



UU Update

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

• July 2010 • Volume 54 • Issue 7 •

Sunday Services are at 10:00am

July 4th

Shooting the Sun: The World According to P.T. Barnum

Service Leader: David Templeton
Worship Associate: Erin Howseman

This Independence Day weekend, we take an entertaining look at one of America's most inspiring, independent, and controversial historical figures, Phineas Taylor Barnum, whose 200th Birthday is July 5. Showman, publisher, politician, promoter, philanthropist, and avowed Universalist, P.T. Barnum is best-known for inventing the three-ring circus, for harnessing the power of hyperbole ("The Greatest Show on Earth!"), and for suggesting that there is a sucker born every minute (guess what? He never said that!). With a unique philosophy of personal growth and spiritual development—inspired by his own evolution from deeply-prejudiced slave owner to leading abolitionist—P.T. Barnum truly saw the shining soul in all human beings, and felt it was his divine office to provide everyone he encountered with one short moment of happiness . . . even if he then charged them a nickel for it. Step right up for this truly unique Sunday service, followed by a celebration with birthday cake (celebrating the birth of P.T. Barnum and the United States of America!).

July 11th

Wizards, Elves, Dark Lords, Vampires, Wraiths, and Hobbits:

The Spirituality of Fantasy Literature
Service Leader: Scott Miller
Worship Associate: Erin Howseman

Fantasy literature and film has power to move audiences spectacularly, as exemplified by the rabid communities of "Twi-hards," "Ringers," and would-be Jedis and gate-crashers at Hogwarts. *The Lord of the Rings*, the Twilight series, the Harry Potter books, and other modern works of fantasy, this service will show, have powerful spiritual dimensions—indeed *are* spiritual works, sharing a great deal of thematic commonalities with scripture. To a spiritually starved culture and world, this literature offers food for growth that (so long as the literature is read critically) can be as rich and healthful as it is satisfying and powerful.

July 18th

A Cure for the Summertime Blues?

Service Leader: Andrew Karlson
Worship Associate: Scott Miller

For many, summer is the season of plenty: barbecues, vacations, parties, and adventures. Is it right, though, to be at play when the world is full of evil, pain, and suffering? And what about those of us for whom suffering is a companion that doesn't take a summer vacation? Guest preacher Andy Karlson will explore the question of how we can seek balance between our experience of suffering and our capacity for joy.

July 25th

Rock & Roll Poets & Poetry

Service Leader: Andy Levine
Worship Associate: Heather Lawton

Andy Levine, who came of age in late 1960's, will lead us in a celebration of the music that influenced and shaped his life. With a little help from our friends The Beatles, Bob Dylan, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young and some of our own local talent, Andy will explore with us the protest songs, social action songs, love songs and more. Come on people now, smile on your brother...

August 1st

Are Our Values and Ethical Models in Conflict?

Service Leader: Jeffrey Melcher
Worship Associate: Lucia Milburn

Ethical models often bring cherished values into conflict. In our UU principles we are challenged to hold several values in creative conflict: a strong tradition of upholding personal rights and a deep commitment to communitarian ethics. How does this play out in our congregations and social justice work? Come, engage questions, and leave inspired.

Yeah, I'm Talkin to You!



I just got off the phone with our president, Andrew Hidas. I'm leaving for vacation in a few days, and so the first thing he said when I called was, "Oh, hey, I've been wanting to check in with you before you go."

"Yes, it's the very reason I'm calling," I said. "It does seem that we ought to check in a little more frequently. Why, I've just given Janis my column for this month's UU Update, only to now discover that you have written about very same thing, only so much better!" In fact, Andrew *had* said he would write on this topic in July when we last met, but my brain turned that memory into "Chris - you should write on this topic in July." Doh!

"We probably could have talked about it again," he said. Yep. Instead, with a sense of ironic glee, let me add a different, last minute take on communication as spiritual practice, and urge you to read Andrew's delightful piece on email on the next page.

Most of us have learned our lessons quite personally and painfully about communication. We lost the friend and thus learned the need for diplomacy, or lost the job and learned not to say everything we think. We mumbled under our breath until we acquired the bravery to give and receive praise or criticism. We have all felt the sting of unkind words, and the bitterness of saying them.

Our human religious heritage has collected much of the shared wisdom from these universal lessons. Right speech, the Buddha taught, is one of the cornerstones of an enlightened life of wisdom and compassion. It generally involves not lying, gossiping, slandering, or being abusive, and trying to avoid unwholesome topics or mindless chatter. The book of Proverbs from the Hebrew Bible is full of similar advice about watching what and how you say things (it teaches good table manners, too). Jesus said "It is not what goes into the mouth that makes a person unclean, it is what comes out." Refraining from speech in a retreat is a global practice that clarifies the power of speech.

In our day many have found the techniques of Compassionate Communication, with its emphasis on uncovering the human needs underneath all conflict, to be a spiritually transforming practice. Our organizing work with the North Bay Sponsoring Committee is built on the principle of strong relationships and open communication, and I think our religion is similarly grounded. Each of our Principles, closely observed, is a call to ever-greater relationship with each other and all beings, which involves communication at a fundamental level. Hey, even atoms communicate.

Across time and tradition, that form of communication is lifted up as sacred that opens us to ourselves,

each other, and to the call of the bigger, better self we share. It makes room for the power of emotion and the clarity of reason. It is always committed to truth. It mostly involves curiosity, genuine listening and attending to feelings. It requires uncovering and centering in our needs and commonalities. It demands everyone freely speaking one's truth and commitments, while also granting respect and seeking harmony. It knows when to shut up. And whenever possible, it takes place face-to-face or at least side-to-side. It invites real friendship around the fire, at the table, in a circle, on the dance floor or playground, in a hammock, and in the pews.

So, where does email fit in? I do not know. I do know I frustrate many of you with my terribly slow responses, and I apologize for that. Thus, hoping to strengthen our relationships, let me offer my own new email strategies for the upcoming year. Please hold me to them.

I am only going to open my inbox on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, but I really will respond to every email on those days. If you need a response before one of those days, call me. My response may be only "I will read this more closely and get back to you" or "Please call me about this" but you will know that I have seen and read your email. I will release my inner middle-school teacher and respond briefly with the minimum amount of language necessary. Please don't be offended. If I feel I need to respond in greater length, I'll set the example and call you.

Please know that none of you calls me too much, some not enough, and you don't ever need to apologize for calling me on my cell-phone (except Monday, my Sabbath). I may not answer, but I will get back to you soon. Peek your head into my office during the week. If the door is open, so is my ear. (If the door is closed and the music is really loud, I'm writing my last minute newsletter article, and you should leave me be!). If you want a more focused conversation, make an appointment, or invite me to coffee. I keep plenty of free hours for human contact - it's my job and my joy.

I hope you have a lovely and relaxing July, filled with the blessings of sacred communication, while lacking in committee meetings. My family and I are off on an old-fashioned summer driving vacation across this great land, and we'll be away for all of July. I'll check my email a few times (no, really) and I will be available by phone if there is an emergency. Gail Alford and the caring committee stand ready, too, and the office is open to field your questions. I look forward to seeing you and speaking to you - in person - when I return.

Blessings, Rev. Chris

You Talkin' To Me?

Sometimes I wonder how I spent my life B.E. (before email). Just over 10 years ago, I didn't even have email at work—it seems I communicated with clients via such arcane methods as telephone, fax, the postal service, courier, and even an occasional visit and presentation. Today, the phone still rings but I am in no danger of developing phone ear, the fax machine is probably a waste of money, and I can and do go a year and longer in between seeing clients face to face.

But email? Oh no no no, surely my business, if not my very life, would cease to function without email at my daily beck and call (or without me at its beck and call, to be more accurate...).

Like every other bustling organization, UUCSR has come to rely on email as a primary communications tool to keep the ten-thousand-and-one matters we contend with on any given day moving along. It is just the handiest dang tool, isn't it? Perfect for insomniacs, night owls, the up-with-dawners, the schedule-challenged, the home-bound, and for groups who can't possibly coordinate a meeting to discuss every item that pops up requiring quick attention.

I love the opportunity for connection that email affords. It's a great tool for reaching out to express that passing fond thought you're having about someone, or inspiration you're wanting to share, or even business item you can actually move along even though it's 2:30 a.m. on Saturday morning. But I have come to grow a bit suspicious of email as well—or at least more aware of its shadow.

It's taken me years to understand that email is often a very poor and even counter-productive tool for expressing frustration, displeasure, disagreement. It is almost always a lousy format for an argument—most especially among intelligent and articulate correspondents whose knives of wit, analysis and self-defense are sharpened to an exceedingly fine point.

This matter has particular relevance, it seems to me, in the context of a spiritual community that is founded and sustained on a set of principles that make us accountable in an intentional, idealized way. We are in covenant with each other here to be, among other things, kind. Many other qualities hitchhike along with that basic commitment to kindness—trust, acceptance, forgiveness, just for starters.

When disagreement and conflict arise (as they do in every relationship and community), being guided by a commitment to the qualities mentioned above is the difference-maker. And I would submit that the very

strength and allure of email—its convenience and immediacy—work against that commitment when two or more parties disagree or perhaps just don't get what another party is expressing.

I don't think it is impossible to have a civil and kind dialogue via email when there is disagreement or a troubled understanding. But it can be difficult. Without a tenacious clinging to protocols of kindness and listening, the human tendency toward defensiveness and counterattack, undercutting and faulty assumptions, can overcome our best intentions. And off we go into seemingly interminable, contentious email threads that leave us feeling none the wiser or more understood, wondering, "Just how did we get here, anyway?"

One way we "get there" is by missing the moderating, contextual influence of each other's physical presence. Our expressions, our voices, the light in our eyes—these are all unavailable to each other when we're pecking away at a keyboard, nursing a frustration or bruised feeling and objectifying the person or event that we project as the source of our woe.

It's so much harder for me to be and remain mad at you (or that contrary budget solution you're trying to propagate) when you are there breathing and blinking and warm in the room with me. As I look into your eyes, you are no longer the handy abstraction that I can blast away at while scoring points off a grievance checklist I keep next to my laptop.

There in a room, we are a community of two or three or 13, governed and restrained more readily by the protocols we have established by our faith, our history, our commitment for being together. And it is the "being together" in a spirit of good faith and trust that is so much more difficult when we are soloing with email.

So might I propose an approach here that if we're having serious issues that raise our emotional temperature, we use email only after taking plentiful deep breaths, taking great pains to be polite, and probably waiting till at least the next day (and a last edit) to hit the "Send" button? Or alternatively (and most often preferably, I think), we instead seek out those we are in dialogue with, or a trusted confidant or congregational leader, and raise the issue with them face-to-face?

Using this basic guideline, the hostile "You talkin' ta me?" taunt that Robert DeNiro made famous in the movies morphs into an opportunity for just the kind of taunt-free and trusting exchange that reflects the best qualities of ourselves and this community we love.

— Andrew Hidas
President, Board of Trustees

Treasurer's Report

Wow, I just love it when a plan comes together. Especially one that takes, oh, say, 5 or 6 months to develop.. maybe 100+ (wo)man hours.. at least several dozen revisions and updates.. and requires a lot of head-scratching, hair-pulling and even soul-searching before finally falling into place. But, leave it up to your trusty UU bean-counters, cause guess what - we've completed our 2010-11 budget!!

It's a balanced budget that your Board of Directors is quite pleased with, as it includes several key elements: our full UUCSR staff, including salaries and benefits, remains intact and without reductions; we have pledged to pay our full share of PCD/UUA dues; we nearly doubled our building repair & maintenance budget; and we have pledged to start a Minister's Sabbatical fund. (This is in anticipation of Chris' sabbatical, which will happen sometime over the next few years. We will need to have enough funds on hand to cover his being away for 6-7 months).

In working to balance our budget, these 4 key elements, (plus many others), were bounced around, put on the table, taken off, on again, off again, kicked around, discussed and debated in full detail. But fortunately, right near the end, some additional pledge income came in from our canvass folks, and suddenly, the numbers were able to fall into place. A little last minute tweaking here and there by our numbers goddess Lillian Reid, and - viola.

And so, at the June 13th Congregational meeting, the budget was presented, discussed, voted on, and passed - followed by a hearty round of applause! It represents MANY long months of hard work, time and energy by many people. The Accounting Committee, Fine Stew, and your Board of Directors is immensely pleased that we have not only increased our annual pledges by around 8.5% in this ever-so-changing and scary economy - but we have (to date) collected \$75,000 for our newly-created Emergency Reserve fund! This fund is to be used solely for unbudgeted, unexpected, unplanned for expenses, and will go a long way in relieving stress on the day-to-day operating budget. You may recall that 3 years ago, we had a

VERY successful canvass year - and the cash flow was the best that it had been in MANY a UU-year. Which was fortunate... considering the next year brought our (ever so infamous) PTP. (That was, in case you forgot, our "Property Tax Problem"). So thank goodness for that prior year tremendous cash flow, because it saved the day. And then the following year (which was this past [fiscal] year) - we had our now famous PI. (ie, "Plumbing Issue"). That carry-over tremendous cash flow did help - however our bottom line (including reserve money) showed the effect. And to bring you to the present year: THUS the need for our Emergency Reserve fund! I would hate to think of our overall financial status now, were we not to have had that tremendous cash flow year 3 years ago. Should an unplanned for, costly event occur again this year, thanks to our Emergency Reserve Fund - we can rest assured that we will be able to handle it while keeping our operating budget (and therefore cash flow) intact.

Aside from our newly-enacted budget - the financial affairs of your beloved congregation are actually looking pretty good, despite our tough year. In looking over the year-to-date reports, it is clear that even through April and May - committees have kept their expenses down, and the bottom line is not as dire as we expected. (Thanks also to many new members during the year, who brought in additional pledge income that was not in the budget). We had originally put off paying the 3rd and 4th quarter PCD/UUA dues, (due to our "unbalanced" budget last year), waiting to see how the cash flow was looking. But, I am pleased to say that we made the 3rd quarter payment in June, and expect to be able to pay the 4th quarter by mid-July. (We will double-check the figures after the June 30 year-end, to make sure things look ok for our anticipated slow-down of summer).

So, as our fiscal year winds down, we are now encouraged and confident about our new year ahead. What an amazing bunch we are; we can handle a challenge, that's for sure! So hat's off to everyone who had a hand in bringing our new budget to healthy fruition. We feel very good about what we've accomplished.

Cont. on Page 6

Children's and Youth Religious Education (RE)

I just returned from a weekend in Ventura (my former home) and am struck by how much my time there was colored by the past, and how much the drive home was consumed by making plans for the future. I feel like I missed out on something rich by not being able to be present in the moment at hand. As I strive for a more centered life, I am reminded of this Zen story:

One day, while walking through the wilderness, a man encountered a vicious tiger. He ran for his life, and the tiger gave chase.

The man came to the edge of a cliff, and the tiger was almost upon him. Having no choice, he held on to a vine with both hands and climbed down.

Halfway down the cliff, the man looked up and saw the tiger at the top, baring its fangs. He looked down and saw another tiger at the bottom, waiting for his arrival and roaring at him. He was caught between the two.

Two rats, one white and one black, showed up on the vine above him. As if he didn't have enough to worry about, they started gnawing on the vine.

He knew that as the rats kept gnawing, they would reach a point when the vine would no longer be able to support his weight. It would break and he would fall. He tried to shoo the rats away, but they kept com-

ing back.

At that moment, he noticed a strawberry growing on the face of the cliff, not far away from him. It looked plump and ripe. Holding onto the vine with one hand and reaching out with the other, he plucked it.

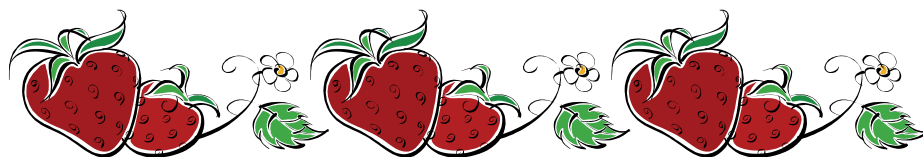
With a tiger above, another below, and two rats continuing to gnaw on his vine, the man tasted the strawberry and found it absolutely delicious.

Now this is a man living in the moment! Despite his perilous situation, he chose not to let potential dangers paralyze him and was able to seize the moment and savor it. The past can seem as horrific as a tiger in pursuit, and the future can seem as daunting as a fall from a high cliff. But most likely our life's path is much less drastic and dangerous than this. It is a matter of perspective and focus.

The Buddha said, "The Secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, not to worry about the future, nor to anticipate troubles, but to live the present moment wisely and earnestly". *Ferris Bueller* said, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it." I say, "Go for that strawberry!" And watch your children at play - they know how to do this.

What's Happening In RE This Month:

7-4-10	Theme: Perseverance, Overcoming adversity <i>Wilma Unlimited</i> by Kathleen Krull--- Activity: Game: Frozen Shoes. Teachers: Deborah Mason, Susan Dickey
7-11-10	Art, Inspiration <i>The Starry</i> by Neil Waldman— Activity: Painting in the style of Van Gogh- in bright colors & swirls
7-18-10	Theme: Mystery, Buddhism <i>The Blind Man and the Elephant</i> - Retold by Sophia Fahs -Children will act
7-25-10	Theme: Unitarian Universalist Tradition <i>Circles of Light</i> by Janeen K. Grohsmeyer Activity: "Magazine Mosaic" Chalice art. Teacher: Deborah Mason



Treasurer's Report Cont.

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(Although, may those in attendance at that one meeting please excuse me, when in near exasperation, I off-handedly stated - "but, you know, it's ONLY a budget!") (Really, that's not quite what I meant to say!!) My thanks especially to Lillian Reid and Andrew Hidas, who carried it through to the end, with revision after revision, then even more tweaking, followed by another revision or two. We done good, folks. And also - hats off

to all the committees who have kept their expenses down during this past year, so that our bottom line doesn't look as bleak as we nay-sayers said it might. So here's to a brand new fiscal year - and may we continue to be blessed with many fiscally responsible, motivated and highly efficient bean-counters to keep us all in check.

Respectfully Submitted,
Denese Pender

All Congregation Retreat!!



It's time to register for the All-Congregation Retreat! It will take place at beautiful camp Valley of the Moon in Glen Ellen from July 16-18. See the full-page registration form in this Newsletter - and note that there are TWO forms: one for a regular (weekend) registration, and one to register for

DAY USE ONLY. On the Sundays from June 13th through July 4th, a table will be set up in the social hall for sign-ups. You may fill out this form and bring it to any of these services, or else mail it to Pat Wilson at 465 Boas Dr, Santa Rosa, 95409-3616. Or visit the Retreat table on any of these Sundays, where forms will be available. If you have any questions about DAY USE - please stop by the table and we'll be more than happy to answer your questions.

A Few Pastel Colored Words About Monopoly

I don't know about you, but when growing up, my favorite part of playing the board game Monopoly was handling the little stacks of fake, brightly-colored money. That and sliding the little pewter race-car around the board. The tiny little iron was cool too. But that make-believe money, in the various pastel colors, there was just something intoxicating about it. When I was old enough to handle real money, I sometimes wondered why it couldn't be printed in colors other than green. And of course, I soon realized that real money was far more limited than in Monopoly. According to the official game rules, if players ever deplete the stash of paper dollars provided by Parker Brothers (until recently, the game came with 15,140.00 in artificial cash), then players could legally go on playing by scribbling various dollar amounts on scraps of paper, which would be accepted as legal tender. I can't tell you how many times have I wished a real-world bank would honor that particular trick. The real world, money is not a game, unfortunately, though it is sometimes useful to think of the world in those terms (it can make things more fun.)

Here we are in the beginning of July, that amazing annual moment when our old fiscal year sputters out, only to be

replaced by a brand new fiscal year, and everyone at the UUCSR has been thinking hard about money, wishing that raising money were as easy as playing Monopoly. It's not, of course. Or is it? What if there were an easy way to make a measurable donation to your UUCSR community that doesn't cost you a cent, and does not require your collecting sponsors for some ride, walk, or other fund-raiser? If you could provide your congregation with a bit of extra financial support, as easily as writing a dollar amount on a scrap of paper, would you? This Monopoly Metaphor is my way of announcing that the UUCSR is preparing to re-launch our Scrip program in a big way, with expectations that if Scrip were being fully maximized in its potential, we could double the amount of money raised several times over.

Truth is, the days when Scrip was just for local grocery shopping are long gone. Making use of our secure partnership with eScrip, every single time you use a credit card or debit card to make a purchase, between 1% and 5% of the purchase could go to the UUCSR. That includes grocery shopping, pharmacy purchases, Holiday and birthday shopping—you name it. All you have to do is let us sign you up.

Cont. on page 7

A Few Pastel Colored Words About Monopoly Cont.

Cont. from page 6

It couldn't be easier, and could potentially have a positive financial impact for the congregation. Every little bit counts, right?

Beginning in August, on Sunday mornings, there will be information available at the Events table, and volunteers to assist you in signing up. Additionally, Janis or I are available in the office during work hours, and we can help you get signed up as well.

If this seems exciting to you, perhaps you'd be willing to help out as a once-a-month Sunday Scrip volunteer. Ideally, we'd have four volunteers, for a one-year term, to sit and greet your fellow congregants, and help them help the UUCSR.

Thanks for your ongoing enthusiasm and creativity. With this renewed Scrip effort, helping to raise much-needed funds could be as easy as counting play money.

David Templeton, Glaser Manager and Artistic Director

1 Day Meditation Retreat

Deepen your practice with a structured day of sitting and walking meditation on Saturday, August 21, 10: a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at UUCSR. Meditation contributes to your physical and mental well-being. Meditation

opens your heart to compassion for yourself and others. If you plan to attend, or for more information, call Rose, 865-0755.

UUCSR Writers

UUCSR Writers will meet from 4 - 6 pm in the "Green Room" on Monday, July 5, 2010 at UUCSR, 547 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa, Ca 95401, 707-568-5381, Can't attend monthly meetings? Live in another City, State or Country? Request an Invitation to join our Online Writer's Blog. Information: UUCSR Writers, Georgette G. deBlois, GGdeB@aol.com, <http://uucsrwriters.blogspot.com>.

"TaP" Thursdays at Peet's

The UUCSR Writers meet once a week for Peet's coffee and conversation in Copperfield's located in Montgomery Village at the corner of Montgomery Drive and Farmers Lane, Santa Rosa. Parking is Free.

Come, join us on Thursday mornings at 10 am. Buy a cup of coffee or hot chocolate, add a Danish pastry and enjoy the pleasure of chatting with writers about writing. We have no set agenda. Also, be sure to save some time to browse the books at Copperfield's.

UUCSR Writers August, Monday Editing Study Groups (Please help spread the word...)

"Editing Your Sentences" Grammar and Punctuation Study Groups. Save the following Monday evenings in August if you are interested in editing a "work in progress" word by word, sentence by sentence.

Note: This is a UUCSR Writers Community Outreach Project. It is free and open to the general public. We will have three groups working at the same time at different tables. Writers working with Writers, Poets working with Poets and Credentialed teachers available to work with Junior High and High School students, who need/want Remedial English assistance. Diane McCurdy, M.A. English and KRCB Film Reviewer, is putting together a team of our local Credentialed teachers to volunteer their time to be available with all three groups. Our Latino Community is encouraged to participate.

Four Mondays in August

6:00- 8:00pm

Monday, August 2, Forum Room, Sonoma County Central Library, 3rd and E Streets, Santa Rosa

Monday, August 9, Board Room, UUCSR, 547 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa

Monday, August 16, Forum Room, Rincon Valley Regional Library, 6959 Montecito Blvd. Santa Rosa

Monday, August 23, Board Room UUCSR, 547 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa

Are you a Grammarian, a former English Instructor? Would you like to help at the Writers', Poets or Remedial English tables? Send me an e-mail...let's talk.

Georgette G. deBlois

The 7th Principle Working Group

What do you do when you doubt that any one of us can really make a difference about global warming or any other environmental problem? I remind myself of this quote from Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." The 7th Principle Working Group is a small group that gathers in the name of the UU Principle that honors the Interconnected Web of All Existence. The African philosophy of Ubuntu, as Bishop Desmond Tutu explains in the film, "Fierce Light," (that 7PWG screened on June 10th) expresses our interconnectedness so well: "We think of ourselves far too frequently as just individuals, separated from one another, whereas you are connected and what you do affects the whole world. When you do well, it spreads out; it is for the whole of humanity."

Working within our congregation and networking with the greater community is our small start to "do well." The 7 WPG believes that the little efforts we all make, e.g., recycling, bringing your own bags to the grocery store, beach clean-ups, planting an organic garden

or ride sharing do make a difference. Action and participation in community are also great antidotes for feelings of frustration and hopelessness. I sure don't have all the answers, but I do know the conversation has started. More action is necessary. Internalizing the knowledge that we all are connected in the great web of existence has certainly motivated me to want to do more. The 7th Principle Working Group is part of the Advocates for Social Justice Committee. I believe that working to save our one and only planet is the most fundamental action toward social justice. What are your ideas about making this church (and the world) more environmentally sustainable for all? Share them with us. We truly are all in this together.

Susan Bartholome

Look for an upcoming announcement for the next meeting of the 7th Principle Working Group. For more information contact Susan at 887-9810, bartlev@sonic.net.



North Bay Sponsoring Committee

On May 25th, my granddaughter Katherine came to our first Action Assembly. This is what she thought.

I was stunned by how many people were there, I was lucky to get a chair but had to sit in the very back. It was an interesting vantage point though, because I got to see the sheer number of people in the room.

I was impressed by the organization and timing, each group and official being allotted a certain number of seconds. I think in most large organizations, people get frustrated because of the collective action problems or the time that gets wasted by not having a clear agenda. In this case, it was very well-organized and thought out. It even ran ahead of schedule, and I think people appreciated knowing that their time wasn't being wasted.

I thought it was great that the moderators reminded the

officials that this isn't a campaign stop, and not to make political endorsements or statements. Keeping the focus on the issues and what they would do to work with community groups if elected was a brilliant way of creating accountability through the power of democracy and collective action.

Overall, I was extremely impressed with the organization and commitment of so many people from all faiths and walks of life who came together to make their voices heard and make sure elected officials remain responsive to the people of Sonoma County. As a UCB Poli Sci Major, this was an amazing real-life example of the power of individuals to make a difference in politics- a refreshing change from the cynicism that so often characterizes our view of politics.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

SUNDAY, JULY 18, 2010

Newsletter@uusantarosa.org

E-mail submissions

Greatly Appreciated!

Newsletter Assembly 28, 2010

Advocates for Social Justice

Share the Basket: On Sunday, July 4th, one half of the money from the offertory will go to The Living Room, the only drop-in center of women and children in Sonoma County. Here is the story of Jean, one of its clients. From the outside, Jean was enjoying a good life: A wonderful condo in Cloverdale with all the amenities. Unfortunately for Jean, a series of events exhausted her financial resources and led her down the path to homelessness. Here's what she wrote about The Living Room:

"I have been blessed to have had over 6 years of safety, warmth and caring kindness bestowed on me. I feel fortunate indeed in knowing that each woman I have encountered - each staff member and volunteer - has helped me along this journey. I was encouraged by a former staff member, Arlene, to send one more application - one more time - persevering until I finally succeeded in finding housing. And what a blessing it was to be accepted, to be guided, to be listened to when no one else was listening. I see the world

differently now; I shine on the inside and it shows on the outside...Life is Good!"

UUCSR is part of the Living Room's Circle of Support so when the basket comes your way, be as generous as you can so other women can tell such inspiring stories! Thank you.

Hot Topics - UUlphbet Soup: UUA? UUSC? UULM? UUJEC? GA? DA? Confused? Feel left out? Join some knowledgeable members on Sunday, July 11th at 11:30 in the Board Room to crack this code!

Adrienne Swenson Award: On Sunday, June 5th, Alysha Risch came to our service to receive the \$500 award for this year. Alysha graduated from Elsie Allen High School and was chosen by her teachers and counselors because of her outstanding social justice work. She is most grateful for the gift as it will help with the expenses of UC Santa Barbara which she will start in the Fall. Thank you all for your generosity!

T.I.E. Groups Contribute Service Projects

Our T.I.E. (Together In Exploration) Groups completed their final sessions in May and also completed their chosen Service Projects.

These facilitated groups, part of UUCSR's Small Group Ministry program, begin in the Fall and meet through the Spring. Toward the end of their time together, the members of each group choose a service project. This year's projects are described below. Congratulations and *thank you* to each of the participants for their involvement and service!

Facilitators Maureen Wallace and Marge Wright - brought cookies for Coffee Hour.

Facilitators Joanie Read and JoAnn Robson - Helped with the Saturday Breakfast on the fifth Saturday in May.

Facilitators: Bob Barrows and Julie Malm - Helped prepare the UUCSR newsletter for mailing.

Facilitators: Diana Breslich and Dorris Lee - Members of the group represented UUCSR in attending the May 25 Action Assembly sponsored by the North Bay Sponsoring Committee.

Facilitators: Brian Wells and Kitty Wells - Organized and inventoried medical supplies and other items stored upstairs at the church (and continue to do so!)

Facilitators: Mary Louise Jaffrey and Art Rosenblum - Signed up to assist with the preparation of coffee and tea for two after-service coffee hours.

Facilitators: Rose St. John and J. D. Thompson - Prepared for and hosted a North Bay Sponsoring Committee meeting held at UUCSR.

Facilitators: Bonnie Daines and Carol Kraemer - Members of the group represented UUCSR in attending the May 25 Action Assembly sponsored by the North Bay Sponsoring Committee.

Facilitators: Jeanie Bates and Maureen Kaulum -- Partnered with Advocates for Social Justice to prepare lunch for the 2-21 Congregational Meeting. (\$549 was raised and contributed to a fund to help rebuild Haiti.)

Are you interested in belonging to a TIE Group when they begin again next Fall? Do you have questions about how they function? Do you want to know why they're so popular? Then call a member of the Small Group Ministry Steering Committee: Mary Wagner (Chair), Jeanie Bates, Dorris Lee, JoAnn Robson, Marge Wright, or Carolyn McLeese, all available at Coffee Hour and/or listed in your directory.

Submitted by Dorris Lee

Matter of Balance

Would you like to learn how to gently strengthen your body to improve your balance and prevent falls? This class is for people who are experiencing some limitations in their movements or feeling stiff. Elizabeth Olsen, a member of our congregation and a trained and experienced "Matter of Balance" coach, will facilitate an 8 week class beginning on Sunday, July 18, from 1:00 pm - 3:00pm and ending September 5 in the Board Room . You may bring a sack lunch and eat together first if you wish. A snack will be provided later. The sessions will include group discussions, exercises, ideas

and resources for preventing falls in your home or in public places. Workbooks will be included for easy reminders and goal setting.

The "Matter of Balance" curriculum was developed by Boston University and is provided by the Sonoma County Health and Human Services Area Agency on Aging. A donation of \$20 will be requested, but no one will be turned away for not donating. There are openings for 8-14 people. Please contact Elizabeth at (707) 573-0543 to register by July 5.

The Imaginists!

**Theater for the Future, an Imaginists fundraiser:
Sunday, July 18 from 3:00-5:00pm.**

**Bilingual theater at its very best!
Explore the world of the migrant community
and support the Imaginists who
promote compassion and understanding.**

Experience a professional multimedia theatrical event featuring the breathtaking "Arte Es Medicina", The Imaginist's bilingual, bicycle touring summer show, and much more.

The Imaginists is a highly regarded, professionally trained theater company located in the heart of Rose-land on Sebastopol Avenue. It works directly with the migrant community, such as the Graton Labor Center,

placing migrant workers in plays where they tell the stories of their struggles to survive. The company also travels by bicycles to low income areas in Sonoma County to perform puppet shows in Spanish and English for the children. Students from Elsie Allen, Roseland University Prep, etc. attend their theater to learn acting and production skills needed to bring plays to the community. The final productions when presented are extraordinary and are free to all. For more information visit www.theimaginist.org.

This dedicated group expresses many of the Unitarian Universalist Principles through its bilingual theater productions about the migrant community. Please RSVP Susan Moore at (707) 577-8210. Donations of \$40 are requested. No one will be turned away.

Evening Book Group

The Evening Book Group is on summer vacation for the months of July and August. Regular meetings resume in September. The selections for the coming year are listed below. We meet on the second Thursday of the month in Room 2 in the RE wing from 7 to 9 p.m. Participants take turns leading the discussion and providing a light snack. Visitors are welcome.

Month/Book/Author

September: Cutting For Stone

Abraham Verghese

October: God of Small Things
Arundhati Roy

November: The Madonna of
Leningrad
Deborah Dean

December: Jane and Prudence
Barbara Pym

January: Half Broke Horses
Jeanette Wells

February: The Help

Kathryn Stockett

March: The Devlin Diary
Christy Phillips

April: The Immortal Life of
Henrietta Lax
Rebecca Skloot

May:

June: Choose
books for next
year

Linda Lampson



Summary of UUCSR Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Board President Andrew Hidas.

All members were present: Andrew Hidas, Bob Barrows, Craig Work, Denese Pender, Ann Chambers, Phyllis Heagney, Mary Louise Jaffray, Bonnie Daines, Karen Lillard, Lois Nagle.

Chalice lighting and opening words by Rev. Chris Bell, from the hymnal, No. 360, "Here We have Gathered."

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bonnie Daines and Denese Pender reported that income was higher and expenses were lower than expected for the month. UUA/PCD dues may be earmarked for the surplus.

HR COMMITTEE: Laura Jean Hageman and Marlene Kaulum of the Human Resources Committee made a brief presentation. They defined their committee's function within the congregation and also gave an overview of their payroll budgeting process and relationship with the accounting committee. They also made recommendations regarding ways they might assist during budgetary crises.

BUDGET DISCUSSION: Lillian Reid, Ellen Skagerberg, Rose St. John, Ted Miller and Phil Harriman were present for part of the budget discussions. Many proposals were put forth regarding the final budget to be presented to the congregation at the meeting on June 13. After much discussion, Karen Lillard moved that we accept the proposed balanced budget recommendations. Mary Louise Jaffray seconded. All in favor, no abstentions.

BYLAWS REVIEW/CHANGES: Andrew Hidas has worked with the Financial Stewardship Council to finalize Emergency Fund Policy Changes, and is consulting with Mary Louise Jaffray and Craig Work regarding how those changes may affect UUCSR Bylaws. The Board will continue to discuss the topic of bylaw revisions as they relate to the E-Fund, the Council Structure, and any other considerations that surface after further review.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING PLANNING: It was decided that the meeting agenda, assignments, and appreciations will be discussed via BOT email blog during the weeks prior to the meeting on June 13.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35.

THE 20TH-- BELIEVE IT OR NOT-- SERVICE AUCTION IS COMING SATURDAY OCTOBER 2, 2010



Save the date for our biggest social event and fun/fund raiser of the year. It will be happening a month early so be sure and get that date on your calendar: *Saturday,*

October 2, 2010. We are so excited that we are celebrating our 20th time to have this great event that we are committed to making it the best one yet! Join us for a fun Harvest and 20th anniversary celebration. We'll have an exceptional raffle and all the usual great services and gift quality items. Be thinking about what you want to offer. (Kitty Wells is gathering donations from local businesses for the raffle. If you have any ideas or would like to help her, call 707-953-0620.)



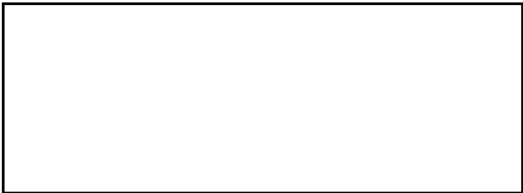
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July 2010

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Send submissions to Newsletter@uusantarosa.org
Newsletter by E-mail is available. To sign up, send an e-mail
to Administrator@uusantarosa.org with your name and e-mail
address

Editor: Janis Brewster

**Newsletter deadline follows the 3rd Sunday. All
electronic deadlines are noon Monday.**

Please place any hard copy submissions in the Newsletter
mail slot in the office by noon Sunday.

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