



UUCSR

# UU Update

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

• January • Volume 55 • Issue 1 •

## Sunday Services at 9:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

### January 2nd MILESTONES

A service of sharing with many voices, including yours, which honors the events, joys, sorrows, and lessons of the 2010. We'll have a slideshow, too.

*Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Rita Butterfield  
The Choir performs at 11:00.*

### January 9th ON BEING A DISCIPLE

Many religious people understand themselves to be disciples of a particular teacher, whether living or dead, emulating their teacher's actions and promoting their thought and methods. (For me, it is the Buddha.) Of course there are dangers in this, but to be a disciple is to be a devoted student, not a slave. Today I ask, whom do you follow? And whom, if anyone, might we all follow together? At 11:00, we will welcome some of our elementary children into our Covenant with a new Ritual of Belonging.

*Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Deborah Mason,  
Izzy Fischer, Lucia Milburn*

### January 16th DR. KING, THE UNIVERSALIST

Today we'll take a look at the later life and thinking of Dr. King. Following a trip to India, he evolved a pacifistic and universalistic concern for humanity that transcended even his great passion for his own race, as vital and necessary as that was. This country still lives in the vast shadow of racism, as any debate about immigration reform quickly reveals. Dr. King's voice offers a light that can help us find a way out.

*Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Frances Corman  
The Choir performs at 9:15*

### January 23 PROBING THE HEART OF SCIENCE

Science, spirituality and the human condition have been intertwined, not always peacefully, since the first recorded civilization. Galileo and Darwin sought to expand the reaches of scientific inquiry, but still maintained their spiritual paths. Einstein said, "Science without religion is lame. Religion without science is blind." Today, we will hear insights from scientific seekers from our own congregation. From social justice issues to spirituality, how can science help us thrive and give meaning to our lives? We will have four reflections at each service, so you may want to stay for both!

*Service Leaders: Erin Howseman, Lucia Milburn, Phil Harriman, John Jaffray, Pam Tennant, J.D. Thompson, Susan Panttaja, Orlando Raola, Leslie Norinsky  
The UUusual Suspects will rock out on some tunes of galactic proportions.*

### January 30th THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE Vedanta, Pt. 3

Jnana-Yoga is the Path of Knowledge in Vedanta. It is the path of realization for those with strong mental or intellectual abilities. If Karma-Yoga is about right action, and Bhakti-Yoga is about right feeling, Jnana-Yoga is about right thought. It wants the truth, and nothing but the truth! I'll describe this path, and use it as an opportunity to critically consider the secular and religious schooling of our children. What are we really trying to teach? And what do we really need to learn?

*Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, David Hope,  
Scott Miller, Ollie Ostlund  
Cathy Read will sing for us.*

## Down With The Sickness



As most of you know by now, I've been sick for more than three straight weeks with some kind of head cold/sinus infection. I am finally getting better as of this writing, but it's got me really empathizing with you who struggle with chronic pain or illness. Or deal with chronically-ill partners, or with your own ongoing struggles with bodies that are no longer performing as they once did.

As John Chenoweth says, "Health is like water. You don't miss it until it's gone." When you are really sick it's hard to think about anything else except being sick. Oh, you might have wanted to write a thorough and thoughtful "Top 10 UUCSR events of 2010" retrospective for the newsletter, only to find that your head full of congestion makes it hard to even remember what you had for breakfast yesterday, or whether you had breakfast at all. Reading, my great joy, lately only makes me ready for a nap, which would be far more relaxing in a bed rather than in a chair doing the bob-and-weave with my head. Somehow I eeked out a few sermons and some Chalica reflections in December, but for the last week (until the antibiotics finally kicked in) the only thought I really seem to have had is "Ummmm...."

Being sick is lonely, too. Others can bring you some soup or a cuppa tea, pat your head and smile, but they can't take away how you are feeling. Ultimately, you have to come to terms with it, and find some way to comfort yourself; to settle in to the place you feel most comfortable and stay there. This can make everybody feel helpless. When Rita had pneumonia, there was nothing I could really do but try to encourage her to take time off and rest. But her crazy-busy pace of life far too infrequently yielded that opportunity. She had to get her grades in. Many people simply feel like they cannot devote adequate time to caring for themselves, and I number myself among them. I've come to see that as the real sickness. (Even though many of you motherly types were firmly encouraging of my self-care. Thank you.)

Ironically, being sick has made me feel grateful, too. I have a warm place to live. I have people who worry about me. I have healthcare benefits, and Kaiser provides quality, if factory-like, care. I've been feeling better since I've been on antibiotics, which I can afford. So many people do not have these privileges, and our bizarre society somehow accepts it. That is a bitter pill for me to swallow, and it renews my desire for us to work for change together, and care for those among us who need care

The most striking thing about this experience is that I have lost my sense of taste. It still really hasn't come back. We drank three Syrahs from the same single vineyard in three consecutive vintages with our Christmas din-

ner. That's the sort of wine nerd thing that normally rocks my world. But I couldn't taste them at all, as I whined repeatedly at the meal. Yes, even ministers whine. Forgive me.

The lesson, I suppose, is non-attachment. At least I can still eat, right? I won't be able to taste in the grave, so I'd better get used to it, right? Normally, I'd think that was good wisdom, but this was Dry Creek Syrah, man! Losing my sense of taste did reveal just how much I'm focused on the physical delights of living, and the need to find an even deeper peace or joy that does not require them. Back to the unadorned hut of meditation practice for me, I guess.

Hmmm. If you are learning lessons then even being sick can somehow be a good thing. I know three weeks isn't really all that long in the grand scheme of things, but it has still forced me to make some positive changes in my behavior, and increased my determination to take better care of myself - and to ask you to do the same for yourself.

Oddly, there really is a positive usage of the word "sick." I hear it from my teenage son and his friends. As if further proof of the malleability and ultimate unreliability of language were needed, to them "sick" also means "excellent, unbelievable, difficult to achieve, hella cool." It's good - really good. "Chris Cole is sick" means "I admire the top-notch skateboarding skills of pro skater Chris Cole."

I resist this usage. Too confusing. Sick isn't good.

But, it's not all bad either. Isn't that one of the great ironies of living? We rail against God for allowing sickness or struggle or suffering, when those are the very things that call forth growth and greatness from us, in ways both simple and sublime. So I'm learning my lessons, and getting better, and trusting my body, and the Spirit in it, to heal and restore itself, as I always do, with deep bows to the Universe.

Isn't life wonderful and amazing? Bones break, bones heal. Scratches turn back to skin. (Yo, taste buds, are you reading this?) Also, grief passes, or turns to passion for a cause. Depression lifts. Financial hardship can be relieved, even if the medicine is nearly always our own hard work. The Buddha was right that we are of the nature to grow old, become sick and die. But we are also, quite beautifully, of the nature to grow wise, to heal, to touch eternity in the here and now, and to be free and content in the midst of woe.

A very happy and healthy New Year to you all, with the renewed commitments to love and hope and possibility and care that it brings. I predict that we are going to have a soulful, joyful year of ministering to our community together this year, and I hope to see you on a Sunday soon.

## On the Love of Stuff

*"A mystical experience would be wasted on me. Ordinary things have always seemed numinous to me... You can draw from perception the same way a mystic would draw from a vision."*

—Marilynne Robinson

The just completed holiday season practically begs for the kind of reaction many of us feel come January 2: *Dear merciful God, if you exist and your mercy is true, please deliver us from stuff.* Too much stuff: too many lights and gift cards and piles of wrapping paper, too many presents to think about giving and graciously receiving, too much chocolate, too many candles and cookies and impossibly packaged electronics. (And too many muzak-ish renditions of *Oh Come All Ye Faithful*—but does an auditory nuisance qualify as "stuff?")

As a religious people, UUs are not so much about mere "stuff" anyway, preferring to be defined by the distinctly non-stuff-like qualities of the heart such as kindness and love and loyalty and wonder.

But let me speak here nevertheless in praise of stuff.

The Marilynne Robinson quote at the top of the page (from a 2008 *Paris Review* interview) addresses what is likely an eternal tension between the material world we human beings inhabit and the spiritual worlds we conjure. Religions throughout history have had an often lamentable record of denying the integrity of physical existence. We will not here review the tragedy of so many truncated lives denied the profound wonder of embodied, immanent life by austere spiritualists whose response to mortality was to negate rather than celebrate the joys of incarnation while pointing to some future heavenly reward. Many (though not all) mystics have played a part in this by denigrating earthly life in favor of a supposedly higher, disembodied rapture that marries them to timeless, softer-focused visions of God-union. This while ignoring or denying themselves the sweet burst of God-sensation to be found in, say, a perfect summer strawberry.

Novelist Robinson, however (*Gilead, Home*, both 5-star recommendations from this corner), makes the case for a kind of radical immanence that uses the stuff of this very life—the sights, sounds and textures of everyday existence and moment-to-moment feeling—as a

springboard to a deep experience and subsequent understanding of the sacred. The shirt draped haphazardly on the old chair, the flickering candle in the window at dusk, the perfectly textured custard, a warm new (or old) sweater, the iPod, yes, that shiny new iPod in your child's or lover's hand—none of it sacred or alive unto itself, but all of it potentially made so by the attention, perception and appreciation we bring to it. Who needs other worlds when this world in front of our eyes and hands and minds is so steeped in loveliness, mystery and rapture-awaiting? Robinson asks.

Stuff, of course, can sometimes become an obsession, the pursuit of which represents an empty quest to accumulate for accumulation's sake, or worse yet, as a means to lord it over others who happen to have less disposable income. (Just how many Bentleys parked in how many garages does one newly minted mega-millionaire athlete need to verify his exalted status in life?)

But we must be careful in rejecting crass materialism not to reject material itself. No, I don't need 26 Bentleys in 26 separate custom-built garages, but I can't say I'd mind the beauty and design and performance represented by, oh, *one*. (We must also be careful not to define "crass materialist" simply as "anybody who has more stuff than we do.")

Our cars, houses and easy chairs, our bikes, laptops, bracelets, tools and rose bushes, hard drenching rains and soft feathery snowfalls, our children's drawings, our books, our Buster Posey rookie cards, the lightning-struck tree we pass by on a favorite hike, the perfect cocktail on the counter after a hard day at work, our church building and hymnals and cookie recipes: all of these can come to be so deeply anchored in both the sensate world and our inner selves that we do well not to besmirch their essential integrity, their capacity to help imbue our lives with meaning, gratitude, and joy.

No, we are not our stuff, and whoever dies with the most toys doesn't necessarily win, but let us sing a song here on behalf of the physical world as an inexhaustible treasure trove of spiritual wonder. Our food, our drink, our toys, our bodies: stuff, stuff and more stuff. All of it good. All of it deeply spiritual—if we have but Mind to see.

—Andrew Hidas

*President, Board of Trustees*

## Treasurer's Report

In January 2007, when the UUCSR finances were stressed, we borrowed \$41,000 in the form of 2-year notes from members to provide a cushion for the normal fluctuations in our operations income and expenses. In January 2009 we renewed about \$24,000 of those member notes, which have now come due. This cushion no longer seems necessary as we have maintained an adequate surplus for operating expenses for four years despite the infamous plumbing problem and the increase in our property taxes.

As a result, the Financial Stewardship Council and the Board have decided not to renew these notes; they will be repaid with interest when they come due this month. Any questions can be directed toward Co-Treasurer Bonnie Daines or myself.

Submitted by Laura Jean Hageman

### Save the Date! Saturday, March 5, 2010

**Come enjoy our own Rev. Chris Bell in conversation with KQED "Forum" host Michael Krasny, author of the recently released "**

**Who:** Rev. Christopher Bell and KQED "Forum" host Michael Krasny, author of the recently released *Spiritual Envy: An Agnostic's Quest*

**What:** A special UUCSR fundraiser featuring a conversation on matters of religion, spirituality and more...

**When:** 4 p.m. Saturday, March 5, 2011

**Where:** The UUCSR Sanctuary

**Why:** Intellectual stimulation, spiritual inspiration, and a chance to gather with fellow congregants and contribute significantly to the financial health of UUCSR

**How Much:** \$100 Benefactor tickets include premium seating and a champagne reception with Messrs. Krasny and Bell (sliding scale seating available closer to event date)

*Tickets on sale at UUCSR beginning January 15!*



## Religious Education for Children and Youth

How do children and families fit in to our congregation? What place do they hold in the consciousness of the many and diverse committees and planning groups in our congregation? What is "family ministry"? What are the needs of families with young children? What are the needs of families with teenagers? How can our congregation address some of those needs? Is Sunday morning the best time to worship in the hustle-bustle lives of families with busy lives? What are the alternatives? How can we support a spiritual life when the needs of children take so much of the energy of parents? Who are the people who live near UUCSR? Are there families right in our neighborhood who need us? How can we reach out to families in the wider community and let them know that there is a spiritual home for them here with us? How can we better serve the children and families who are already a part of us?

The questions are many, and the answers will come as the new Expanding Religious Education Task Force gets underway this month. We have a powerhouse of talent on the Task Force! Rev. Chris and I will be joined by Catherine Arnold, Jeanie Bates, Susan Dickey, Eric Fischer, Mindy Graham, Linda Harlow, Susan Miller, Jan Prater, and Cathie Wiese to take on the creative work of building and strengthening Religious Education for Children and Youth. Our aim is to take a close look at what is happening now, and examine the possibilities for growth and change and ultimately put some new plans into action. So, stay tuned...you will be a part of this process.

There is something new happening this month. Rev. Chris and I have created a ritual just for elementary school children. It is called "the Ritual of Belonging". The inspiration for this ritual came from Braden Arnold. One Sunday morning in worship Rev. Chris asked all who were members to raise their hand, Braden lifted his hand then sheepishly brought it down. Later, he expressed

to his mom that he did not know his place in the congregation. Braden had been moved by the baby dedication and the new member recognition ceremonies in worship, but he, like many children, came to UUCSR in elementary school, and missed being dedicated as a baby. Too young for membership, too old for dedication he was left with a feeling that he didn't really belong to our congregation.

Rev. Chris and I feel that children have a special place in Unitarian Universalism and this congregation. We want our congregation to make a covenant with those children who wish to participate to honor their place in the community, and to stand beside them in their UU journey. Because the ritual takes place for children in grades 3 to 6 the child has the maturity to choose to make this statement, and they can take this step any time during these years. The ritual will not offer them official membership (that would take a change of UUCSR bylaws), but will give them an acknowledged place of importance in the fabric of the congregation and an affirmation of their belonging. We now have five rituals to honor our children in their spiritual development across ages: Baby Dedication (up to age one), Ritual of Belonging (grades 3-6), Coming of Age (8<sup>th</sup> grade), Membership (age 16 and up), and Bridging (12<sup>th</sup> grade).

The Ritual of Belonging will take place during the 11:00 worship service on January 9. I hope everyone will come in the spirit of sacred community to honor our children.

In faith,  
Deborah Mason  
Director of Religious Education



## Advocates for Social Justice

### Share the Basket

On Sunday, January 9th,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the offertory will go to fulfill our part of a grant from the UUA to pay for our four members to attend the 5 day training in community organizing in Phoenix last November. Those of us who heard their report at the December Hot Topics will agree that it is money well spent!

On Sunday, January 23rd,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the offertory will be given to the Redwood Empire Food Bank. The Food Bank sustains an increasingly large number of our friends and neighbors through these hard times, and also provides a good part of the food we serve on Saturday mornings. Please be as generous as you can. Thank you!

## Circle Dinner Groups

UUCSR CIRCLE DINNERS are re-forming again this winter! Shirley Williams and Cathie Wiese will be gathering names (and phone numbers) of folks who would like to participate in this wonderful program. NO NEED TO SIGN UP IF YOU ARE ALREADY A PARTICIPANT but if you would like to change your status please let us know.

Circle Dinners are informal social gatherings over a pot-luck meal. All participant names are shuffled into groups of 7 or 8 which becomes a "Circle Dinner Group" for the 4 months of the Circle Dinner period. In the September Newsletter we post the Fall Circle Dinner Lists. In January we rearrange them and post the Spring lists in the February

Newsletter. The groups then contact each other, decide when to gather and who will bring what. At each dinner the group decides who does what for the next month's gathering. You don't need dinner service for 8, a family sized dining room, linen napkins, or even a room with a view!

We are taking SIGN UPS UNTIL FRIDAY, JANUARY 14TH. Send your name and contact info. via EMAIL: to SHIRLEY WILLIAMS at [skwill36@earthlink.net](mailto:skwill36@earthlink.net) or call her at 537-9790. Or contact CATHIE WIESE at [cathie@sonic.net](mailto:cathie@sonic.net) or phone 829-3634. A SIGN UP sheet is posted on the UUCSR Community Bulletin board on the wall in the social hall.

## Immigration Workshops

The concerns about immigration are many and complex. People have strong feelings on this subject but not always accurate information.

Immigration is the **UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION'S** Study/Action issue for the coming year, and **IMMIGRATION REFORM IS ONE OF TWO ISSUES OF OUR STANDING ON THE SIDE OF LOVE PROGRAM. MANY FROM OUR UUCAN LEADERSHIP HAVE BEEN ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN LOCAL IMMIGRATION-RELATED ISSUES AND HAVE SEEN THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION ON THE SUBJECT.**

It is fortunate that the NBSC is putting on two workshops in Sonoma County to explore the history and economics of immigration in our county and state as well as what our various faith traditions teach. We invite you to a conversation about one of the most challenging issues of our time in our effort to build a safer and more just community where all people can live in dignity.

***Wednesday, January 19th from 7 to 9 pm***

St. Vincent de Paul Parish,  
35 Liberty Street, Petaluma

***Thursday, January 27th from 7 to 9 pm***

Congregation Shomrei Torah  
2600 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa

## Evening Book Group

The Evening Book Group will meet on Thursday, Jan. 13 at 7:00 pm at 547 Mendocino. Our selection this month is *Half Broke Horses* by Jeanette Wells. The February selection is *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett. Newcomers and visitors are always welcome.



Linda Lampson

## Women Together

All UUCSR women and their friends are invited to our first film showing. On Saturday, February 5th, at 6:30 pm, come to 547 Mendocino Avenue to watch Meryl Streep and friends in *It's Complicated*, a witty and wise exploration of relationships in mid-life. We will provide wine, tea and coffee. Please bring a dessert to share.

Also mark your 2011 calendars for our Annual Weekend Retreat at Saint Dorothy's Rest. It is earlier this year than in the past, Friday afternoon, April 29th, through Sunday morning, May 1st.



## Day of Silent Buddhist Meditation



On Saturday January 8 at UUCSR from 10 am to 5 pm a meditation retreat will be held. Sitting and walking meditation periods will alternate throughout the day, none longer than 45 minutes.

Some instruction will be provided so that both new meditators and seasoned ones will benefit. Bring a bag lunch. For more info or to sign up, call Rose, 865-0755.

## Committee on Shared Ministry

The Committee on Shared Ministry exists for the purposes of overseeing the general health of the congregation, supporting our minister and providing conflict resolution when needed. We aim to encourage healthy communication, to address issues and concerns in a safe and respectful manner. We meet at least once a month. The meetings are always confidential.

Please contact any one on the committee with your concerns, your questions and your comments. Your input is vital to the health and well being of our congregation. Cathy Read (chair), Rev. Chris Bell, Roger Corman, Nancy Hargis, Andy Levine, Elizabeth Marrs, Mary Wagner

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**  
**SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 2011**  
**Newsletter@uusantarosa.org**

**E-mail submissions**  
**Greatly Appreciated!**  
**Newsletter Assembly**  
**January 26, 2011**

## Annual TIE Potluck

If you are now in a TIE group,  
If you've EVER been in a TIE group, or  
If you've ever been in a Covenant Group elsewhere,  
come to our fourth annual TIE Potluck Luncheon on  
Saturday January 15th from 12 noon to 2 p.m. at the  
church.

TIE (Together In Exploration) groups are UUCSR's version of the Unitarian Universalists "small group ministry" program, sometimes called "covenant groups."

Nationwide they are called by many names, but they all operate in similar ways. That is, each separate group usually has eight to ten members, meets once or twice a month, opens with a reading and then members' sharing salient events in their lives, discussion of a topic chosen from among dozens developed through the years, and

ends with another brief reading and an assessment of the meeting. Each group is led by two trained facilitators.

So, if you're in a TIE group, or ever have been in one, or have been in a similar group at another UU congregation, come to this potluck luncheon! It's a great opportunity to meet others who are—or ever have been—involved in this exciting small group ministry program.

Please bring food (main dish, salad, dessert etc.) for eight to ten people. We'll supply the beverages, dishes, etc.

If you have any questions, please ask your TIE facilitator, or call Mary Wagner at 523-1366

## Race: The Power of an Illusion

People of all colors are warmly invited to come to three nights of exploration and discussion based on our shared viewing of the film *\*Race: The Power of an Illusion.\** We will view the film in parts, so each night will be different enough that you are welcome to come to one, two, or all three classes. Rev. Chris Bell will help lead our discussion of the conclusions that these films draw from history and science.

If you are fascinated by how history influences how we live today, interested in how cultures and races interact

with each other, or just curious about people whose skin colors or cultures are different from your own, you would be a welcome participant.

Please join us January 5, 12, and 19 at the UUCSR from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. This class is sponsored by the UUCSR Diversity Task Force. Contact Carol Kraemer (707)838-3736 if you would like to let us know you will be coming or if you have any questions or comments.

## UUCSR Writers

### UUCSR Writers

Our next regular monthly meeting will be from 4 - 6 pm in the "Green Room" on **Monday, January 3, 2011** at UUCSR, 547 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa, Ca 95401, 707-568-5381. Information: UUCSR Writers, Georgette G. deBlois, GGdeB@aol.com, <http://uucsrwriters.blogspot.com>.

### TatH

The UUCSR Writers now meet for our weekly 10am - 12 noon Thursday morning coffee at the "Haven Coffee House" located in one of the few remaining authentic video stores in Sonoma County, the Video Droid on 1901

Mendocino Avenue in the Santa Rosa JC area. It's in the same parking lot as CVS Pharmacy. Parking is free.

Buy yourself a good cup of coffee or hot chocolate and a morning pastry of your choice. Enjoy the ambiance at the "Haven" as well as the pleasure of our humor, clever conversations and the periodic, spontaneous outburst of laughter that permeates the atmosphere.

Take Care,  
Georgette G. deBlois  
GGdeB@aol.com



## Hot Topics—Engaged Buddhism

Engaged Buddhism is a phrase used to describe the application of Buddhist teachings on mindfulness and meditation to larger social problems. It applies to Thich Naht Hanh's Order of Interbeing, the Dalai Lama's teachings, the work of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship in the U.S., and more.

To many of us Buddhism seems like a way to detach from the world around us, the world of work and family, struggle, pain, sadness, even caring. On Sunday, January 9th at 12:30 in the Board Room, Reverend Chris will disabuse us of these notions and explain how to be active and lively in this world through following Buddhist practice. A light lunch will be available for a donation.

## North Bay Sponsoring Committee

**CAR IMPOUNDS:** As many of you may have read in the Press Democrat, Police Chief Schwedhelm and incoming Sheriff Freitas have decided to re-examine the policy of impounding for a mandatory 30 days vehicles driven by unlicensed drivers.

They're beginning to feel that this is an unproductive use of law enforcement's time and money and serves to alienate the Latino community from them. This more humane approach is a result not only of the example of a flexible response by law enforcement in many Califor-

nia communities, including Oakland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and just recently San Jose, but also the many hours of meetings between members of the NBSC and our local leaders. Everyone agrees that we want safe and sober people driving on our roads and until 1994 people could qualify for a California Driver License regardless of their immigration status. We'll keep you posted on this issue as it evolves.



## The Chalice Project

Through the talents of local established and emerging artists and in partnership with COTS and The Arts Council, the Unitarian Congregation is proud to host and produce: **THE CHALICE PROJECT.**

The Chalice Project is a community-wide effort in which artists and visionaries create pieces of art inspired by the word Chalice. Proceeds of all sales are split 3 ways, with 1/3 of the money raised from the auction of each piece going to the artist who created it. The rest of the money is used to assist COTS and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa to support the lives of people in need.

Join us for this exciting auction  
and festive party!

Saturday, February 26, 2011 at 5:30 pm

The Glaser Center

547 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA

Price: \$15.00 in advance or \$20.00 at the door.

Tickets will be sold at 547 Mendocino Avenue and Copperfield's Montgomery Village.

You have a chance to win a magical week vacation in the medieval village of Soreze in Southern France. Live and share meals in the 300 year old stone home of Carol Watanabe. (Transportation not included).

For more information call: Nancy Hargis at 707/571-1987 or David Templeton at 707/568-5381 ext. 103.



## DIVERSITY TASKFORCE PRESENTS

# “RACE: THE POWER OF AN ILLUSION”

**Convener Rev. Chris Bell**

The class will meet in the Social Hall 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm  
Wednesdays January 5, 12 and 19

Information contact: Carol Kraemer 707-838-3736

**January 5—THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US:**

Despite what we always believed, the world’s peoples don’t come bonded into biological groups. We look at several scientific discoveries that illustrate why humans cannot be subdivided into races..

**January 12 —THE STORY WE TELL:**

Ancient peoples stigmatized “others” on grounds of language, custom, class and especially religion, but they did not sort people according to physical differences.

**January 19 —THE HOUSE WE LIVE IN:**

Until we address the legacy of past discrimination and confront the historical meanings of race, the dreams of equality will remain out of reach.

### **Aging with Grace**

The Aging with Grace group will not meet in January. We will try to reform the group in February. There are many topics for discussion as we proceed in our life’s journey.

If you are interested we will meet next on February 2, 2011 from 10:30am to 12:00 noon in the Board room if available. Those who attend find the information helpful to their needs.

Submitted by Bob Watkins, 707/775-8627

## Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes Unitarian Universalist Congregation Santa Rosa 18 November, 2010

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Andrew Hidas

**Members Present:** Bob Barrows, Ann Chambers, Lois Nagle, Bonnie Daines (Co-Treasurer), John Farison, Laura Jean Hageman (Co-Treasurer), Phyllis Heagney, Andrew Hidas (President), Mary Louise Jaffray (Vice President), Cathie Wiese (Secretary), Craig Work

**Non-members:** Chris Bell, Minister, Terry Graham, Recording Secretary, Deborah Mason

**Opening Words:** Chris Bell, a selection from "Awakening the Soul" by UU Minister John C. Morgan

**Open Mic:** Deborah Mason shared plans for a Religious Education task force to start in January to assess the culture of the congregation; taking a global view of the congregation, examining potential structural changes ranging from visioning to "nuts and bolts" issues. The ad hoc committee is expected to convene for 6 to 12-months. A number of task force members have been identified. Deborah requested that a BOT member join the task force.

**Minutes of 21 October 2010** approved as modified.

**Open Mic (cont'd):** Mary Louise announced that the Bylaws Task Force conducted a first meeting 12 November 2010. Issues addressed included task force membership, goals, congregational communications, and bylaw re-write procedures. Meeting minutes were distributed to the Board. The next meeting is 22 November 2010.

Bob announced that the Annual Pledge Drive Committee was being formed. A kickoff meeting is scheduled for December.

Laura Jean distributed copies of the revised job descriptions for both the director of music and for the sexton/custodian

**Treasurer's Report:** Bonnie reported on a Financial Stewardship Council discussion regarding the possibility that despite UUCSR's property taxes being reduced slightly due to real estate devaluations, further reductions might be possible with an appeal. Discussion proceeded regarding the Council's recommendation not to pursue a reduction at this time, given possible complications and costs relating to an appraisal.

Bonnie moved, Mary Louise seconded, to accept the recommendation not to appeal the tax re-evaluation. Motion passed unanimously viva voce.

(Note: Subsequent Financial Stewardship Council discussion in the days following this vote led to a change in its recommendation and a request for Board reconsideration. Since the re-evaluation request faced a Nov. 30 deadline from the county, the Board conducted an email vote on the matter, and voted

unanimously to submit papers and the \$30 fee to request a re-evaluation.)

**Maintenance Plan Budgeting:** John reported on his initial research regarding building preventative maintenance and capital equipment replacement planning and budgeting. John will serve as Board liaison with operations and budgeting functions. Goal is to establish a long-term budget line item based upon current equipment service conditions and anticipated repair/replacement costs of major items. John moved, Bob seconded, to establish a line item in the 2010-11 budget for funding long-term obsolescence and replacement of capital facilities at \$12K/year, to be negotiated and finalized during the budget process. Motion passed 10-0 with an abstention by Bonnie.

**Membership:** Chris shared his anticipation that the congregation may be poised for a transformative year of growth. His concern is that the congregation may not be adequately prepared. Although the spirit of the congregation is very positively conveyed, Chris anticipates that additional individuals are required to take the lead in new member instruction and welcoming. He called for a deliberate effort to train new leaders, forming a team effort toward this end. The topic was tabled for further discussion.

**Islamic Society Lease:** Andrew reported on the pending 15 December 2010 expiration of the current lease with the Islamic Society. The Society is in the process of securing its own purchased property and prefers a slight modification of terms in the soon-to-be renewed lease. David Templeton had negotiated the revised terms, which were presented by Andrew.

Mary Louise moved, Craig seconded, that the Board accept the terms of the negotiated agreement that extends the lease for a year, but allows either party to terminate with a minimum 30-day notice. Motion passed unanimously viva voce.

Board members then visited the leased area of the building to begin usage considerations in anticipation of the Islamic Society's possible vacating.

**New Member Contacts:** Each Board member committed to make a welcoming contact with two each of the 29 new members to encourage new member engagement with the congregation.

Closing Words: Chris closed the meeting with a reading "Go in peace..." by UU Minister Mark Belletini

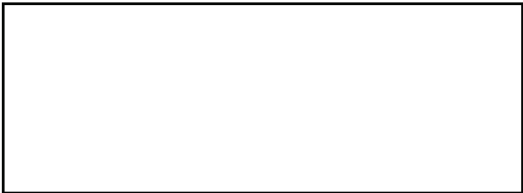
Adjourned: 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Terry Graham, Recording Secretary

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January 2011

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**Editor:** Janis Brewster  
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Please place any hard copy submissions in the Newsletter mail slot in the office by noon Sunday.

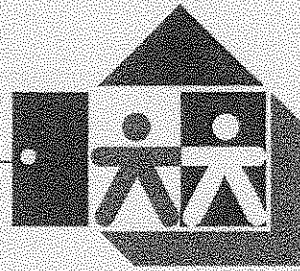
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Sexton: Art Hernandez

**Sunday Religious Education Staff**  
Jeremy Cummings  
Aly Holloway



**Seniors•At•Home**



*~A division of Jewish Family and Children's Services*

*presents a training on ~*

**Depression and Suicide  
Prevention in Older Adults**

**Sunday, January 16, 2011**

**12:30-1:30 p.m.**

**The Glaser Center  
Main Auditorium**

***Presenters:***

***Vicki Wedegaertner, Seniors-at-Home  
Coordinator***

***Henry Lasky, Retired Judge and JFCS Volunteer***

**This presentation will include a discussion about depression and how it presents in seniors. You will also learn how to use the evidence-based Question-Persuade-Refer approach to assess and intervene when a senior's depression is so serious that they might be considering suicide.**

***This training is funded by Sonoma County Mental Health  
through Mental Health Services Act funds.***