



# The Flaming Chalice

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

Located at: 1951 East Park Avenue

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Tom Phillips – President	Carol Stiles - Vice-President /Program Chair
Doug Tanner –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.

### What's going on... **May 2018**

Sun	May 6	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Rev. Fred Howard, “What Happened to Virtue?”</b> Potluck after the service to welcome New Members!
Friday	May 11	7:00 PM	VAMA coffeehouse at First Christian Church
Sun	May 13	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Rev. George Bennett, “Every Bush Afire with God”</b> Meet & Greet after the service
M	May 14	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
Sat	May 19	7:00 PM	<b>Coffeehouse at UU!</b>
Sun	May 20	9:00 AM 11:00 AM	<b>Shared Service Sunday!</b> Service at Serenity Christian Church, 1619 N. Lee St. Service at UU and Religious Education for children Potluck dinner at UU following the service!
Sun	May 27	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children <b>Service – Carol Stiles, “Flower Communion”</b> Meet & Greet after the service

## May, 2018

Much going on this month! The annual Shared Service with Serenity Christian returns and there are two coffeehouses! (One at First Christian Church, one at UU – see inside for details!)

#### 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 6 – Rev. Fred Howard, “What Happened to Virtue?”**

Virtues are very different than values. Virtues are qualities of character. Things like compassion, thoughtfulness, gentleness, and honesty are virtues. Values, on the other hand, are qualities more relative to the person or culture that holds them. Gangs have values. Hitler had values. Values are relative to the individual or group that holds them and may or may not be reflections of admirable virtues. Today we hear very little about virtues – neither in UU circles nor in society in general. Why is that? Its actually a rather fascinating state of affairs. This morning I’ll share some of my research and thoughts on the topic.

**Today’s service will include a new member ceremony and will be followed by a potluck to welcome new members!**

### **Sunday, May 13 – Rev. George Bennett, “Every Bush Afire with God”**

The sermon is about the Moses experience of the burning bush and the ancient harmony in all of life.

### **Sunday, May 20 – Shared Service with Serenity Christian 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.*

**Schedule: 9:00 - AM – Service at Serenity Christian church, 1619 N. Lee Street, Speaker: Dr. Gerald Williams**

*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.

### **11:00 AM - Service at UU Church:**

**Speaker: Rev. Fred Howard, “Dealing with Difficult People – Jesus Style”**

This morning I would like to share some thoughts on the rather unpleasant subject of how to deal with difficult people. The incident recorded in the Gospel of John, chapter 8, traditionally referred to as the story of the woman caught in adultery, has much to teach us in this regard. This morning I will share some insights from the story that have been helpful to me in my search for ways to function better in interpersonal conflict.

*Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will go to VSU CampDISCOVERY Scholarships for children for summer camp. See Sue Bailey for more information.*

**12:15 PM – Fellowship Potluck Luncheon** with Serenity at the UU Church. *Please bring a dish to share, so that we may include those who might be attending for the first time today.*

### **Sunday, May 27 – Carol Stiles, “Flower Communion”**

Bring a flower from your yard and join us for the annual Flower Communion! Carol Stiles will provide a brief reflection about plants and their symbioses with other organisms. What can we learn from them? (We will have extra flowers, in case you do not have flowers available....)

## **Annual Congregational Meeting April 15, 2017**

Our Annual Congregational Meeting was held on April 30. The budget for 2018-2019 was approved. Welcome to our new board that will take office on July 1, for the 2018-2019 year!

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

**Thank these individuals for agreeing to serve on the board for next year!**

# Ministerial Musings

Rev Fred Howard

April 2018



Come Sunday dramatizes the story of Carlton Pearson's excommunication for espousing Universalist views. The movie premiered on Netflix in April. It is informative viewing for those seeking to better understand the Universalist strand of our faith tradition. The film could have also been made much more interesting by adding in this little tidbit - today Pearson preaches at one of the largest UU congregations in the world, All Souls Unitarian in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Regrettably, the movie leaves viewers hanging at the end and doesn't finish the story by revealing Pearson's redemption when he and his faithful remnant are taken in by the UU Tulsa congregation. As much as Hollywood loves a good redemption story, I find it odd that they leave Pearson's story truncated. Still, I highly recommend the movie if you get a chance to see it.

Pearson claims he received a revelation from God in 1996 as he was watching a newscast about the refugee crisis in Rwanda. Sitting in front of his big screen TV with a plate full of food, he watched the women and children with emaciated bodies and swollen bellies and no light or life in their eyes trying to make their way back home. Pearson assumed they were not Christian and were therefore bound for hell. And he was completely overwhelmed. In that moment, Pearson firmly believes it was the Spirit of God in his own heart that said to him, "We're not sucking those dear people in to hell. Can't you see they're already there- in the hell you have created for them and continue to create for yourselves and others all over the planet? We redeemed and reconciled all of humanity at Calvary."

This was a powerful message for someone who had received all his nurture in the born again, bible thumping, holy rolling, hell-fire and brimstone world of Pentecostal Christianity. Pearson took away from this epiphany an intense conviction that the whole world is already saved, to use the vernacular of Christendom, whether they are believing Christians, or Muslims, Jews, Buddhist,

atheists, gays, it simply doesn't matter in God's eyes. It was a powerful message. And a dangerous one, as Pearson would soon come to find, when he began to preach it from his pulpit.

I won't give any more spoilers because I certainly want you to see the movie if you can. But I urge you to pay particular attention to the irrefutable logic Pearson uses in his sermon to his congregation explaining his newfound theology. It caused a seismic shift in his world. Just not the one he envisioned.

I look forward to the conversations that will follow your viewing of this interesting and provocative film.

Fred

Rev. Fred Howard is our part-time minister. He can be contacted by email (preferable) at [fredhoward3622@gmail.com](mailto:fredhoward3622@gmail.com). 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.

## 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.

# Coffeehouse

## An interfaith event of the Valdosta Area Ministerial Association

On Friday evening, May 11, beginning at 7:00 pm, VAMA will hold a coffeehouse at First Christian Church fellowship hall, 1905 N. Patterson St., to celebrate the cultural and spiritual diversity of our community. The event will include music and food\* from the variety of cultures represented in our local churches, synagogue, and mosque.

Also, the following morning, from 9 am to noon there will be an accompanying educational event to give participants further opportunities to learn more about each other's respective cultures and religion. Further details on this opportunity will be shared at the coffeehouse.

Both events are free and open to members of the various houses of worship in the Valdosta Area Ministerial Association.

Come and be a part of this interesting and exciting experience! We look forward to seeing you there.

\*All food items will be well labeled so as to be sensitive to all cultural and dietary restrictions

## ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

*Keep in your thoughts...*

- ❖ Our members and friends experiencing health concerns

### Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles  
Newsletter deadline is the 20<sup>th</sup> 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

# UU Coffeehouse!

Yes, not one, but two coffeehouses this month! This one is at UU!  
Saturday, May 19, 7:00 – 9:30 PM

We have asked our musicians, Daniel Peveto and Stephen O'Kane, to play a few pieces for us. We will also have open mic for others who want to play music, sing, read poetry!

There will be a sign-up sheet for open mic at the church or contact Carol Stiles.

For it to be a coffeehouse, there needs to be coffee and some light finger foods and desserts! Please plan to bring a snack or dessert to share – there will also be a sign-up sheet for this and to help set-up and clean-up afterwards.

Join us for a night of talent and fun!

## Georgia Conflict Center

John Lash, Executive Director of the Georgia Conflict Center, was our guest speaker on Sunday, April 29. The Georgia Conflict Center is an Athens-based nonprofit that addresses violence through skill building and restorative approaches to conflict and harm. His own path started with a commitment to violence as a way of life, leading to his nearly 25 years of imprisonment. In prison he discovered the path of nonviolence and began to apply it to his own life and the prison community. After his release in 2009 he attended Kennesaw State University's M.S. in Conflict Management program, focusing his work and research on community based peace building and restorative justice. He has served as the director of GCC since 2013.

John also facilitated a workshop on Nonviolent Communication on Saturday, the day before the service at the church, with about 7 people attending. For more information on the Georgia Conflict Center: <https://www.gaconflict.org/>

## Field trip to Tiger Stripes!

Photos by Kimberly Tanner



Eight children and six adults, plus some other friends, visited Tiger Stripes near Quitman, and had a great time getting to know the animals. Thanks to Kimberly Tanner for organizing the trip!

Tiger Stripes is an Exotic Animal Sanctuary located near Quitman, GA – they need our support!

Online at:

<http://www.tigerstripes.org/>

## UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News

April 5, 2018, 6:00 p.m.

Among other items reported elsewhere in this newsletter, highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Discussed hiring a student pianist for next year.
- Approved the proposed budget for consideration at the annual congregational meeting.
- Next Meeting: TBA.

### 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.

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

The KTD Buddhist reading and meditation group is meeting on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 p.m.

**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](mailto:georgia@taoist.org)

### Oaken Circle CUUPS Chapter

Oaken Circle, a chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, meets each Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m., 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

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.



## Thank You! Thank You!

**For serving on the Nominating Committee:** Dee Tait, chair, Dawn Renner, Mary Ellen Adams  
**For organizing field trip to Tiger Stripes:** Kimberly Tanner, Carol Stiles  
**For organizing lunch for the Non-Violent Communication Workshop:** Carol Stiles  
**For lay-leading services:** Cliff Adams, Doug Tanner, Crystal Rapier  
**For speaking at Sunday Services:** Lars Leader, John Lash, Rev. George Bennett  
**For providing music at services:** Daniel Peveto, Stephen O'Kane, Doug Tanner (via technical services).  
**For Meet & Greet:** Dawn and Teagan, Mary Ellen Adams, Joyce Rapier, Dee Tait  
**For leading RE:** Sue Bailey  
**For assisting with RE and nursery:** Teagan Dunn, Kimberly Tanner, Doug Tanner  
**For taking out trash and recycling:** Dee Tait, Lawrence Rapier, Lars Leader, Sue Bailey, and others.  
**For delivering Break Bread meals:** David Rodgers  
**For photos for newsletter:** Kimberly Tanner  
**For leading the Caring Committee:** Dee Tait

## Thanks to Tom Aiello!

Tom A. is stepping down from the UU board after a few years as president and secretary. Thank you, Tom!

## UUA General Assembly, June 20-24, 2018 - Kansas City, MO

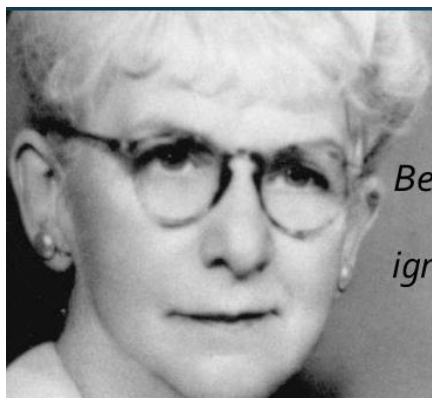
General Assembly is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through a democratic process.



*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.*



*Be a nuisance where it counts;  
Do your part to inform and stimulate  
the public to join your action.  
Be depressed, discouraged, and disappointed  
at failure and the disheartening effects of  
ignorance, greed, corruption and bad politics,  
but never give up.*

**– Marjory Stoneman Douglas**