

and spirit. I'll be constantly mindful of you all. The summer gives me a chance to spend some time in reflection and to explore new avenues of thought which will inform my messages I'll bring to the congregation next year. I'm so proud to be a part of this community which provides such a needed liberal religious presence in South Georgia!

Grace and Peace,  
Fred

## Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting of the membership of UU Valdosta was held on Sunday, April 19, after the service for the purpose of election of the Board of Trustees and approval of the proposed budget, for 2015-2016. Congratulations to the following individuals who were elected to serve on the UU board for next year!

President	Tom Aiello
Vice-President/Program Chair	Carol Stiles
Secretary	Tom Phillips
Religious Education Director	Sue Bailey
Treasurer	Rosie Asbury
Membership	Kimberly Tanner
Bldg & Grounds	Jim Ingram

The congregation also voted unanimously to apply for Welcoming Congregation status from the UUA! Carol Stiles and Kimberly Tanner will prepare the application early in the summer. According to the UUA website, it takes about a month for the application to be reviewed once submitted.

## 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. If you have questions about any of the areas, please see the person listed below.

You can also contact Carol Stiles or Doug Tanner with the task and date(s) and they will put you on the list for that task.

Carol Stiles - chair  
 Doug Tanner - lay leaders  
 Kimberly Tanner – visitor greeter  
 Cliff Adams  
 Rhett Watson - music  
 Dawn Renner – meet-n-greet

# Thank you, Thank you!

The following individuals sponsored the purchase of new hymnals in March! Some of these were in memory of individual friends and family members, while others were gifts to the church. We were able to purchase 10 regular hymnals and two large-print hymnals through their generosity! Thank you so much to Dee Tait, Diane Holliman, Melanie Hubbard, Lars Leader, Betty Derrick, Rosie Asbury, Tom Phillips, Carol Stiles, and Cliff and Mary Ellen Adams.

At the April board meeting, the UU board voted to designate three (otherwise undesignated) hymnals in memory of Virginia and John Branan, Janet Andersen, and Martha and Norman Horowitz – all active members and past leaders in the UU Church of Valdosta. More information will be included in future newsletters.

## 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.

## 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.

## ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

*Congratulations to....*

- ❖ A couple celebrating their 29<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a recent graduate, and a recent research poster award winner – among our members and friends!

*Keep in your thoughts...*

- ❖ Our members and friends who are dealing with health issues of their own or 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. Get in touch too if you or someone you know needs the services of this committee.

## UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News April 5, 2015

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Discussed plans for Shared Service with Serenity Christian
- voted to donate \$100 from the Accepting Difference Project funds to the Southold NY Universalist Church, which lost their historic church to fire earlier this spring. Carol sent a letter of support along with the donation check.
- Next Meeting: May 3, 9:30 a.m.

## Meet our new members!

Adam and Haley Logan



## Thank You! Thank You!

**For cleaning the church (both sides) before the congregational meeting:** Richard Schofill!

**For lay-leading services:** Betty Derrick, Tom Aiello, Doug Tanner

**For providing music at services:** Rhett Watson, Nephtali Santiago

**To everyone who brought food for the potluck after the congregational meeting!**

**For Meet & Greet:** Dee Tait, Tammy McDowell and Tanya Thomason.

**For assisting with RE:** Dawn Bodhi, Kimberly Tanner, Mary Ellen Adams, Seanese and Kim Richardson, Teagan Dunn (every Sunday!)

**For sweeping sidewalks:** Richard Schofill, who often makes a trip early Sunday a.m. to finish this task!

**For taking out trash and recycling:** Richard Schofill and Rhett Watson, Sue Bailey, Dee Tait and others.

**For delivering Break Bread meals:** David Rodgers

**For photos for the newsletter:** Kimberly Tanner

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

**For folding and mailing the newsletter:** Betty Derrick

## Pizza and a Movie

Friday, May 8, 6:30 p.m.

Our feature for May will be *Children of Heaven*. This movie is set in Iran, a culture only faintly understood by the Western world. The wonderful storytelling, combined with excellent directing, acting, and cinematography, may change that. This film gives us an intimate glimpse into the heart and soul of a poor family coping with some universal themes – the close ties of siblings who unite to deal with the seeming irrationalities of parents and the cruelties of life, the anguish of parents who try to act lovingly yet wrestle with difficult realities and the overwhelming trials created by poverty, and the paradoxes and inconsistencies of children, who sometimes speak and act cruelly to their peer, yet can also exhibit surprising capacity for kindness and empathy. This film demonstrates brilliantly how a work of art can be created by the simple drama of a boy losing his sister's shoes. In 1999 *Children of Heaven* was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film and won numerous awards that year at the Montreal World Film Festival. It gets 8.5 out of 10 stars by 221 critics at the Internet Movie Database. Please join us for this family friendly film. A \$5 contribution toward pizza and drinks is suggested. See you there! Contact Fred Howard.

## Potluck and Book Discussion

Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m.

The book for the next book discussion is *A Backpack, A Bear, and Eight Crates of Vodka* by Lev Golinkin. It's the true story of the author's Jewish family who emigrated from the former USSR to the U.S. in 1980.

We gather for potluck dinner at 6:30, and then begin the discussion. Contact Tom Aiello.

## Games Night

Friday, May 22, 6:30 p.m. – until ?

All are welcome! Bring a snack to share and your choice of beverages. If you have a game suitable for several to many players and people of all ages, bring it along. Contact: Susan Bailey

# Universalist Convocation 2015

## Buckman Bridge UU Church

The Universalist Convocation will be held May 29-31, 2015, Jacksonville, FL. Registration and more information:

<http://www.bbuuc.org/uc2015/>

Universalist Convocations gather Unitarian Universalists together to learn about, celebrate, and draw from the heritage of Universalist faith and experience. We explore how this heritage informs Unitarian Universalism today and helps to light its way toward the future. Speakers will include Rev. Andrea Greenwood and Rev. Mark Harris, co-authors of *An Introduction to the Unitarian and Universalist Traditions*, and Rev. Jack Ford, the 2014 recipient of the Clarence R. Skinner Award for the best sermon in the Florida District.

## Treasurer's Report for Mar., 2015

**Outstanding Debt** \$ 0.00

### Receipts

Plate \$ 58.00

Pledge 1495.00

Rent 100.00

Share the Plate (LACC) 83.00

**Total Receipts** \$ 1736.00

### Disbursements

Minister Expense \$ 1181.18

Pest Control/Termite 35.00

Speakers' Fees/Child Care 210.00

Repairs/Maintenance

Donations (LACC) 183.00

UUA Dues

Utilities 417.26

Advertising 0.00

Others 0.00

**Total disbursements** \$ 2026.44

**Net receipt** \$ - 290.44

### Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles, [uuvaldosta@yahoo.com](mailto:uuvaldosta@yahoo.com)

Worship Team Chair: Carol Stiles

December 15: Deadline for the November 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

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

**Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday, Beginners 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](mailto:georgia@taoist.org)

### 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.



New member ceremony, April 19<sup>th</sup>

*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.*

