



UU Update

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

• November 2009 • Volume 53 • Issue 11 •

Sunday Services are at 9:00 and 11:00am

November 1st

"Sin: A Wounded Word"

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Michael Walsh,
with writings from members of the congregation

We all make mistakes. And sometimes we deliberately do things that hurt others or ourselves. Sin is one word that describes any such act regarded as a serious or regrettable fault, offense or omission. But it also means a transgression of divine law, or a violation of moral standards, or a corrupt nature, and those definitions are much more problematic, and more painful. Can we redeem this word together?

November 22nd

"A Guest at your Table"

All Ages Service

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Heather Lawton

Expressing our gratitude and sharing our blessings is a bedrock spiritual practice, simple enough for the youngest child, and demanding enough to challenge and transform us until the end of our days. Through story, song and teaching we'll learn how to root ourselves and our families in a living prayer of thanks through service and generosity.

November 8th

"The Big Picture"

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Joe Como

In June we sent a number of delegates to the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Today we'll hear from Rev. Chris and some of our GA delegates about what most inspired and challenged them there, and consider the delegate's decisions and actions of witness that will impact our congregation and our movement. And we'll sing a great new song!

November 29th

"Salvation: A Wounded Word"

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Scott Miller, with
writings from members of the congregation

The perfect follow-up to our first wounded word service, since this word generally means deliverance from sin (whatever that is!) and its consequences, though it also conveys preservation or deliverance from harm, ruin, or loss. That's not a bad thing is it? Unfortunately, many use the word to harm others by separating the "saved" from the "unsaved." We'll put that notion to rest today.

November 15th

Service Leaders: Rev. Blythe Sawyer, Erin Howseman

Blythe Sawyer of the United Church of Christ Petaluma Congregation will be preaching on the topic of stewardship of our lives. How can we make good use of this one wild and precious life we've been given? We'll explore the ways we discover ourselves called to new directions or to continue in old directions, using well the time and talent of our lives.

December 1st

"Chalica"

All Ages Service

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Deborah Mason,
Andy Levine

Take back the holidays with a UU winter celebration for all ages!

9:00 AM SERVICE

It is a smaller gathering, we have the same readings and message that are given at the 11:00AM service, plus we have time for a discussion of the sermon topic. What UU doesn't like a discussion? There is childcare available. Any questions, contact Andy Levine at 887-9810

How does the word Power make you feel?



"Power...is the ability to achieve purpose. It is the strength required to bring about social, political or economic changes. In this sense power is not only desirable but necessary in order to implement the demands of love and justice. One of the greatest problems of history is that the concepts of love and power are usually contrasted as polar opposites. Love is identified with a resignation of power and power with a denial of love... What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive and that love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice. Justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

How does the word *power* make you feel?

Many people have a negative reaction to this word. We recall Lord Acton's critique of the doctrine of papal infallibility, that "power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely" and thus don't want to have anything to do with power. Power seems like a dirty thing, something used to control others, and we feel suspicious of it and those who have it. But power isn't only power *over*, it can also be power *with*. To me power with is the very essence of religious community.

Power really just means the ability to act, or the ability to achieve purpose, as King put it. Our purpose is captured in our mission and our vision, which is "to live as fully as possible our Unitarian Universalist Principles and to nurture a liberal religious community in Santa Rosa by celebrating life, empowering people, caring for one another, and building a better world." It is a purpose filled with action words. When we act to fulfill this purpose, we are exercising power, and it feels good.

To make a real difference in each other's lives, and in the community, we need power. In the real world there are two basic ways of accumulating power: organizing money and organizing people. Each of these can be negative or positive, depending upon the purposes to which the power is put. For example, it is primarily organized money (of extraordinary amounts) that allows a tiny group of elites to shape the economic, political and

military policies of the world. That is not good. On the other hand, organized money also allows us to pay salaries and bills and help out our fellow members. That is good.

A powerful congregation organizes its people and its money. We're really pretty good at the former. As for the latter, it has been empirically observed that UUs give the least to their congregations of almost any religiously affiliated group. Maybe we're afraid of what the Board or the minister might do with it, or we think money is corrupting, or we believe religion should come for free like sunshine or God's love or enlightenment, or we doubt our abilities to put the money to good use. We like to say it's because we give so much to other causes, but studies also show that those religious folk who give more to their congregations also give more to charity and causes than we do. I find that a little embarrassing.

Recently the daughter of a member, and her fiancé, joined the Mormon church. They told her straight up that the financial expectation was 10% from everyone, no matter their low income. Her response was "we'll find a way make it work." The reward of such sacrifice on the part of the members is a congregation that has the power to pay for her entire wedding, that can sustain unemployed members for months, that makes sure none of the flock ever go hungry. I would love for us to be able to take care of each other like the Mormons take care of each other, and to powerfully spread justice, equity and compassion with real and lasting impact.

If you are a member you literally own this organization. It's yours. You have the right and obligation to imagine what would UUCSR be like if we maximized our power. How many individual lives, might be saved and transformed? How could we impact our city and county? How much celebrating, empowering, caring and building might we be really able to do? With a group as loving and generous as I know you to be, only the sky is the limit. And that's why I am so grateful to be your minister.

Blessings and Happy Thanksgiving to all y'all. Love, Rev. Chris.

Splinters from the Board

Music, Ecstasy and Religious Community

One cannot attend a concert, read an environmental treatise, participate in a relief effort or observe the tremendous outpouring of care and concern for an injured or ill or simply disoriented whale without being struck by the profoundly religious attributes attending virtually all aspects of these activities. The deeply felt needs of our religious selves—to form profound connections, experience beauty, exercise compassion, express our truest selves, and then lose those selves in the ecstasy of music, fellowship, nature, love—are as critical to our survival as the very air we breathe.

I was thinking of these matters recently after returning home from too many hours of church committee meetings, leashing up my dog and taking a long walk under the starry autumn sky. The profound emotional engagement of music had been in the air for me lately, and I'd been reminiscing about one of those *Great Concert Moments I Have Known*. (We all have our own little catalog of them, yes?) Miles Davis was at the War Memorial Opera House in San Francisco just a few years before his death, and after an interesting but slightly noisy round of fusion music with his band of young turks, he sat down on the side of the stage, the house darkened and a sole spotlight glistening off his horn as he played such an achingly tender and haunting solo rendition of "Time After Time" as to make the angels themselves stop in their tracks. As each lovely note wafted through the air, the audience seemed both his and not his, first willing to eat from the palm of his hand in worship and then taking collective wing to destinations far, far away. There we were, a tribe, an ad hoc church, joined together in an experience of transcendent beauty.

Oh, my.

So: given the many experiences of engagement and ecstasy as available to us as the nearest concert hall or mountain pass, why bother with institutional religion at all? Why traipse downtown and coop yourself up all evening for yet another damn committee meeting, when you could instead go to a Bruce Springsteen concert where you make instant friends, happily buy them drinks when you go out to the bar, then sway alongside them while lustily belting out, *'cause tramps like us, baby we were bo-orrrrrn to runnnnnnn?*

When the very walls throb with the shared experience and bliss of music and movement and other trappings of intense religious experience at the concert hall, do you really need to sign the member book at UUCSR, pledging

your time and treasure to, among other things, help pay for sewage repairs to the building?

Here is a key difference, it seems to me, between the Church of Springsteen and UUCSR: When we exit the club or arena doors after a shared concert experience, we will not (with the exception of any friends or relatives who have accompanied us) see these people again. The essential religious aspect of communal experience—shared ritual—is *here*, and *then it is gone*, replaced at our next concert by a new cast of fellow congregants with whom we come together for the brief shining moments between the event's beginning and end.

But in religious community, we come together Sunday after Sunday with essentially the same cast of congregants. I look around and see David and Calvin and Karen and Joe, Rose and Eric and Ellen, Erin and Ila, Alan and Elizabeth and Phyllis, Cassandra and Lucia and Monica and Bob. They have names and lives and aspirations that I know about and often enough, share. We've all decided to calendar this experience—with these people, in this place, at this time—as a regular item on our spiritual agenda.

Sunday morning, 11 a.m.: I know where I'll be—in this familiar building, with these familiar people, doing familiar, intentional things designed to bring us all closer to some shared essence, some essential juice, of life. This juice is familiar to us inveterate concert-goers, but it also goes far beyond the concert experience precisely because of its consistency, a consistency born of commitment to something beyond one's personal pleasure and even salvation. It is a commitment not so much to the occasionally planned ecstatic experience of a concert or even a particularly moving worship service, but to the quotidian—the regularly planned ritual of observances that can occasionally yield ecstatic experiences but whose essence is not ecstatic but everyday.

Ultimately, we join this community in the faith that it is out of our constancy—to each other, this shared body of UUCSR, and this larger faith of Unitarian Universalism—that our deepest, truest selves can finally emerge. Time after time after time.

—Andrew Hidas

President, Board of Trustees



Treasurer's Report

In the world of accounting, spreadsheets and graphs are quite a necessity. Even we old bookkeepers sometimes have a hard time remembering the BC days (before computers), when we had to actually add things up by hand or with a calculator. However, sometimes I could throw my computer out the window. Last week I was having to remember a password I had supposedly already set up for a certain program. But since I couldn't remember it, Mr. computer had to ask me 3 personal questions, to make sure I was who I said I was. Well, I failed the test, thanks to the last question. Mr. computer dude asked me, "What was the name of your kindergarten teacher?" "WHAT??" I shrieked aloud, "KINDERgarten?? Are you KIDDING? Do you know how OLD I am??" Who in the world (over 40) could possibly remember that? But, after I calmed down, (and received a new password by email, thank you), it got me to thinking about my 3rd grade teacher, as that is the earliest I do remember. Her name was Zude (zu-dee), Zude Smith. (How can you forget a name like that?) I really liked her, even though I thought she was kind of old. (Probably, you know, 30 or so). She had curly redish-black hair and wore horn-rimmed glasses. And she taught me the only Latin words I have ever remembered. "Tempus fugit", she would write in big cursive letters across the blackboard. "Time flies," she'd say, so, 'get your homework done soon', I guess was the gist of her lesson there.

Well, tempus fugit, folks - because, guess what... it's time to work on BUDGETS again! Alright, I hear that moaning. It seems like we just got finished with them, I know. Well, actually... you're right, it wasn't too long ago that we completed our current year budgets. But, as with many things around the UU lately, we are working hard to perfect and streamline processes so that things can be done more smoothly and efficiently. Therefore, we are starting the first step of the budget process now.

This step is to have all the different budgets printed up and handed out to committee chairs. These printouts (which also include the expenses year-to-date) were reviewed at the last Accounting Committee meeting. And we were pleased to find that, in the first 3 months (the first quarter) of this fiscal year, most all of the committees have stayed either at or below one-quarter of their annual budget. (Well, uh, we'll talk more about building & maintenance later). But otherwise, good work, everyone! Kudos to us all for holding the line so well.

So the rest of this first step entails each committee chair reviewing their current budget, and determining whether they can keep it as is, or if changes need to be made. As it looks now, our current year's budget will likely be somewhat similar to next year's budget (which will cover July 2010 to, uh, June 20.. ELEVEN, oh my gosh, tempus fugit again!!) At this point, it appears that next year we will need to stay as fiscally conservative as we have this year. However, we should not lose sight of our "dream" budget, as envisioning our future challenges and opportunities always remains important. As diligent overseers of the financial health of our beloved UUCSR, we continue to 'hope for the best but plan for the worst'.

So... all committee chairs should have their new budgets turned into their Councils by Dec 15th. The importance of this early planning is so the Accounting Committee will be able to start with their work early in the new (calendar) year. We were quite pressed for time when our last fiscal year came to a close - so thank you all for helping to make sure the remainder of the budget process will go more smoothly this year.

And as to our notorious plumbing repairs... rest assured that all of the expenses related to said problem have now been paid in full. While our cash has been depleted a bit to cover this unexpected expense, I continue to be in awe of the magnitude of success generated by our 'Piggy Bank Fundraiser'. Once again, kudos, three cheers, and hip-hip-HOORAY for Claudia's brilliant and most inspirational idea!! While we hoped it would bring in maybe 3 or 4 or even \$500, it raised a whopping \$4,100!! Jeepers, folks, WE DID GOOD!! Thanks to all who participated, encouraged, DONATED (thank you thank you!!), cheered, and helped in any other way to make this endeavor such a smashing success. Way to go, Claudia - and to her team of Piggy Bank overseers!

As an additional note.. we recently had a social gathering to celebrate Rev Chris' 3-year anniversary with UUCSR. It included a special fundraiser, primarily targeting the PCD/UUA dues, which raised \$1,600! Thank you tremendously to all who participated and made those wonderful donations! And a special thanks to Laura Jean Hageman and Tom Bond for hosting that lovely event!

Cont. on page 7



Children's and Youth Religious Education (RE)

How can it be that the holidays are upon us already? Where has this year gone? As I look ahead to the holidays I am doing so with an eye on taking commercialism out of the picture. Not an easy task in our culture!

Thanksgiving is my very favorite holiday because its sole purpose is to gather with people to give thanks for the many blessings of this life. I have always taken the opportunity to use Thanksgiving to set the stage for a meaningful holiday season. Gathering an extended family of folks related by blood or by deep friendship I provided a meal that honored the abundance of the earth, and I facilitated expressions of gratitude from everyone at my table. Warmth, laughter, and love were the centerpiece, the simple joy of one another's company; sustenance for our souls.

Generally, the simple joy of Thanksgiving sustained me until about the second week of December when I was swept into the madness of Christmas overindulgence. When my children were young I experienced an uncontrollable driving force to *provide*: provide for every wish, provide the best gifts, provide enough so that my kids wouldn't grieve their fractured family, and provide a shield from *all* of the woes of the world - at least for this one magical day. In short, to provide a *perfect* Christmas. Often I spent more money than I should have, and stressed way more than was reasonable. As my children grew older and left home, this drive subsided, but the anxiety of holiday providership has remained until this day.

Perhaps this is familiar to some of you, perhaps you have similar demons.

Well, this year I will exorcize the demon of holiday madness! You may ask how will I do such a thing? What ritual or prayer can save me from the whirlwind of holiday commercialism? In a word: Chalica. This year both of my children will be home with me the first week of December. This is traditionally the week of the Unitarian Universalist winter holiday, Chalica. For those of you who missed it last year, Chalica is a seven day celebration of the UU seven principles. Each night a chalice is lit and words are said to lift up the principle of that day. There are no material gifts involved. All one has to do is take time to acknowledge those things that we as UUs have pledged to affirm and promote, and perhaps to do something that will put action to words. Chalica will not be *another thing to do* this holiday season, for me it will **be** the holiday season. You won't be receiving Chalica cards from me, nor will there be a Chalica bush, or special Chalica lights on my house. No, just the three of us gathered around the chalice on that first night talking about what it really means to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

If you want to know more about Chalica, just Google "Chalica". And no matter what your holiday plans entail, I hope you will consider the simplicity of this celebration that is unique to our faith.

In faith,
Deborah

This Month IN Religious Education:

Date	Theme	Teachers
11/1	Children's Chapel	Deborah Mason, Jean Smith
11/8	K-2: Listening, Talking, Sharing	Linda Farison, Kirsten Olney
	3-5: Framework for Peace & Justice	Michael Walsh, Rita Butterfield
	6-8: Promoting Utopian Society	Kitty Wells, Elizabeth Wheless
11/15	K-2: Fair & Unfair Experiences	Linda Farison, Kirsten Olney
3-5:	Affirmation of Self	Michael Walsh, Rita Butterfield
6-8:	What About Prejudice & "isms"	Kitty Wells, Elizabeth Wheless
11/22	Intergenerational Service/Thanksgiving	
11/29	Arts Sunday: Chalice for Chalica	Leeann Lidz, Susan Bartholome

Notes for November



November is an interesting month in our current culture, isn't it? We have the wonderfully unique Halloween behind us and in the USA we look forward to Thanksgiving. Yet these days, Christmas looms so large in the consumer culture that Thanksgiving can easily seem lost. I envy the more traditional Christians who refuse to acknowledge Christmas until December 25; they spend the prior 4 weeks marking Advent (which is a beautiful way to ritualize anticipation), and before that they simply get to enjoy Thanksgiving more fully. I'll follow their lead; Thanksgiving is a beautiful thing!

Though Thanksgiving is often considered the "family" holiday, when people gather close with their relations (sometimes whether they want to or not), many of my late November feasts have been spent in the company of strangers. Having gone to school far away from home, I've eaten numerous interpretations of stuffing, and I've led and followed various versions of "saying grace." (If you want to hear a story on my leading grace, come see me after service sometime!)

But I do bring one family element to every Thanksgiving, no matter where or with whom I may be. My mother has always had a particular desire to share around the feast table everyone's personal thanks. She wants to hear what each person is grateful for. So, let me prepare us for this year's giving of thanks, Trish Taylor style: I'm grateful for sharing music with you all, with the choir and the band, with Nancy Hayashibara and with Rev. Chris, with our music committee and with our worship associates. I'm grateful for the opportunity to practice instruments and music for our services--music I had to ignore as a conservatory student. I'm grateful for meeting and working with new people all the time; I'm fairly shy, so the opportunity helps me grow as a person. In short, I'm grateful to be at UUCSR, easily the most interesting place in Sonoma County to spend Sunday mornings.

This month, I'll offer a new song I wrote for you all. It incorporates readings from our hymnal, as well as a familiar children's rhyme. I dearly hope that you enjoy it. I'll be grateful!

Save our Pianos!

The piano plays a nearly ubiquitous role in our services at UUCSR, in no small part because we are blessed with an unusually outstanding pianist, Nancy Hayashibara. (Go, Nancy!) She's a delight to work with, musically and personally. But as she has been heard to say, "It's not a piece of furniture." And she's talking about the piano.

Our congregation's pianos need more care and affection than they are currently getting. If you use the sanctuary, RE wing or the boardroom, please take note of a few basic rules for our pianos.

1. Don't put items on the piano (especially food or drink!)
2. The pianos should be closed when not in use.
3. Do everything possible to not store a piano next to a window.

We musicians and music lovers (and our music budget's bottom line!) will be so appreciative if everyone can be respectful of the congregation's instruments. Thank you, all!

Choir

The choir is beginning rehearsals of holiday music. If you would like to join us for these festive and beautiful musical experiences, I and the regular choir members welcome you! There is a Christmas Eve service at 6pm in which the choir participates. And the choir also offers up holiday music on Sundays for Hannukah, Chalica and other winter festivities.

Regular rehearsals: Sundays, 9am, in the Board room.

Do YOU play an unusual instrument?

Recorder, hurdy-gurdy, banjo? Cembalom, bass clarinet, ocarina?

I know you are hiding out there! We want your unique talents! Please talk to me or Susan Panttaja about how you can be a part of it all. Any instrument is of interest; yes, even the kazoo! I'm totally serious.

Musically yours,
Ben Taylor, Music Director

The Holidays are Almost Here!

We will be selling a very attractive assortment of Holiday Cards in the lobby during November. We hope you will want to support the work of UUSC by buying some.

The UU tradition of *Guest at Your Table* is another way of supporting the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and its work to implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. On the Sunday before Thanks-

giving we will distribute colorful cardboard boxes, (complete with coin slots) to each congregation member along with the booklet "Stories of Hope" so that you can share your holiday spirit with symbolic guests from all over the world.

Phyllis Clement, UUSC Rep for
Advocates For Social Justice, 823-0925

Grand Opening!

A wonderful new store is opening November 1st called Bazaar and the wonderful part is that all of their profits will go to help the schools art and music programs that have all been cut by the government. It is located in McDonald Center at Highway 12 and Mission.

This is an eclectic kind of store with an art room, great painted jeans, drums, pottery, a kids play room, tie dyed baby clothes, doggy shirts (also tie dyed), local jams,

lots of hats, bunnies and much more. Please shop there and support this great cause!

The store is not full yet so if you are an artist or craft person that is interested in selling your things, the owners name is Andrea Stilwell and her phone number is 623-0001 or email her at sonomacountyartisan-scraftersfair@yahoo.com

Men's Groups in UUCSR

A hidden strength of our congregations is our vibrant and active men's groups. There are 45 men involved in 5 groups. Each group meets at different times and locations in homes and at the Glaser Center. Rev. Tom Owen-Towle expressed what happens at a men's group meetings the following way. "One of America's burgeoning revolutions finds men meeting to share pieces of their deep hopes and hurts, as they unwrap their self-sufficient exteriors to exchange touch and thought with other men."

Our successful men's retreat with over 50 participants this summer built enthusiasm for more men to get involved in a men's group. If you are interested in a men's group please contact the 'men's group coordinator', Bruce Hope. He can be reached at kip-sterb@sonic.net or 707 975 7210.

A national web site with many references regarding UU men's groups and recently been re-activated. It can be found at <http://www.uumen.org/>

Treasurer's Report Continued

Cont. From page 3

Getting back to our overall fiscal health and well-being, we were very fortunate to have been able to tackle and subsequently overcome two major financial hurdles in the last two years. However, as with 'the joys of homeownership', untimely expensive surprises unfortunately come with the deal. We all take pride in this 'ownership' of our lovely building, and planning ahead for future surprises is paramount. The best thing perhaps we can do now is to continue to support and assist our Board of Trustees and Financial Stewardship Council as we continue to plan for

our bright and promising future. Continuing to pay pledges in a timely manner of course is another help! And one last thing... don't miss the Service Auction on Nov 7th - our biggest and most extravagant fundraiser of the year!! I for one am taking this "dress up" idea to heart. Of course it's not required, but, I sure hope to see some 'fun-finery' out there... so dust off those dress-up costumes from the back of your closet, if you like, and really ham it up! I hear boa sales are really hot this time of year, ladies. Hope to see you all there!

Respectfully Submitted,
Denese Pender

Women Together

Elder Tales

Olive Horrell will tell us about her multifaceted life from 2 to 4 pm on Saturday, November 14th in the Lake Room. You will be impressed when you learn what this previously stay-at-home mom did when she became a widow with two children at age 50. From laundry supervisor in Alaska, to dessert chef in a fancy French restaurant, to administrator of SSI at its inception, to Sacramento lobbyist, with

other explorations and occupations along the way, Olive, who was told upon graduating in Economics from UC Berkeley that women didn't work in economics and she should stay home and raise a family, has blazed quite a trail! Come hear her inspiring story! Please bring finger-food to share. If you have questions or want more information, contact Linda Harlow, 526-3528.



HOLIDAY PARTY

Save the date

Saturday, December 5th

for our festive and fun annual get-together

at Helga Lemke's warm and welcoming home from noon to 2.



Advocates for Social Justice

Share the Basket

On Sunday, November 1st, half the money collected in the basket will go to The Living Room. As the days get colder and wetter, and more people lose their jobs and homes, the demand for services for women and children is growing. Help these homeless women learn necessary skills to enable them to hold jobs and find housing as they and their children cope with the emotional impacts of what they're going through. Thank you for your generosity!

Film

Also on November 1st, come see Tea and Justice, a film about the experiences of three Asian-American women who join the NYPD, at 12:30 pm in the Board Room. Marie DeSantis, founder and director of the Women's Justice Center, will introduce the film and tell us about the work her agency is doing to protect the rights and safety of Latinas in our community, one of the most vulnerable populations. This will be an enlightening and hopeful program! If you have questions or want more information, contact Linda Harlow, 526-3528

Evening Book Group

The Evening Book Group will meet on Thursday, November 12th at 7:00 p.m. at 547 Mendocino. Our selection this month is The Story of Edgar Sawtelle by David

Wroblewski. The selection for December is Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Stroud.

Newcomers and visitors are welcome.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2009

Newsletter@uusantarosa.org

E-mail submissions

Greatly Appreciated!

Moving Into Action: The NBSC identifies actionable issues and moves into research phase.



On the evening of October 12, over 60 congregants and parishioners from UUCSR, Congregation Shomrei Torah, Knox Presbyterian Church, Congregation Beth Ami and Resurrection Catholic Church gathered in the main sanctuary at Resurrection Church on Stony Point Road to begin to identify actionable issues to collaborate on through the North Bay Sponsoring Committee (NBSC). Karen Jackson of Knox Presbyterian welcomed the group, acknowledging that all are "itching for action." UUCSR's own, Dorris Lee, brought the meeting into focus, identifying the Covenant we have embarked upon, as people of Faith in this effort, to listen with an open heart to each other to build a better community and world.



Rev. Chris then got the action started, facilitating one-on-one discussion around the question: What in your faith tradition inspires you to be involved in community organizing? I spoke with Clara from Resurrection. Clara told me of her love of Jesus and his teachings, telling me that to her, "Jesus is, you know, justice." It is the lack of justice she sees in her Spanish-speaking

community coupled with the message of Jesus that called her to join her Faith Community in the NBSC organizing effort. I shared her concern for the lack of justice in our communities and the contradictions of the compassionate teachings of Jesus in society at large. I also shared with her that our First Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of all people, was a

large driving force behind my own involvement and commented on how I felt Jesus would also be in agreement with our Principle.

UU's Linda Proulx and Phyliss Bazzano of Resurrection brought the group back together over the many problems we have identified in the House Meetings being held throughout all of the participating institutions. We split into groups of 8 to 10 to discuss: What concern is meaningful enough that you want to pursue it with a team of people from other congregations? Tell a story why.



After 25 minutes of engaging conversation we came back together as one group to report our findings. Many concerns were brought up, but three issues rose to the surface as high priorities to all: Mental Health Care, Public Transportation and Police/Community Relations (including car impounding, racial profiling and neighborhood safety). Research groups, including representatives from each institution, were formed around these topics. The groups will now begin meeting and collecting information that will eventually inform the ultimate action(s) the NBSC will take together to effect the positive social change in our community we are "itching" for. A training for the particular research process to be used will be held Monday, October 19 at 7 PM at the Glaser Center. For information on how you can get involved in this process, contact Deborah Mason at debmasonuu@yahoo.com or 568-5381.

Change will not happen over night and it does not happen by accident, but it always happens inevitably. Come be part of the change. Let us raise our voices in harmony as one people in Faith, regardless of what that Faith may be.

-Larissa Dahroug

If you use Twitter ...

you'll find us under the user name "uuSantaRosa"

(administered by Ellen Skagerberg)



Don't Forget!

***Sunday,
November 1st!
Fall Back!***

UUCSR Writers

UUCSR Writers next Monthly Meeting

The next UUCSR Writers meeting date is Monday, November 2, 2009, from 4 - 6pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 547 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa.

"TaP" Thursdays at Peet's

The UUCSR Writers meet once a week for coffee and conversation at Peet's Cafe 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 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.

NaNoWriMo - Write-Ins!

November is National Novel Writing Month. NaNoWriMo is sponsored by the Central Library in Santa Rosa. The UUCSR Writers who take on the challenge of writing a 50,000 word novel in 30 days meet in the Forum Room of the Central Library located on the corner of Third & E Streets, Santa Rosa. Monday's: Oct 26, *Nov 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30th at 5:00 pm. *Note: participating UUCSR Writers usually go to the Library after our regular monthly meeting on Nov 2. A Librarian and a NaNoWriMo author will give us complete details about

the November meetings, as well as other libraries participating in this International Project, at the Launch Party on October 26.

Focus

Whatever your creative endeavor: fiction, non fiction, memoirs, letters, history, biography, the Great American novel, poetry, essays, dissertation, thesis, song lyrics, report, term paper, cook book, web pages, blogging, twittering, etc., our focus is to provide an atmosphere where serious writers improve and hone their writing skills. The UUCSR Writers is open to the novice, the more experienced, and the published author. Membership at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation Santa Rosa (UUCSR) is not required. We meet once a month at UUCSR in Santa Rosa, CA on the First Monday of the month, except September, from 4:00-6:00pm.

UUCSR Online Writers

Can't attend monthly meetings? Live in another City, State or Country? Join our "Online Writers" Blog. You can learn more about our group, and current "Works-in-Progress", at the UUCSR Writers Blog.

Information

UUCSR Writers, Georgette G. deBlois, GGdeB@aol.com, <http://uucsrwriters.blogspot.com>

What is the Committee on Shared Ministry?

The Committee exists to facilitate the smooth running of our congregation. Our monthly meetings are confidential. If you are concerned about unmet needs within the congregation, involved in a conflict with another congregant, staff member, committee or the Minister, you

can call on any of us to be heard.

This is our charge:

Oversee the general health of the congregation

Support the Minister in his various roles

Provide conflict resolution

We are happy to hear from you regarding what you think is going well also!

Elizabeth Marrs- Chair, Rev. Chris Bell, Roger Corman, Nancy Hargis, Andy Levine, Cathy Read, and Mary Wagner.

Economic Justice—Read/Study/Discuss

At its next meeting, Tuesday November 10, the Economic Justice read/study group will examine the recent financial crisis through the lens of Marxian Economic Theory. One focus question: Is our current mode of capitalism structurally both criminogenic and

anti-compassionate? In addition to our text, you may read <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article23723.htm>.

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, bimonthly, at UUCSR 7 p.m.

UUCSR Board of Trustees Goals for 2009-10

At its Labor Day weekend retreat, the UUCSR Board of Trustees set the following goals to guide its efforts through the 2009-10 church year. They are admittedly ambitious, the better to match the Board's vision that only great ambition can set the stage for the great accomplishments that members of UUCSR clearly hope to achieve in the future.

Short-Range Goals (1 year, prioritized)

- Enhance and secure the financial health of UUCSR by:
 - * Raising \$100,000 to close the current budget gap, with an effort focused both on large gifts and developing a culture of generosity among all members
 - * Supporting an early and effective Annual Budget Drive
 - * Helping to create a long-range maintenance plan to assure adequate reserves for equipment and infrastructure obsolescence
- Support and encourage Membership Council efforts regarding hospitality and new member integration
- Update our minister's Letter of Agreement
- Establish communication protocols from Councils to Board and among Councils themselves
- Establish a Bylaw Update Committee to examine possible changes in light of new governance structure and other congregational changes
- Develop a practice of informational meetings prior to and after annual PCD and GA events in order to keep members better informed on denominational affairs

Medium-Range Goals (2-5 years, unprioritized)

- Call an intern minister
- Establish three months' reserve fund
- Triple children's religious education average attendance (preschool through high school figure in 2008-09: 22)
- Develop a long-term maintenance plan
- Install a solar power system for hot water
- Support the founding and official emergence into the public square of the North Bay Sponsoring Committee's Sonoma County branch
- Fund the previously approved position of Volunteer Coordinator

Long-Range Goals (5+ years, unprioritized)

- Renovate the upstairs space
- Host a nonprofit pre-school
- Establish one year's reserve fund
- Install a solar power system for electricity
- Create thriving campus ministry
- Upgrade to a commercial kitchen
- Achieve membership of 500+



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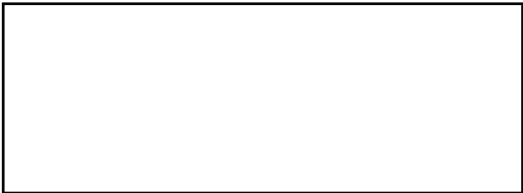


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November 2009

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Order of Service Announcements:

Send submissions to Orderofservice@uusantarosa.org
Editor: Janis Brewster
Deadline: Wednesday, Noon, prior to Sunday Service

UU Update Newsletter:

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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