



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

<http://uuvaldosta.net>

229-242-3714

e-mail: uuvaldosta@yahoo.com



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... **September 2016**

Sun	Sept. 4	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Dr. Tom Aiello, “The Ways Black Lives Mattered to Unitarian Universalists in the 1960s and the Ways They Matter Now” Meet & Greet after the service
Sun	Sept. 11	11:00 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. Fred Howard, “Ingathering and Water Communion Meet & Greet after the service
M	Sept. 12	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
F	Sept. 16	6:00 PM	Pizza and a Movie!
Sat	Sept. 17	12-7 PM	UU table at South Georgia Pride Festival, John Saunders Park
Sun	Sept. 18	10:45 AM 2:00 PM	Religious Education for children Service -- Rev. Fred Howard, “Our Prejudices About Prejudice” Meet & Greet after the service Interfaith Pride Service
Fri	Sept. 23	6:30 PM	Games Night!
Sun	Sept. 25	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Dr. Don Thieme, “Environmental Stewardship and Climate Change” Meet & Greet after the service

September, 2016...

Welcome back to Rev. Fred Howard, who will be speaking on the 2nd and 3rd Sunday of September! Sunday, September 11 is the annual water communion – come prepared to share briefly about a summer experience that was meaningful to you. And September is Pride Month in Valdosta! The Interfaith Pride Service is at 2:00 PM on Sunday, September 18th!

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, Sept. 4 – Dr. Tom Aiello, “The Ways Black Lives Mattered to Unitarian Universalists in the 1960s and the Ways They Matter Now”

Unitarians went through considerable hand-wringing and debate during the post-Civil Rights Act period of black activism in the 1960s, debating the merits of black arguments about equality claims and the role of white supremacy in black lives. In the wake of Black Lives Matter, we sometimes find ourselves doing it again. This talk will compare the two periods.

Tom Aiello is an associate professor of history at Valdosta State University and the current president of UU Valdosta.

Sunday, Sept. 11 - Rev. Fred Howard, “Ingathering and Water Communion

Today we will celebrate our annual ritual of water communion. For those who wish to participate, please bring a small jar or vial of water from that significant place of your summer journey, such as a lake, river, or ocean, and a few brief sentences about your experiences. If you didn't collect water, just bring some from the tap – no one will know ;-)). I will also share a short homily entitled “The Tale of the Journeying Stream.”

Sunday, Sept. 18 – Rev. Fred Howard, “Our Prejudices About Prejudice”

We generally think of prejudice as a bad thing. Stupid and evil people doing stupid and evil things. Actually, though prejudice has a bad name, it is an essential tool evolution has given us to help our survival. It is not a bad thing in itself, but unless we better understand it, it can be misused and cause people to do stupid and evil things. This morning I'll elaborate on this further and suggest some ways our natural tendencies can be more constructively channeled as we seek to create a better and more just world.

Share the Plate Sunday: *Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will go to the Valdosta Area Rotary Club Imagination Library Project. The project provides Dolly Parton's Imagination Library books each month to children under the age of five in Lowndes County. Starting with “The Little Engine That Could,” an age-appropriate book is mailed directly to each registered child each month, until the child's fifth birthday. There is no cost to the child's family. Early reading is important to all parts of the community because it leads to a lifetime of opportunity. Children who learn to read early in life become avid learners in school, skillful workers on the job, and informed citizens in life. The program is administered in Lowndes County by the Valdosta Rotary Foundation.*

Sunday, Sept. 25 – Dr. Don Thieme, “Environmental Stewardship and Climate Change”

More information to follow. Don Thieme is an assistant professor in the Department of Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences, Valdosta State University.

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Keep in your thoughts...

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

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.



Ministerial Musings

Rev Fred Howard

It's been a busy summer for Kathy and me. I took advantage of several opportunities to speak to our sister congregations around the area, work on my next book, and play with our grandkids. Thanks to you for giving me the time off to recharge. I'm now looking forward to re-engaging with our congregation!

Beginning Sunday, Sept. 18, I'll be starting the following video series during the second hour:

"The Jesus Fatwah: Loving Your (Muslim) Neighbor as Yourself"

Much of what passes as information about Islam is weed-like disinformation rooted in stereotype and watered by fear. In *The Jesus Fatwah*, Islamic and Christian scholars offer reliable information about what Muslims believe, how they live out their faith, and how we all can be about building relationships across the lines of faith. Featuring seventeen Islamic and Christian scholars, including:

Hans Küng (*Islam: Past, Present and Future*)

Brian McLaren (*Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?*)

Eboo Patel (*Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim*)

Stephen Prothero (*God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World--and Why Their Differences Matter*)

Feisal Abdul Rauf (*What's Right with Islam Is What's Right with America*)

Sunday, Sept 18 - Session 1: "Islam 101: In Which We Tell You Some of What You Need to Know About Islam."

Sunday, Oct. 2 - Session 2: "Misconceptions about Islam: In Which We Help You Adjust Your Malarky Filter."

Sunday, Oct. 16 - Session 3: "Islam in America: In Which We Introduce You to People Who Love America and Pray Towards Mecca."

Sunday, Nov. 6 - Session 4: "Making Connections, Part 1: In Which Non-Muslims Make A Case."

Sunday, Nov. 20 - Session 5: "Making Connections, Part 2: In Which Muslims Have Their Say."

The schedule for this interesting and provocative video series is posted above. Our group will meet during the second hour right after Meet and Greet, at 12:30 pm (time approximate)

and will last a maximum of one hour. There is a 20-25 minute video clip and then a guided conversation.

I hope to have some participants from the Muslim community join us for one or more of the last four sessions. Trinity Presbyterian Church is also planning to do a program on this video series and I'll also be co-facilitating that endeavor. Some members of their congregation may join in one or more of our sessions.

I hope you'll make plans to be a part of this initiative to promote interfaith dialogue.

Grace and Peace,

Fred

Promotional material on the course from:

<http://www.livingthequestions.com>

Pizza and a Movie

Friday, Sept. 16, 6:00 p.m.

The movie selected for September is "Mists of Avalon." This film captures the passion, glory and heartbreak of Camelot in its retelling of the story from a feminist perspective. The reign of King Arthur marked a turning point between the old ways and the new, between the end of the old matriarchal culture of the Druids and the new patriarchal world of the Christians. The movie presents a balanced view of both religious traditions as it tells a riveting story with great production value. A visual feast that earned several Emmy awards.

Please note the early start time at 6 pm. We'll start promptly then as the movie is three hours.

I could not find a rating for the movie but there is a bedroom scene, adult themes, and some brief nudity. A \$5 donation is suggested toward pizza and drinks. Hope to see you there!

-- 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.

South Georgia Pride Events

Workshop: "What is Transgender?" hosted by SGP, Thursday, September 15 at 6 PM - 7:30 PM, at VLPRA – Valdosta Lowndes Parks and Rec Building, 1901 N Forrest St, Valdosta, GA. Presenters will be Gabrielle Claiborne and Rev. Linda Herzer.

Pride Festival: Saturday, September 17, noon - 7 PM, John W Saunders Park, 1151 River St. We will have a UU table at the Pride Festival! Sign up to help out with set-up, be at the table during the festival or help take-down. We'll have a new tent!



Games Night

Friday, September 23, 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.

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.

Interfaith Pride Service

UU Church of Valdosta

Sunday, September 18th 2:00 p.m.

Our guest speakers, Rev. Linda Herzer and Gabrielle Claiborne will address *The Genesis Gender Dilemma*. This service will give us an opportunity to consider the possibility that God does *not* create *only* male and female, and that gender variant individuals are also part of God's good creation. It will give us insight into the challenges transgender people face integrating their gender identities and their faith journeys and help us all be better allies.

Rev. Linda Herzer and Gabrielle Claiborne are co-founders of Transformation JourneysWW.com, a transgender diversity training firm. They travel nationally speaking, preaching, leading workshops and providing corporate trainings.



Rev. Linda has pastored churches in New York and Georgia and worked as a public school library media specialist. She is an active LGBTQI ally and the author of *The Bible and the Transgender Experience:*

How Scripture Supports Gender Variance, coming this fall from Pilgrim Press.



Gabrielle Claiborne has been a church leader all her life and an out and active transgender woman since 2010. In 2015 the Atlanta Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce nominated her

as Business Woman of the Year in recognition of the success of her transgender owned and operated businesses and her contributions to the community. Gabrielle serves on the Executive Board of Atlanta Pride and was honored as Atlanta's Best Trans Activist 2015.

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.

UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News

August 7, 2016

Highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- Agreed to purchase a new tent/canopy for events like the Pride Festival
- Discussed Parents' Meeting (to be scheduled early fall) to plan children's activities.
- Next Meeting: Sunday, Sept. 11, 9:30 a.m.

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

Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. **New Beginner Class Starting Tuesday September 6, 2016, Tuesday and Friday mornings 10:30 - 11:30 at the UU church.** The continuing Tai Chi class will continue to meet in the evenings, Monday and Thursday. 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/>

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 making the arrangements to install new carpet:

Jim Ingram

For putting the sanctuary together after the carpet install: Kimberly and Doug Tanner and Lars Leader (and to all those who helped move items out after the service the Sunday before....)

For lay-leading services: Doug Tanner, Dee Tait, Carol Stiles, Tom Aiello

For speaking at Sunday Services: Dr. Patricia Marks, Luana Goodwin and Dennis Bogyo, Dr. Elvan Aktas, Dr. Cristobal Serran-Pagan

For providing music at services: Rhett Watson, Nephthali Santiago, Daniel Peveto

For Meet & Greet: Doug Tanner, Dawn Renner, Kimberly Tanner, Lawrence Rapier, Mary Ellen Adams

For assisting with RE and nursery: Teagan Dunn

For covering RE while Miss Sue was on vacation:

Dawn Renner, Dorothy Ellis, Diane Holliman

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

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

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.



Recent high school grads, front, L-R, Patrick Richardson, Teagan Dunn, and Emmilee Bailey (with one of the Ellis triplets) participate in the Bridging Ceremony held on August 7. Vice-President Carol Stiles is behind the podium. (Photo by Doug Tanner)

During the Bridging Ceremony, the parents of Patrick, Teagan, and Emmilee read a blessing by Jean M. Olson titled, "Go Boldly:"

May you be brave enough to expose your aching woundedness and reveal your vulnerability.

May you speak your deepest truths, knowing that they will change as you do.

May you sing the music within you, composing your own melody, playing your song with all your heart.

May you draw, paint, sculpt, and sew, showing the world your vision.

May you write letters, poetry, biography, slogans, graffiti, the great novel, laying bare your words to love and hate.

May you love even though your heart breaks again and again.

And until the end of your days, may your life be filled with possibilities and courage.

Each graduate was given a copy of "becoming: A Spiritual Guide for Navigating Adulthood" (edited by Kayla Parker, published by the Unitarian Universalist Association). The congregation celebrated with cake and refreshments after the service. We wish you all the best along your future path!

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.