

# The Flaming Chalice

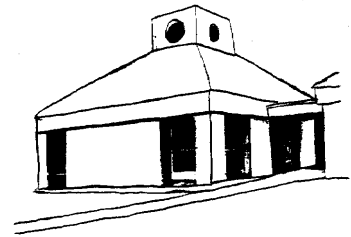
## Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

Located at: 1951 East Park Avenue  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2342  
Valdosta, GA 31604

Minister: Rev. Fred Howard  
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Please note that although individual personal contact information has been removed from this online newsletter, you can obtain more information on any event or ask questions by sending an e-mail to [uuvaldosta@yahoo.com](mailto:uuvaldosta@yahoo.com).

### What's going on... **October 2013**

W	Oct. 2	6:00 PM	Board Meeting in the RE wing at the church
Sun	Oct. 6	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – “A Fish out of Water,” Rev. Fred Howard Meet & Greet Coffee after the service Adult RE after Meet and Greet
F	Oct. 11	6:30 PM	Pizza and a Movie at the church
Sat	Oct. 12	9AM-12	Fall Clean-up at the church
Sun	Oct. 13	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – “Meditation as Spiritual Practice,” Dr. Michael Stoltzfus Meet & Greet Coffee after the service Adult RE after discussion
M	Oct. 14	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
T	Oct. 15		<b><i>Deadline for the October Newsletter</i></b>
Sat	Oct. 19	afternoon	RE Retreat for Children overnight at the church
Sun	Oct. 20	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – “Zen and the Art of Congregational Maintenance,” Rev. Fred Howard <i>Share the Plate Sunday</i> Meet & Greet after the service Adult RE after discussion
F	Oct. 25	6:30 PM	Games Night at the church
Sat	Oct. 26	9AM-12N	“All About Unitarian Universalism” Small Group Experience at the church
Sun	Oct. 27	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – “Hallowing Halloween,” Rev. Fred Howard Meet & Greet light lunch after the service Immigration as a Moral Issue Discussion after Meet and Greet
F	Nov. 1	6:30 PM	Book Discussion and Potluck at the church

**October** ... The new Adult RE is in full swing this month. Immigration discussions continue with a movie and Sunday session. If you are interested in learning more about UU and our community take advantage of several opportunities. Come when you can; we miss you when you are away.

If a ❖ appears on your mailing label for this edition, please contact the editor if you wish to continue to receive a mailed copy of this newsletter.

## Sunday Services

### Sunday, October 6 – Rev. Fred Howard “A Fish out of Water”

Many of us (some surveys of UUs nationwide indicate up to ninety percent) came to Unitarian Universalism from other faith traditions. From these past affiliations we carry a range of different emotions. Some have a sense of thankfulness to that religion or denomination and maybe even a faint nostalgia for our time in that faith and the relationships that were forged there. Others carry only sadness, regret for the experiences there, and perhaps even anger. Some of us have a mixture of these feelings. This morning I will explore this phenomenon and share some personal experiences from my own past in the Baptist tradition. Perhaps you can find yourself in this reflection and I hope it contributes in some way toward the process of helping us all make peace with our religious past.

### Sunday, October 13 – Dr. Michael Stoltzfus, “Meditation as Spiritual Practice”

While meditation has always been an important part of spiritual practice in many religious traditions, it may be more important today than ever before. Whatever spiritual aspirants faced 2,000 years ago is incomparable to the chaos of today’s media-saturated, cell-phone-using, computer-based fragmented mental state. We are encouraged to be online, in touch, and up-to-date. Calm, quiet awareness is simply not on the agenda. Meditation enters this chaos and tells us to do nothing, seek nothing, and just sit there in silence with your breath while thoughts and emotions arise, endure, and fade away. What is spiritual about this practice and how might it transform our lives?

### Sunday, October 20 – Rev. Fred Howard, “Zen and the Art of Congregational Maintenance”

We are such a diverse community. What is it that binds us together? Visitors from more traditional, creed based churches often wonder how a congregation with such varied beliefs and so many differing individual spiritual practices can ever hope to find unity. That we’ve managed, for the most part, to achieve this unity can seem rather mysterious, even to those of us that have been around awhile. Zen has some wisdom to offer us, I think, as we seek to understand the dynamics of our community. I will share some thoughts on this from my recent reread of Pirsig’s classic “Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance” that may be of use to us as we continue to stretch ourselves in incorporating newcomers, broadening our diversity, and strengthening the ties that bind.

*Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will go to the Habitat for Humanity.*

### Sunday, October 27 – Rev. Fred Howard, “Hallowing Halloween”

Of all the words used today in the context of religion, none conjures up more diverse images and reactions than the word “pagan.” Misunderstandings abound concerning Paganism, and many of these have roots that go back centuries, and in some cases, almost two millennia. However, for anyone who has read a bit in classical literature, or has traveled some and been exposed to indigenous people, the explosive associations that this word sometimes has seem rather ignorant and silly.

This is an opportune time for us to explore the fascinating roots of these misconceptions, because they are inextricably entwined to the ways that Halloween, All Souls Day, and Samhain, the religious holidays we are approaching, are related. This morning I will share some thoughts on this, where I am personally with the “tension” between Christianity and Paganism, and hopefully do my part to dispel some of the misconceptions around the diverse array of faith traditions lumped together as pagan – many of which predate all the world’s other religions.

## 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 weekly e-mail volunteer list or let Sue Bailey know if you can help on a given Sunday.

### Kids RE Retreat at the church

#### Saturday– Sunday, October 19-20

Kids and parents should plan to arrive at the church 5–5:30PM for supper at about 6 PM. Sue hopes to arrange a special tour for earlier in the afternoon so watch for more information about participation in this event. There’ll be games, activities, crafts, and fun for all throughout the evening. Plans are to “camp out” overnight in the church, share breakfast, and get ready for the service. Kids do not have to stay overnight if they can’t or don’t want to. Also, later arrivals are welcome for folks who can’t be there at 5ish. More details will follow. Contact Sue Bailey if you have questions.

### Adult Religious Education and Immigration as a Moral Issue Discussions:

- This fall Fred Howard, on most Sundays, will lead Adult RE sessions after the Sunday service. See a syllabus elsewhere in the newsletter. These sessions will be after Meet and Greet. On Sundays when there is a discussion, the discussion will be limited to about 10 minutes with the RE session beginning immediately afterwards. These sessions will end at 1 PM.
- There will be a continuation of our discussions on Immigration as a Moral Issue after a light lunch Meet and Greet on Sunday, October 27. Note also the movie planned for Movie Night in October.

### Intro to UUism

Again this year we will be offering an informal “Intro to UUism” class immediately after Meet and Greet most Sundays. These brief classes will consist of a brief overview of our faith tradition and an opportunity for newcomers to ask questions. The class will be facilitated by our Director of Membership, Kimberly Tanner and, when he is not occupied with Adult RE, our minister, Fred Howard.

For those interested in a more in depth exploration, there will be an “All About Unitarian Universalism” small group experience on Saturday morning, Oct. 26 also facilitated by Kimberly and Fred. See separate announcement for details.



## MINISTERIAL MUUSINGS

Rev. Fred Howard

October 2013

I'm now back in full swing after my summer hiatus, and once again the issue of homelessness is taking front and center priority in my thoughts. The reminders of the enormity of the problem have been coming fast and furious. At the steering committee of Lowndes Area Crisis Care (LACC), I heard heartbreaking tales of some of the desperate measures to which families are having to resort to meet their basic needs. At the partnership meeting of the South Georgia Partnership to End Homelessness (SGPEH), I learned from the case workers at our local schools that there are presently around 300 homeless children in our school system. Obviously, within this lopsided economy of ours where the chasm between the haves and the have nots widens more and more every day, more and more local families are falling into that chasm. Much of the funding from government programs to Lowndes Area Ministries to People (LAMP) and SGPEH that kept these programs going has been cut or abolished altogether and, though many local churches have stepped up their contributions, there are still overwhelming and escalating needs.

I heard it said at one of these recent meetings, "For most residents of Valdosta and Lowndes County the problem of homelessness simply doesn't exist." The person who made this statement is quite compassionate and knowledgeable about the scope of the problem and listed several reasons why so many people are oblivious to it. One reason is that we just don't see very many homeless people here like you would in Atlanta or some other large city. Most of those who were camping out under local bridges have been relocated, but that's only geography. It hasn't alleviated the problem, but only made it "out of sight, out of mind." It would appear that our city managers are more interested in making aesthetic changes than they are in tackling the real core of the problem. Though the problem is enormous and growing, there are reasons for us to be hopeful. I'm proud to report that our congregation has been involved and continues to make contributions to the ministries that are attempting to address these needs. We have made a significant pledge to LACC to help with its startup costs and monthly funding. Our congregation is one of the principal drivers of the annual Coffeehouse that benefits SGPEH. Many in our community contribute their time, talents, and money to Habitat for Humanity, that builds one or two new houses during the blitz build every year the week before Thanksgiving. These endeavors and others are making even more strides now and its really for two reasons, I think. First, because members of local congregations are getting more involved with the homeless directly, they are becoming more aware of the needs and therefore they're opening their hearts and wallets to a much greater extent. Second, it may seem counterintuitive, but since government money is no longer available for many of these programs, this has actually had a beneficial effect because it means that much of the red tape and regulations, the "strings" that government always imposes, are also gone. And so the coordinators and volunteers of these agencies and programs can now work unrestricted, and are able to act more quickly and decisively to address needs.

Thanks to everyone who supports our community because, directly or indirectly, when you support us, you are

also supporting these projects. If you would like to be involved more directly, please let me know. At LACC we will begin training of volunteers in just a week or so. This will be another great way for us to engage in the wider community and live out our values. All you need to have is a heart for the homeless and a couple of hours a week to offer.

In Faith and Community, Fred

Fred Howard is our part time minister. You may contact him by email (preferable) at [fredhoward3622@gmail.com](mailto:fredhoward3622@gmail.com) should you need to reach him. He is available for weddings and rites of passage ceremonies by prearrangement.

### All About Unitarian Universalism Small Group Experience at the church

**Saturday, October 26, 9 AM-12N lunch provided**

Kimberly Tanner and Fred Howard will be facilitating this experience. It is an opportunity for newcomers, as well as those who are considering becoming members, to learn more about our faith tradition, join in a dialogue on liberal faith and values, and ask questions. It's also a great opportunity to meet others who are new to our congregation and for all of us to get to know one another better through mutual sharing of our stories and conversations about where we are on our faith journey.

There will be an informational as well as a personal sharing component to this time together and our time will be centered around three general themes:

- 1) What brought you to Unitarian Universalism?
- 2) What is Unitarian Universalism?
- 3) Where do I want to go on my faith journey, and how might this church be a part of that journey?

If you are interested in being a part of this experience, please contact Kimberly or Fred after a service or via email or phone and let them know. The group will be limited to eight people, so commit early. Come and be a part of the fun as we learn together and build community!



Kathy Mittelman playing piano when CDs didn't work. She was visiting her daughter Gratia for Parent's weekend at VSU

#### 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 our President, Carol Stiles, 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.

## 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. Participants should supply their own pillow for sitting, although using a chair for those unable to sit on the floor is allowed. The group shares books and the liturgy.



### VALDOSTA SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE SUPPORT GROUP

This support group hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta is facilitated by Tamara Hardesty. The group meets at the church on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8 P.M. Contact via e-mail at [sosvaldosta@yahoo.com](mailto:sosvaldosta@yahoo.com) or connect online at **VALDOSTA SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE SUPPORT GROUP** or 'Like' us on **facebook** for online support, daily affirmations, links to resources, and information on upcoming meetings.

### Syllabus for Transcendentalism and Our Faith Identity

**Adult RE Class this fall:** Page references are to the book "The American Transcendentalists: Essential Writings by Lawrence Buell. Fred has ordered several copies that are in our church library for loan if you do not have a copy.

**Sept 29** Introduction to Transcendentalism and its Relation to Unitarianism. Read Introduction to "The American Transcendentalists" and Caroline Dall's Essay on p. 546-553.

**Oct 6** Emerson. Read Emerson's essay "Nature" p. 31-67 (at least read into and chapter 1), Emerson's Divinity School Address p. 129-145, and Lidian Emerson's piece "Transcendentalist Bible"

**Oct 13** Thoreau. Read First Days at Walden p. 433-438, Resistance to Civil Government (Civil Disobedience) 257 - 277 (at least first few pages), and Christianity and Hinduism compared p. 178-181.

**Oct 20** Margaret Fuller. Read Recollection of Mystical Experiences p. 158-161, The Great Lawsuit 301-320

**Nov 10** Theodore Parker. Read The Transient and Permanent in Christianity p. 162-174 and A Sermon of Merchants 244-250

**Nov 17** The Alcotts and Education Reform. Read A Controversial Experiment in Progressive Education Parts One and Two p. 281-296, Bronson Alcott's The Doctrine and Discipline of Human Culture 68-75, and Louisa May Alcott's A Transcendental Childhood 513-519

**Nov 24** Antislavery Movement. Read p. 347- 378

**Dec 8** Remembrances and Legacy of Transcendentalism. Read p. 523- 545, 554-561.

Communicating at UU Valdosta  
Newsletter Editor: Betty Derrick, October 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  
Facebook: Kimberly Tanner  
Local Publicity: Dee Tait

## Social Action Activities

### Break Bread Together

We deliver meals with the Break Bread Together program on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday (and 5<sup>th</sup> when there is one) of each month. Let Dee Tait know if you are interested in helping with this service.

**Volunteer Needed:** For now Betty Derrick will no longer be able to regularly help with the food delivery. We are seeking someone who would be willing to work with Dee Tait in seeing that this monthly service to which our church is committed continues. Please let Betty or Dee know you are available. Several volunteers makes it possible to adjust to changing personal schedules.

**UU Valdosta Caring Committee** Contact Dee Tait if you or someone you know needs the services of this committee.

### Interfaith Pride Service

Again this year UU Valdosta and our Accepting Difference Project hosted an interfaith pride service at the church on Sunday afternoon during South Georgia Pride Festival weekend in September. The church also had a booth at the festival. Carol Stiles organized the service. Singer-songwriter Kym Berry, who performed at the festival, spoke on "What is Love?" at the service. Rev. Dale Goff of New Hope Community Church, UU Minister Rev. Fred Howard, and Rev. Chris Michael of First Christian Church and President of the Valdosta Area Ministerial Association participated in the service. Collection from the service went to South Georgia Pride to assist with expenses for an Anti-Bullying Conference scheduled for 2014. Dee Tait coordinated a reception after the service hosted by UU Valdosta.



Kym Berry playing and singing during service.

### Notes from Kids' RE - Sue Bailey

This fall in RE we will make our way through our 7 UU Principles and explore how we can live these principles every day. We begin in the beginning with Principle 1 - We believe that every person is important. As always, there will be lots of stories, games, and crafts as we continue to learn and grow together. If you would like to volunteer to help with RE, please see Sue Bailey.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### CAROL STILES

Our series of conversations around "Immigration as a Moral Issue" continues this month, on October 27, after a light potluck lunch / meet-n-greet. When I spoke during the service on August 25, I gave an overview of what Unitarian Universalists are doing in regard to immigration issues around the country. National campaigns are focusing on efforts to keep families together and to treat undocumented persons with dignity and respect no matter the circumstances. These efforts are organized by the Standing on the Side of Love campaign, the UUA Office of Social Justice, and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, along with ministries in individual congregations, such as "No More Deaths," of the UU Church of Tucson (website resources below).

In our first conversation after that service, we reviewed the complexity of the current immigration system – it can take years for someone to obtain citizenship, even if he/she has a close relative or spouse who is already a citizen. Parents of young children who are U.S. citizens can be detained and deported, leaving the family separated for years at a time. Even survivors of torture who come to the U.S. seeking asylum are placed into the same detention facilities (some of them prisons) to await hearings, perhaps for months.

We looked at the difference between the use of the word "illegal" and "undocumented." To be "undocumented" is a civil offense, essentially like a speeding ticket, but these individuals can be detained for months or longer without a hearing. We looked at the patchwork of state laws which treat undocumented individuals very differently from state to state, in matters of higher education opportunity and other issues. Employers, especially those in the agricultural industries, are finding it difficult to hire employees. There is some consensus that something needs to be done for immigration reform – even from very different viewpoints. What that will turn out to be remains to be seen....

Watch for announcements in the Sunday bulletin and on our Yahoo e-mail list for specific upcoming conversation topics. If you have any questions, or wish to discuss, please feel free to contact me!

In community, Carol



Carol Stiles leading the immigration discussion in September.

### Immigration Resources:

"As people of faith, we must raise our voices for an immigration reform bill that promotes justice, compassion, and keeps families together."

From: Standing on the Side of Love, online at:

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

UUA Social Justice: <http://www.uua.org/immigration/>

UUSC: <http://www.uusc.org/civilliberties/torturesurvivors>

No More Deaths–UU Tucson: <http://www.nomoredeaths.org/>

Film: 9500 Liberty (see October Pizza and a Movie Night)

Book: *The Death of Josseline* by Margaret Regan (we have copies on loan from the UU Church of Orlando). The book discussion group at our church read this book a couple of years ago and recommends that you take time to read it. It is a true story of the situation on our border.

### ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

*Keep in your thoughts*

❖ Our members and friends experiencing health concerns...

### Thank You! Thank You!

**For layleading services:** Doug Tanner, Bill Webster, Betty Derrick

**For speaking at Sunday services:** Carol Stiles, Doug Tanner

**For Sunday service music:** Rhett Watson, Bill Webster, Gratia Middleman's mother who was visiting from Atlanta

**For Stories for All Ages:** Sue Bailey, Amy Wells, Fred Howard

**For helping with Children's RE:** Emma Bailey, Teagan Dunn, Mary Ellen Adams, and others who helped out

**For serving as Meet and Greet Hosts:** Doug Tanner, Rosie Asbury, Valerie Webster

**For providing pizza light lunch for immigration discussion Meet and Greet:** Carol Stiles

**For greeting visitors:** Kimberly Tanner, Betty Derrick

**For delivering Break Bread meals in September:** Dee Tait, Betty Derrick

**For cleaning the church last month:** The Buddhist Sangha

**For helping with trash and recycling collection:** Taoist Tai Chi group

**For a generous donation to help repair our roof:** Peter Epes of the Taoist Tai Chi group

**For caring for our plants at the church:** Eva Rucker of the Taoist Tai Chi group

**For sweeping the sidewalk:** Donald Wetherford, Doug Tanner

**For planning the Interfaith Pride Service in September:** Carol Stiles

**For helping with the reception hosted by our church after the South Georgia Pride service in October:** Dee Tait who coordinated the event, Lars Leader, Betty Derrick, Tommie Owens, Sue Bailey, Donald Wetherford, Doug and Kimberly Tanner

**For her work with the Caring Committee:** Dee Tait

**For helping with the immigration discussion light lunch on August 25:** Valerie Webster coordinated, Cliff and Mary Ellen Adams, Betty Derrick, Kimberly Tanner, Dee Tait, Sue Bailey, Rosie Asbury, Carol Stiles



## Let's Have Some Fun!!

### PIZZA AND A MOVIE

**Friday, October 11 6: 30 PM at the church**

Our movie this month is *9500 Liberty*. The movie documents the first time in U.S. history that an Arizona-style immigration law was actually implemented—and the surprising grassroots opposition that led to its repeal. It documents what happened in Prince William County, Virginia when a law requiring police to question people who appear to be undocumented immigrants is adopted. Many reconsider the law when the local economy is affected as workers leave the area. A “virtual resistance” using social media results in a confrontation between supporters of the legislation and concerned citizens. This movie was screened in part at UU General Assembly this past summer and was recommended by Ana Garcia Ashley of the Gamaliel Foundation at the Georgia UU Social Justice Conference. Roger Ebert gives this film a “Fascinating! Two thumbs up!” This movie is a continuation of our church’s discussions about immigration as a moral issue. Plan to attend and join in further discussion.

### Fire Pit and Games Night

**Friday, October 25 6:30PM - until at the church**

Often we play Mexican Train (dominoes), but we enjoy learning new games. If you have a game that is not limited to small numbers of players, please bring it along! Bring something to cook on the fire and then activities will move inside for more fun. Sue will let you know if it turns out to be too hot to restart the firepit this month. Contact: Susan Bailey

### Book Discussion and Potluck

**Friday, November 1 6:30 PM - At the church**

The next book will be “The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and The Collision of Two Cultures” by Anne Fadiman. This book is a winner of several awards including the National Book Critics Circle Award and comes highly recommended through several local people who have read the book. We actually hope to have several of these people as guests at our discussion. This is a non-fiction book which deals with issues between a small hospital in California and a Hmong refugee family over the treatment of an epileptic child. The book explores a clash between cultures: American medicine and the Hmong culture. We will have fellowship over a potluck supper at 6:30 PM and then begin our discussion about 7:30 PM. Books are available through the local library.

### UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News September 5, 2013

*(Note that some matters appear in articles and announcements elsewhere in this newsletter and are not repeated here. The full minutes are posted on the RE wing bulletin board after approval by the board.)*

The UU Board discussed:

- Scheduling of cleanup day and rearranging furniture in RE building
- Final plans for Interfaith Pride Service
- Involvement of UU in an event on Oct. 5 concerning upcoming state legislation that would allow guns on campus,

in churches and bars. Kathryn Grant will speak on this issue at the Sept. 29 service.

- By e-mail: Jim Ingram obtained a quote for \$1,100 to replace the top of the cupola of the sanctuary to repair leaks. Board approved the repair.

- The monthly activity schedule was confirmed as movie night on 2nd Friday, games night on 4th Friday, book discussion TBD by book group and coordinator.

- Next meeting, Wednesday, October 2, 6:00 p.m.

### UU Fall Cleanup!

**9:00 AM to noon, Saturday, October 12**

It’s time to make our beautiful building sparkle again, inside and out! Join us for a morning of work, followed by lunch. There may even be some music practice too, around lunch time, so we’re better prepared for those hymns on Sunday morning. Maybe we can even learn some new songs to expand our repertoire! Please join us – many hands make light work!

### Treasurer’s Report – Rosie Asbury August 31, 2013

Receipts	<u>August</u>	<u>July-August (2 mos.)</u>
Plate	\$124.00	\$ 179.83
Pledge	1385.00	2330.00
Rent	240.00	380.00
Share the Plate (Hungry at Home)		
	<u>114.67</u>	<u>289.40</u>
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$1863.67</b>	<b>\$ 3179.23</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>		
Speakers’ Fees	415.00	415.00
Minister Expense	0.00	350.00
Pest Control	35.00	70.00
Utilities	260.28	500.72
Advertising	350.00	350.00
UUA Dues	577.00	577.00
Donations (Hungry at Home)		
	<u>114.67</u>	<u>289.40</u>
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ 1751.95</b>	<b>\$ 2552.12</b>

**Holly Jones’ honey for sale to benefit the church!!!** Holly has some honey for sale for \$10 with all proceeds going to the UU church. Honey is located where our name tags are with a jar for the money.

## At the Church-in-the-Woods

**Taoist Tai Chi** – Monday and Thursday: Continuing Class, 5:30-7 PM; Beginner's Class, 7-8 PM. Contact Dennis Bogyo or Luana Goodwin. You can e-mail the group at [georgia@taoist.org](mailto:georgia@taoist.org)

**South Georgia Pride** – 3rd Tuesday each month, 7:30PM  
Contact Raynaé Jones [www.southgaipride.com](http://www.southgaipride.com)

**PFLAG Meeting** – 4th Tuesday each month, 7:00PM  
Contact: Doug Tanner The web page for PFLAG Valdosta:  
<http://community.pflag.org/Valdosta>

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## News from New Hope Christian Community Church:

Please note that New Hope Christian Community Church will join with St. Barnabas Episcopal church beginning on Oct. 6, becoming "Hope Community at St. Barnabas."

New Hope Christian Community Church has met on Sunday evenings in our sanctuary since 1997. A full letter from Rev. Dale Goff is posted on the bulletin board at the front of the church (above the name tags).

### Special Note to Our Friends at Hope Community at St. Barnabas

To Rev. Dale Goff and members of the New Hope congregation: We have valued our association with you over many years – thank you for sharing our space, and for all your contributions of love and peace to the greater Valdosta community. We wish you all the best in your new affiliation with St. Barnabas Episcopal Church.

In community,  
Carol Stiles, President,  
on behalf of the UU board and congregation

### UU Activities and Announcements

October 7-11-Southern UU Fall Institute (SUUFI) at The Mountain "The Sacred Side of Science" Five days and four nights of challenge and joy in the beauty of fall foliage in the NC mountains with Michael Dowd and Connie Barlow.

October 16-20-UUWomenspirit, The Mountain Retreat Center, Highlands, NC **Be a part of this exciting and welcoming women's spiritual retreat! In its 26th year.**

## At the Board Retreat at the church in September,

Carol Stiles shared this essay she had used some years ago in our newsletter. The author is Dr. Ralph N. Halverson who at least at that time was at The First Unitarian Church North Palm Beach, Florida. (Carol could not remember where she originally found this quote, but it is worth your consideration and we hope Dr. Halverson will not mind that we print it here.)

### Why Go to Church? (Words Toward an Answer)

1 *We go to church in expectancy, to find the missing part, to relate what we can never explain, to live with unanswerable questions.*

2 *We go to church because we are looking for something of life's fulfillment, a fleeting sense that we wish to make life whole, to find the point of our existence, what the great religions have called God, however we state it.*

3 *We go to church because we are looking for human fellowship, a community where we think of helping one another rather than exploiting one another.*

4 *We go to church seeking composure to face a world of confusion with its many problems, some of which may be solved, and the predicaments that may have resolutions but not solutions, and must be faced over and over in life, calling for courage and decision.*

5 *We go to church to find the strength to go the second mile, to offer forgiveness, to make amends, to find, the good within evil, the healing beyond hurt, to rise again after we have fallen.*

6 *We go to church suspicious of its obvious weaknesses, but still feeling the pull of many centuries of humans who have found faith and renewed their lives, who have moved beyond the hobbling traditions and renewed their minds with a vision of what life may be.*

7 *We go to church because we believe that there is the possibility of having a living faith, aware that we may not understand all that we believe, nor believe all that we understand, but even so, we may confront life with a ready mind and an open heart.*

8 *We go to church because we wish to find channels to help us express faith and hope and love.*

**Carol asked us to share why we go to church for discussion at the retreat. Why do you go to church? Why do you go to our church? Think about it.**

