



# 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](mailto:uuvaldosta@yahoo.com)

### What's going on... **May 2016**

Sun	May 1	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service - Rev. Fred Howard, "You Ain't Up There"</b> <i>Religious Education gathering, after the service</i>
Sun	May 8	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Rev. Bennie Calloway, "Divine Direction For Human Living"</b> Meet & Greet after the service
M	May 9	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
Sun	May 15	9:00 AM 11:00 AM	<b>Shared Service:</b> <b>Rev. Fred Howard speaks at Serenity Christian Church, 1619 S. Lee St.</b> <b>Rev. Floyd Rose speaks at UU</b> Potluck luncheon after the service at UU
Sun	May 22	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Rev. Jane Page, "White in the South: Can I Get a Witness?"</b> Meet & Greet after the service
Fri	May 27	6:30 PM	Games Night and Fire Pit!
Sun	May 29	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Dr. Elvan Aktas, "Interfaith Dialogue in Our Community."</b> Meet & Greet after the service

## May, 2016

Five Sundays in May! The Shared Service with Serenity Christian is on May 15, with a new twist this year, a pulpit exchange! We welcome Rev. Jane Page back on May 22 and Dr. Elvan Aktas as a new speaker at UU on May 29.

#### 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 1 – Rev. Fred Howard, “You Ain’t Up There”**

We’re all familiar with the metaphor of life as a journey. The metaphor works for many reasons. Like a journey life has a beginning and an end, in between we visit several places, and through those travels we learn certain things about ourselves. However, journey as we will, without a good guide we may never fully discover the person we are meant to be. Where should we look to find those good guides for seeking our true self? This morning I’ll share some thoughts on that numinous question.

### **Sunday, May 8 – Rev. Bennie Calloway, “Divine Direction For Human Living”**

We are often face many crossroads in life, more often than we may want to admit and we are often "certainly uncertain" when it comes to decision making or our life choices. I do believe in the old adage that says "follow your heart." It can be referred to as a gut feeling or what I like to call a "divine indicator" that enables you to move in the direction of your passion that will cause you to have a greater impact on global humanity. I want to discuss how to get in touch with our divine side to help us make quality decisions for our human living.

### **Sunday, May 15 – Shared Service with Serenity Christian Church**

**9:00 - AM – Service at Serenity Christian church, 1619 S. Lee Street. *New this year!*** Rev. Fred Howard will speak at Serenity Christian and Rev. Floyd Rose will speak at UU – a pulpit exchange!

#### **Rev. Fred Howard: “Oil Crises are Nothing New”**

We live in a time of extremes. Too much money in the pockets of too few people. Too many health problems caused by too much food. Too much waste by some in the face of too much scarcity suffered by others. How do we live a life of integrity and balance with these excesses all around us? The teaching of the “Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids” in Matthew 25: 1-13 may give us some guidance for these challenging times.

*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.*

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:**

#### **Speaker, Rev. Floyd Rose**

*(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.

*Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will go to Save Our Children for the Black History Museum that is housed at Serenity Christian Church, 1619 S. Lee St.*

### **Sunday, May 22 – Rev. Jane Page “White in the South: Can I Get a Witness?”**

Rev. Jane explores systemic racism of the past and the present. Her sermon includes two personal stories and a challenge for Unitarian Universalists in the struggle for racial equality.

**Sunday, May 29 – Dr. Elvan Aktas, “Interfaith Dialogue in Our Community.”** Dr. Aktas will speak about his efforts to promote interfaith dialogue among various religious groups in the southeast. See his biography later in this issue.

## 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.

## Welcome “New” Board

The Annual Congregational Meeting of the membership of UU Valdosta was held on Sunday, April 17 after the service. Congratulations to the following individuals who were re-elected to the UU Valdosta governing board:

- 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 approved the proposed budget for 2016-2017, with one change, to increase the amount allotted for child care in the nursery.

Carol Stiles gave a brief report on the funding provided by the Accepting Difference Project to local organizations over the past year. Lars Leader then made a motion to re-name the ADP to the “**Betty Derrick Accepting Difference Project Fund**” in Betty’s memory. The motion passed unanimously. Donations received in her memory have already been directed to the ADP fund.

## RE Gathering!

On Sunday, May 1, all families participating in Religious Education should plan to stay after the service for a brief planning and orientation for the Religious Education program. Any adults interested in helping with RE during the year are also encouraged to attend. Our RE program is growing with a diverse range of ages involved. Among other items, we need to ensure that Sue Bailey has the help she needs throughout the year. A *light lunch* will be provided and there will be activities for the younger children, while the adults are meeting.



## Rev. Jane Page returns!

As part of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary series, Rev. Jane Page returns to the pulpit on **Sunday, May 22!** She served as our part-time minister from 2006 to 2008. Prior to that Jane was on the faculty and Department Chair of Curriculum, Foundations, and Research for 12 years at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, which she calls home. She began Seminary at Meadville Lombard Theological School in 2001 as “modified residency student” while continuing to work as a faculty member. She retired from Georgia Southern in 2005 as Professor and Department Chair Emerita. She received her Master of Divinity from Meadville Lombard in 2006 and was called to serve the Statesboro Unitarian Universalist congregation half-time, where she has completed her 10<sup>th</sup> year. She is also in her second year as half-time minister of the UU congregation in Brunswick; spending about 10 days each month in that location.

## Dr. Elvan Aktas - May 29th

Elvan Aktas was born in Ankara, Turkey in 1972. He graduated from Bilkent University in 1995 with a B.S. degree in Business Administration, and from the University of Florida with a Ph.D.

From 2001 - 2007 Dr. Aktas was on the faculty at Florida Atlantic University’s College of Business Administration. In 2007, he joined the faculty of Langdale College of Business Administration at Valdosta State University, where he earned his tenure in 2009, was promoted to associate professor of finance in 2010, and just recently was promoted to full professor. He has been teaching corporate and investment finance classes at undergraduate and graduate levels. Dr. Aktas has been conducting research in Derivative Securities, US Treasury Securities, Financial Institutions, and International Financial Markets. He is married to Sevil Aktas and he has two sons, ages 15 and 17.

Elvan Aktas is also an advisor to several non-profit cultural organizations throughout the Southeast, for whom he volunteers in cultural and interfaith dialogue activities to promote mutual understanding, harmony and tolerance in our diverse community.



# Ministerial Musings

Rev Fred Howard

Are we a foot warmer congregation or a furnace congregation? If that question puzzles you, let me explain. In early 19th century New England, church buildings were unheated. Homes would have a fireplace or a wood stove, but church meetinghouses had no such comforts. And New England winters could be brutally cold. Men attending church were so bundled with wraps and scarves that they could barely walk. Women wore up to seven petticoats, many shawls and capes, and woolen gloves. Churches had family pews, separated from the rest of the congregation by three foot high wood dividers, and the more wealthy families had servants bring along their “foot warmers,” a contraption made of iron containing hot coals. Churches were hardly warm and inviting places during those long New England winters. Imagine what our attendance would be - even in the Deep South - if temperatures inside were no different than those outside!

By the 1820s, things began to change. Churches began installing stoves and furnaces that would keep the entire congregation warm during the service. Believe it or not, the Unitarian Church in Rowe, Massachusetts split over the decision as to whether or not to install this “new technology.” Some radical soul proposed that the church install a furnace so that foot warmers would no longer be necessary and all who attended would find the church warm and welcoming. A number of members were so upset that they withdrew in outrage, moved down the street and built another unheated church.

Of course, we already have a modern, centrally heated building, so why am I telling you this story? Because figuratively, it’s remarkably instructive. A foot warmer congregation only takes care of its own. Its members only bring enough resources to take care of their own attendance and their own immediate needs. In contrast, a furnace congregation has a vision that includes the larger community. It contributes enough time, talent, and resources to care for everyone in its midst, with a larger vision of what the church can be for the entire community. A furnace congregation has

enough “fuel” of time, energy, or money to be all it can be for its members as well as the wider world.

As our membership grows, I hope everyone will consider their level of commitment to this congregation to keep this momentum going. Our growth is utterly dependent on the generosity and commitment of each of you.

Grace and Peace,

Fred

(This story and illustration from the Rowe, Massachusetts congregation comes from a sermon by Rev. Scott Alexander, minister of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Vero Beach and is used with his blessing.)

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.

## ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

*Keep in your thoughts...*

- ❖ Our members and friends experiencing health concerns.

*Congratulations to:*

- ❖ Diane Holliman who has been promoted to Full Professor of Social Work at Valdosta State University!

## 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

April 3, 2016

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- New member ceremony is May 1, after the service we will have a meeting for families involved in RE, for planning and orientation.
- Next Meeting: Sunday, May 1, 9:30 a.m.

## Games Night

Friday, May 27, 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.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:valdostaoakencircle@gmail.com) or on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/oakencircle/>

## 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, Kimberly Tanner, and Carol Stiles.

## Thank You! Thank You!

**For serving on the Nominating Committee:** Dee Tait (chair), Dawn Renner, and Rhett Watson.

**For lay-leading services:** Doug Tanner, Cliff Adams, Stephanie Taylor, Lars Leader

**For speaking at Sunday Services:** Carol Stiles, Cristobal Serran-Pagan

**For providing music at services:** Rhett Watson and Nephthali Santiago

**For board members who agreed to stand for nomination for next year's board:** Tom Aiello, Carol Stiles, Tom Phillips, Kimberly Tanner, Sue Bailey, Rosie Asbury, Jim Ingram

**For Meet & Greet:** Tammy and Tanya McDowell, Dee Tait, Dawn Renner, Diane Holliman

**For assisting with RE and nursery:** Teagan Dunn, Rosie Asbury, Diane Holliman, Dawn Renner, Kimberly Tanner, 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, Lars Leader, and others.

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

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

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

## Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles

Worship Team Chair: Carol Stiles

May 15: Deadline for the June 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



On the left: Stephanie Taylor (layleader) and Nephtali Santiago (music) at the Flower Communion Service, April 17th, 2016. At right, members and friends come forward at the end of the Flower Communion service to choose a flower to take home with them. (Photos by Kimberly Tanner)



Sue Bailey and children during the Story for All Ages, on April 24th. (Photo by Kimberly Tanner)

### 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.*