



UU Update

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

• December 2013 • Volume 57 • Issue 12 •

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

Theme: Love

DECEMBER 1st

LOVE: Sacred Friendship

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Andy Levine

What is a "friend" anyway? Someone who invites you to play *Farmville* again? Or someone who stands by you through thick and thin? What is the special nature of the friendship we enjoy in religious community, and how can we strengthen it and share it? We'll answer these questions today by considering the Buddhist concept of Sangha.

DECEMBER 8th

LOVE: Teacher & Student

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Frances Corman, Eric Fischer, Bryan Plude

Today we consider the special form of love between a teacher and student, and how we can be both for one another. We'll look at examples of the ideal form of this relationship from the world's religions, including our own. Hymn 124 will provide our framework, as it calls us to "Be that guide whom love sustains. Be that helper nothing daunts. Be that builder trusting good. Be that teacher faith directs." We'll share the collection with *The Living Room*, too.

DECEMBER 15th

LOVE: Adults & Children

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Rev. Kathy Huff, Bev Helfer-Grand, Roger Corman

The love of a parent for a child has often been experienced as the purest and most selfless form of love. For example, the Metta Sutta says the ideal love is like that of a mother for her only child. The good news is one need not be someone's biological parent in order to love a child this way, nor to receive a child's love. The famous blended family of Mary, Joseph and Jesus will provide a framework for our contemplations.

DECEMBER 21st

WINTER SOLSTICE SERVICE

5:00 Drumming

6:00 Service

7:00 Potluck

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Susan Bartholome, SCUUPS
Come celebrate the shortest night of the year with our annual Solstice celebration. This year the growing Pagan group here at UUUCSR will help lead the ceremony. We'll drum, we'll chant, we'll tell stories, we'll sit in darkness, we'll light the fires and we'll eat. What could be better? Call the directions and cast the circle, for the Light shall return!

DECEMBER 22nd

LOVE: Creator & Creation

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Andrew Hidas

Is there a creator of the universe? In the light of the evils of the world, does it even make sense to speak of a creator's love for creation? In the great scheme of things, where does love come from? Does Nature love us back? No one has ever completely answered these questions, but Rev. Chris will give it a shot anyway. As we imagine the creator's view of the world (particularly if she were a Unitarian Universalist creator!) certain actions and attitudes arise that are good and useful for all. We share the basket with *The Saturday Breakfast* today, too.

DECEMBER 24th

CHRISTMAS EVE

6:00 pm

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Scott Miller

A joyful celebration of the great healer and teacher Jesus, and the true spirit of the Holiday season, replete with carols and candles. In the midst of the madness, come savor a moment of true stillness, and fill your soul with hope. All are warmly welcome – invite a friend!

December 29th

LOVE: Minister & Congregation

10:00 Service

11:30 Reception

Service Leaders: Lucia Milburn, the Worship Associates, Bryan Plude, Rev. Chris Bell

Today is Rev. Chris' last Sunday before his seven-month sabbatical. We'll reflect on the past 7+ years of our shared ministry and celebrate our ever-evolving relationship. We will bless Rev. Chris on his travels and studies over the upcoming months, and honor the congregation's leaders who will see us through his absence. We'll sing some rowdy songs and tell a few jokes, too. **Only one service today: 10:00am.** Come early to get a seat! A reception follows.

Seven Years—But Who's Counting?



It's November already (whew!) and "The Holidays" are officially underway in Consumerland. Meanwhile, out here in Sonoma County, the vineyard leaves are falling, and the first rains of the season are gratefully received. Thanksgiving approaches. Some members of the congregational family will gather here at UUCSR for a common feast, and other folks will stay at home, or visit neighbors and loved ones. From the ebb and flow of the seasons, as the nights grow cold and long, we intuit a similar ebb and flow in our lives. It is often a time of drawing within. As befits the harvest season, it is also often a time of gathering together, of deeper connection and deeper feelings, some of them joyful, and some sorrowful. I know my family connections, or lack thereof, are acute at this time of year.

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. A time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted," wrote the ancient preacher. So it is.

Ironically, for me then, this feels more like a season of scattering. During this time of gathering and harvesting and coming together, I am instead readying myself for the long sojourn of sabbatical, when I will be away from Sonoma County for much of seven months.

My plans for the seven months are detailed in *The Sabbatical Companion*, enclosed elsewhere in this newsletter. I am looking forward to reconnecting with loved ones around the country, doing lots of writing, reading and reflecting, and enjoying long periods of meditation practice. There will be some Spanish immersion in the mix, and lots of time with my children. I have big UU theological thoughts, and big plans for liberal religion in Sonoma County, that need sorting out.

It's a little daunting, facing the prospect of being away from a place and the people that provide so much of my identity and sense of purpose. But I know that this will be "a time to break down, and a time to build up."

Such a time is meant only to help unfold new capacities in myself as a minister and a person, as well as giving me a rest. That you and I are able to spend this extended time apart actually shows that our relationship is good. It will be such a long sabbatical because we have been so busy and productive for the last seven years that there didn't seem any time to take a break until now! The time away will serve to strengthen and clarify our relationship and renew our connection for the future.

The Search Packet that brought me here said, "Come Grow With Us!" on its cover. I have, in ways I couldn't imagine. The past seven years have been the most challenging, personally transforming, and pleasurable years of my life. I thank you for that. I treasure so many rich and loving relationships here, and so value the chance to lead in Santa Rosa for our vision of the common good.

You have grown, too. Not just in membership numbers, though that fact is in evidence all around us. You have grown spiritually, musically, organizationally and institutionally and personally. So many good and growing things are happening in our community because of you. You and your beautiful, strong, gentle, caring hearts.

Your growth is certain to continue even while I'm away, for the sabbatical is also a time for the congregation to test its vision for the future, to develop new leadership, and to remember that the institution of UUCSR is bigger than any one of us. It is bigger than any minister, that's for sure!

I'm sorry to tell you that in this season of gathering, there is another scattering in my life, too. As most of you know my wife Rita and I have been working hard on our relationship for the past several years, and have been separated for the last six months. I regret to say that we are planning to make our separation complete. I prompted that decision, and I am certain it is the right way forward, although it makes me very sad indeed. Rita has decided to move to Colorado sometime in the spring, depending upon her schedule and obligations at Sonoma State University. I'll move back into our house at Yulupa when that day comes. Aaron will do what he wants. As usual...

I have been deeply touched by the safe and supportive space that you have created for us to do our marital work privately, and by the kindnesses you have shown to both of us during this time of struggle and discernment. Rita will have an especially painful grief to bear, for she will be losing her congregation, too. I am sorry about that. Either of us is willing to discuss this matter privately with you if you have any questions. Please know that I am fundamentally well. "There is a time to keep, and a time to throw away. There is a time to mourn and a time to dance."

In spite of the changes in my life, I still proclaim the bounty of the harvest all around me, and say let the gathering commence! Let it be a joyous holiday season for all. Let Rev. Kathy Huff and Bryan Plude be embraced as the ministerial leadership while I'm gone. Let our new Choir Director and Pianist be warmly welcomed among us (you will meet them any day now)! Let the Caring Connections team continue to grow and serve more ably, let there be great worship every Sunday, let our leaders be loved and trusted.

Finally, as the line from the Monty Python movie goes, "I'm not dead yet!" We still have a month of lovely worship services together. I hope to see you frequently throughout December, and I wish you every blessing during my absence. I'll send postcards, and I'll see you at the Glaser Center 10th Anniversary on July 13th, 2014. May the Great Big Thing shower you with love and beauty, until we see each other again in July.

Greetings from the Board President

I don't know how it got to be December already. The board has been meeting monthly, working toward the goals that were set at our retreat in August which seems like just yesterday. Here is a bit of what we have done to date.

We have taken steps to enhance communication between the board and members both individually and in groups. I hope you have all noticed our "Ask A Board Member" table outside the sanctuary between services and after the late service. You are invited to pull up a chair and ask the board member a question, and, unlike Lucy's practice of charging for her service, we pay you. Do stop by, we really do want to hear from you.

We have begun a system of liaison relationships between individual board members and the many entities within our congregation. Our hope is that this can become a useful two way exchange...a conduit for the flow of information, problem solving, staying current with the very active life of our congregation.

Your board is a hard working bunch. I will share more

of our progress toward meeting our goals in the upcoming months.

So, it is December already and it feels very alive with projects around UUCSR.: jammies and a book for the children at the Family Support Center, thanks to the Friday Family Fun Night folks; lovely greeting cards from UUSC that benefit the good works of UUSC, sold by the Advocates for Social Justice; the beautiful book of reflections from the Worship Associates offered as a gift idea. There is so much happening within our community. Whether it is at the committee level, or the individual level good intentions manifest as contributions to a greater good. We are rich in our willingness to engage with others in the work of our mission:

Celebrating Life
Empowering People
Caring For One Another
Helping to Build a Better World

It is joyful work we do.

Jeanie Bates
Board President

Intern Minister

As many of you know, I preached on November 10, the day before Veterans' Day. In the second service veterans were recognized and were included in the pastoral prayer. I regret to say that recognition of veterans was conspicuously absent in the first service. I meant to; somehow, I missed it. I apologize to veterans and relatives of veterans for not recognizing your service and sacrifice at our 9:15 service.

Last August 18th the Hot Topic considered expanding UUCSR's ministry to the homeless. There was quite a bit of interest, and on October 20th, Rev. Chris convened a group of enthusiastic members and friends. Our conversation focused in on two issues. First, every winter people in Santa Rosa die from exposure during the winter months when temperatures dip or conditions are wet. There are no emergency shelter options available in the city or in Sonoma County to address this. We wondered if there was something we could do. Second, we thought it appropriate to decide as a community what our boundaries are, how we can keep our building a safe

space and at the same time offer a hand to those in dire need. At present, UUCSR has no formal policies or training for volunteers. We thought that it would be good to look further into both of these areas.

We concluded our meeting by dividing our group roughly in half, those interested in policy and training and those interested in shelter. We have called ourselves the Homeless Neighbors Committee, with subcommittees on shelter and policy. We have met regularly since, with progress being made on both fronts. We are in the investigatory stages, gathering information and exploring options. Both of these areas of potential action are long lead time items which will involve discussion by the entire congregation. You will be hearing more about these projects through Order of Service announcements and Focus and Open List messages.

What a blessing it is to work with such a concerned congregation!

Bryan Plude
Intern Minister

Treasurer's Report

December already??? Where does the time go anyway?

Tax time again

Remember to make sure you get all your pledge payments and other donations to UUCSR (and any other non-profits to which you contribute) paid during this month if you want to include them as a deduction on your tax return. Some of you with investments may have had a very good year (like our endowment fund did!) and may want to consider donating appreciated stock in order to avoid paying tax on the increase in value. You can take the deduction for the full value of the stock but will not have to pay tax on the difference between the full value and the original cost of the stock. Please discuss with your financial advisor if you are interested. If you would like to donate stock as a donation or pledge payment, please let me or Janis Brewster know.

Looking for gift ideas?

Copies of the beautiful book, A Circle of Voices, written by our very own Worship Associates are still for sale and make wonderful gifts for friends and family. We are so lucky to be able to hear their moving and inspiring words every week – it's fantastic to be able to share with those who do not live close enough to enjoy our Sunday

services. So don't forget to pick up copies for all your friends and family.

Another idea – give the gift of a donation to our Saturday Breakfast. Provide the name and address and UUCSR will send them an acknowledgement of your gift in their name.

Financial Update

First of all, thanks to all for a very successful Service Auction. We grossed \$19,600. Kudos to the very hard-working committee that made it all possible.

Second, remember when the lights went out? It looks like we are going to need to repair/replace our electrical panel to the tune of about \$35,000 in January. Ouch! There was a time when we would have had to do some serious fundraising to handle this type of expenditure. But thanks to the foresight of our Board several years ago, our Building Systems Replacement Fund will provide most of the dollars necessary. Wow!

Finally, we are still doing quite well relative to our budget this year in most areas. So the news on this front is all good. I'll provide more details once we get to midyear but as always, if you are one of those folks who likes to talk numbers, let me know.

Linda Balabanian, Treasurer

RE Family Holiday Party



Saturday, December 28 from 4:00 to 7:00pm

Families with children of all ages are welcome!!!

We will start with some distinctly UU holiday activities:

Making & decorating flower-pot chalices for your home

Decorating Chalice Cookies (which we will enjoy for dessert)

Singing some UU Songs together

Then we will have a pot luck supper

Child care providers will be on hand to help with the youngest youngsters

RSVP to Susan Dickey susanlf.dickey@gmail.com or sign up on Sundays in RE

***We will need to know who is coming to plan for the two projects,
so do let us know if you can come and what you will bring for the potluck.***

Religious Education for Children and Youth

At the end of this month we will say farewell to Rev. Chris as he embarks on a well deserved six-month sabbatical. There is no question that we will miss him and look forward to his return. And at the same time my hope is that this will be a period of time when the congregation can stretch and grow in ways that make us an even stronger community. In my years at the Ventura UU Church we had two sabbatical periods and in those times we learned a lot about leadership and how we could serve the church to keep it flourishing. For me it was a time that deepened my commitment to Unitarian Universalism and expanded my role as a leader. During both sabbaticals I saw people discovering their own ministries. They stepped up in worship, in caring for those in the congregation who needed extra support, in Board leadership and in creating deeper personal relationships with one another. Because we did not have our minister at the helm, we had to jump in and make it work. The result was that when the minister came back the church was in a place of health and wholeness.

RE will not miss a beat while Rev. Chris is gone. I have a strong RE Committee helping with the work and providing me with support. I will offer The Art of UU Parenting again after the new year so that we can continue to create a supportive family ministry. We will continue to plan family fellowship to encourage close relationships among families.

I challenge all of you to think of ways that you can serve to make UUCSR stronger by offering something of yourself to our programs in the months to come. Not just in RE (though that would be grand!) but in any way that you are called. Chris' sabbatical is his time for rest and renewal I hope it will be our time for invigoration and renewal.

In faith,
Deborah

Here's What's Happening in RE Classes

Sr. High Youth Group meets every Thursday from 4-6pm. Deborah Mason, Rev Chris and Eric Fischer serve as Youth Advisors. Contact Deborah (debmasonuu@gmail.com) for more information.

Grades K-8 will gather together for Children's Chapel on the first Sunday of each month. When there is a 5th Sunday all ages gather for Justice or Arts Sunday.

December RE class schedule

12/1/13	Children's Chapel all ages together	Theme: Love in Friendship
12/8/13	Grades K-2 <u>Love Surrounds Us</u> Session 7 Love Surrounds in Ritual	Grades 3-5 <u>We Believe</u> : Session 8 Dorothea Dix (Principle 1)
12/15/13	Grades K-2 <u>Love Surrounds Us</u> Session 8: <u>Love Surrounds Us in Our History</u>	Grades 3-5 <u>We Believe</u> : Session 9 A Very Short Rule (Principle 2)
12/22/13	Children's Chapel All ages together	Theme: Winter Solstice Celebration
12/29/13	One Intergenerational Service today at 10:00 am as we send Rev. Chris off to his sabbatical.	Children grades Kindergarten and up will worship with adults. Childcare for infants, toddlers and babies.

Workshop! Discussion! Learning!

Put these upcoming Adult Religious Education classes on your calendar – register at the Adult RE Table in the Social Hall after services on Sunday or in the Office weekdays.....

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARY OLIVER

Facilitator: Robert Aquinas McNally

Mary Oliver's poetry is about the wild life that surrounds her home on Cape Cod. But her poems also explore life and death, prayer, spirituality, and a God who is incarnate in Nature. "There is," she says, "only one subject worth my attention and that is the recognition of the spiritual side of the world and, within this recognition, the condition of my own spiritual state."

"The author or coauthor of nine books of nonfiction, Robert Aquinas McNally is also a widely published poet. Four of his poems have been nominated for the prestigious Pushcart Prize, and his most recent collection, *Songs of the Two Names*, won the 2012 Grayson Books Poetry Chapbook Award. McNally has also taught a class on poetry, prophecy, and preaching at Starr King School for the Ministry and taught about Mary Oliver at Mt. Diablo UU Church in Walnut Creek."

Day/Time: Saturday, January 11, 2014 - 9 am to 4 pm.

There will be a break for lunch at approximately noon. Bring your own bag lunch.

Book Needed: Mary Oliver, *New and Selected Poems*. Volume One. (Vol. Two is optional) Readily available at Copperfield's Books, Santa Rosa (20% discount for UUCSR Readers or online at Amazon.com).

Location: UUCSR Board Room

Fee: \$30

LONG STRANGE TRIP: A JOURNEY THROUGH 2000 YEARS OF UNITATIAN UNIVERSALISM.

Edited by Ron Cordes

This film series examines the early roots of liberal religious thought.

Day: Six Fridays in 2014 – January 10, January 17, January 24, January 31, February 7, February 14

Time: Noon – 1:30 pm Bring your own bag lunch to eat while we watch the film and discuss.

Location: UUCSR Board Room

Fee: \$30

Men's Gathering



Men's Gathering 10am to 2pm Saturday 14 December at UUCSR. All men welcome, no prior experience necessary. No registration or fee required.

Bring a potluck item to share, your favorite dish or other item for the BBQ, and your good cheer. If you have questions please contact Andy Levine at [707/887-8810](tel:7078878810) or andylevine@sonic.net.

Meet the Minister

These are brief, informal meetings held once a month following the 11 a.m. Sunday Service as indicated below. They provide an opportunity for visitors and guests to meet with our minister, Rev. Chris Bell, and one or two lay leaders.

Questions are not only welcomed, but encouraged! Bring your coffee or tea and join us in the Green Room, located at the opposite end of the hall from the social area.

December 15

JANUARY 5th

ANNUAL MILESTONES SERVICE

Service Leaders: Susan Panttaja, the Worship Associates

Making Room at Christmas

Well, most of you know that this year, winter of the 2013, will be the first year in a decade that the Glaser Center will not be hosting a certain twisted Christmas event. People keep asking me if I'm going to miss hosting that annual showcase of holiday stories and comedic surprises.

My answer, of course, is . . . "Of course!"

But the simple truth is, it was time to make space in my life for new projects, and sometimes, you can't bring in anything new unless you remove some of the old stuff (as my brilliant and insightful wife Susan has been telling me, though in her case it is in regards to cleaning out the garage once and for all).

Winter is a good time to think about clearing things away. On a personal level, as we prepare to visit family and friends for the holidays, it's a good time to clear away some of that other "old stuff" we carry with us, those old resentments and jealousies and not-completely-forgiven slights that we tend to

hold on to. I don't know about you, but this year, as I literally clear space out in that garage, and as I make room to take new artistic risks, I intend to also work to see those I love without the baggage of all that old stuff.

As for the Glaser Center, I invite you to join us for some of the "new stuff" that we will be bringing to our stage as part of the year-end arts and culture offerings of the UUCSR.

Happy Holidays!

David Templeton,
Glaser Center Artistic Director



Greetings from Rev. Kathy—Sabbatical Minister

When I was a child my younger brother and I eagerly awaited the arrival of the animated holiday specials. This was way before videos, DVD's, and on-demand television. It meant putting the exact time on the calendar and on the appointed day sitting down to watch. If you missed it, you had to wait until next year. We both loved *Charlie Brown's Christmas*; imagine my delight to discover the Charles M. Schulz museum in Santa Rosa! One of my other all time favorites is *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*.

Does anyone still watch this now classic about an out-cast reindeer whose red nose saves Christmas? With the holidays approaching my mind turns to this story in particular for entirely different reasons than years past. I've always appreciated the finer points of the story: the lessons about being bullied, overcoming fears, making friends with those who are different, finding a place for the lost and broken, and having the courage to follow one's dreams in spite of what other people think. That little 47-minute animation is jammed packed with timeless messages.

This year, I've been thinking a lot about Rudolph's red nose. How alarming it was for him and his family. How he tried to hide it, running away so as not to be teased or a burden. Perhaps my focus on his unusual nose is not surprising given I am currently sporting a big red lumpy shape on my face of my own. I just had my first removal of skin cancer. In spite of how I may look on the outside, it doesn't hurt, and I am going to

be fine. What a relief it is to have the tumor removed and the prognosis so good. I really am counting my lucky stars. But there's still the fact of the big red lump on my cheek and that it will be there for quite some time. The true scarring of my face will not be known for even longer.

No matter how much I may wish it didn't make any difference how I look, I know that it does. And for the first time since I was a teenager with pimples I find myself feeling self-conscious. It's an oddly humbling experience. Those who know and love me best are kind enough to tell me it doesn't "look that bad."

A few years ago, a friend gave me a blinking red-nose. My children and I enjoy getting it out over the holidays and wearing it. It brings a bit of humor and sparkle to whatever we are doing at the time. In the make believe world Rudolph puts his shiny red nose to good use. Eventually everyone gets used to this little fellow and he doesn't seem so odd, even to himself.

When we meet for the first time I don't know if I will be feeling odd, or useful, or a bit of both. Whatever the day may bring, I am truly looking forward with eagerness and delight to meeting all of you. Though our sabbatical ministry doesn't begin in earnest until January, on December 15th I will be with Rev. Chris in worship and we can start to get to know one another. You will recognize me by the sparkle in my eyes!

Music Notes

We hope you have been enjoying the wonderful variety of music that our many talented musicians have been providing for our services this past month. We have more in store for you in December, beginning with Robin Rogers and Eric Skagerberg singing "You've Got a Friend in Me" for both services December 1. The choir will also be singing "What Wondrous Love Is This" for the 9:15 service. Pat Russell and I will be playing piano duets by Gabriel Fauré. On December 8, we will hear from Robin Rogers again, along with John Chenoweth and Mac Freeman, playing all the music for both services.

Susan Panttaja will sing a beautiful lullaby, "Here in My Arms," for both services on December 15. She will join Cathy Read and Claire Beery (Luna trio) on December 22 to sing two songs: "Light Against the Darkness" and "Rorate Coeli Desuper," based on the poem "On the Nativity of Christ" by William Dunbar and set to music by former Luna member Coley Glover. Roger Corman will play piano for both of those services.

And then, on Christmas Eve, the choir will sing a medley of carols by Gustav Holst, and Robin Rogers and friends will sing "Carol of the Bells." Pat Russell and I will play a Christmas piano duet by Respighi and some very interesting arrangements of familiar carols. Of course, the service will end with our traditional candle lighting as we all sing together "Silent Night."

Finally, on December 29, which will be Rev. Chris's last service before he leaves for his sabbatical, there will be lots of music by many of our musicians, and the choir will sing "A Gaelic Blessing" by John Rutter to wish him well.

We wish everyone a very happy holiday season filled with beautiful music.



Jenny Harriman, Music Committee Chair

Evening Book Group

The Evening Book Group will meet on Thursday, December 12th from 7 to 9 p.m. at 547 Mendocino. We meet in the RE wing. The December selection is *When Women Were Birds* by Terry Tempest Williams.

Visitors and newcomers are welcome. The selection for January is *The Aviator's Wife* by Melanie Benjamin. If you have questions, please contact Linda Lampson.

UUCSR Writers

SEASONS GREETINGS...The UUCSR Writers will not be meeting during the month of December.

The UUCSR Writers new schedule for our regular monthly meetings in 2014 is January 6, from 1pm to 4pm the first Monday of the month. 1 - 2pm will be Instructional: a half hr lecture and a 1/2 hr group discussion.

Each month we will watch the Great Courses DVD "Building Great Sentences: Exploring the Writer's Craft" with Professor Brooks Landon (Univ. of Iowa) in a series of 24 half hour lectures about writing followed by a 1/2 hr group discussion.

2 - 4 pm will be the Writers regular monthly meeting: of presentations of works in progress by our writers. Novelists, Poets, Memoirs, whatever your chosen work, come and share with us your written words.

If you are not able to attend the Instructional session from 1-2pm, do come for the regular meeting from 2-4pm.

Our meetings will continue to be on the first Monday of the month (except Sept-the second Monday) from 1 to 4 pm at the Glaser Center, 547 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa, 707-568-5381. We will meet 10 months a year, Jan - Oct, no meetings in November and December.

We will also continue our "UUCSR Writers Presents" Special Events Series. TBA

Best thoughts to Everyone

Take Care,

Georgette G. deBlois, ggdeb@sonic.net

December Hot Topic

Affordable Care Act/California Covered: How will the Affordable Care Act Affect You and Your Loved Ones?

Ones? On Sunday December 8th, from 12:30-2:15 in the Board Room at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa, Abraham Daniels, Business Development Manager, for the Sonoma County Department of Health Services, will be speaking on the Affordable Care Act and its impact on Sonoma County.

He will give a broad overview of how Covered California works and where to enroll in Sonoma County. There will

be time for questions and answers. I know we will have questions about some of the myths or stories we have heard about the law. I am very interested to learn how the roll-out of the program has gone in Sonoma County and whether there is anything we can do to help get the word out about the Affordable Care Act. If you have questions, you can e-mail me, Becky Montgomery at montyb@sonic.net or call (707) 573-0103.

Advocates for Social Justice

Share the Offering:

On Sunday, December 8th, half the collection will go to **The Living Room.** We do this quarterly as we are part of its "Circle of Support." As many of you know, this is the only day-time drop-in center for homeless women and their children. They offer many services, from a place to get mail, make local phone calls, to groups that help the women learn about parenting, budgeting, local resources, and general support. The children can engage in constructive and therapeutic play. As the weather gets colder

and children have many school holidays, The Living Room is a god send! Thank you for your generous and on-going support!

On Sunday, December 22nd, half of the collection will again go to finance our **Saturday Breakfast Program.** Grant money is scarce so it's mostly up to us to provide this delicious hot, much appreciated breakfast, to our many, often cold and wet, neighbors. Thank you!

Women Together Holiday Party

All UUCSR women and their friends are invited to our umpteenth Holiday Party on Saturday, December 14th from noon to 2. Helga Lemke is again opening her gracious home for this event, 1983 Grosse Avenue (off of Bryden Lane just off 4th Street) in Santa Rosa.

This is always an oasis of fun, relaxation, and respite from the hecticness of the season. Please bring a lunch dish to share. See you there!



Breath—Mobility—Balance

On Sunday, December 15th, Monica Anderson will offer this fun and easy class from 10:15 to 10:50 am.

No special clothes necessary!

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2013
Newsletter@uusantarosa.org

E-mail Submissions
Greatly Appreciated!
Newsletter Assembly
10 a.m.— December 30, 2013

The UUCSR Ministerial and Congregational Evaluation is Online!!

The online UUCSR Ministerial and Congregational Evaluation is ready!! This evaluation in survey form has been created by your Committee on Shared Ministry for the purpose of conducting Rev. Chris Bell's yearly evaluation, as well as evaluating how we are doing as a congregation overall.

Please take a few moments to complete the evaluation. We really need your input and feedback. A link to the evaluation survey is available on the UUCSR website, or you may go directly to <http://www.websurveymaster.com/s/UUCSR-Ministry-Survey-2013>. The PASSWORD is "uucsr2013". Be sure to use lower case letters please.

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa 17 October 2013

Members Present: Susan Bartholome, Jeanie Bates (President), Reverend Chris Bell (Minister, ex officio member), Lois Bell, John Farison, Laura Jean Hageman (Vice President), Alan Proulx, Cathie Wiese, Marge Wright

Members Not Present: Joe Como, Linda Stabler

Non-Members Present: Sibyl Day (Corporate Secretary), Terry Graham (Recording Secretary), Kirsten Olney (Financial Stewardship), Cathy Read (Chair, Committee on Shared Ministry)

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Board of Trustees (BOT) President, Jeanie Bates

Opening Words & Chalice Lighting – Group reading led by Reverend Chris

Agenda Review – No additional items added to the agenda

Timekeeper Volunteer – Sibyl Day

Minutes of 19 September 2013 Review

- Staff personnel confidential information deleted from the minutes

- Minutes accepted as modified

Opening Words by Reverend Chris and Chalice Lighting by Laura Jean Hageman

Open Microphone – No speakers

Review of 2013 Fall Congregational Meeting

Varied comments from the BOT members included:

- “just gets better and better”

- Information quality very good

- A position that 9 a.m. start is too early supported in that members kept arriving, albeit preferable to leaving, as the meeting progressed. Meeting started with approximately 80 attendees and finished at approximately 100. This position was countered with (a) a congregational survey supported the 9 a.m. start and (b) attendance is growing and has never been larger.

- A position that the visuals didn't enhance the presentation in that they mirrored the verbal presentation also prompted comments supporting the effects of the visuals.

- A noted positive was that the meeting comprised many “voices”, both via the presentations as well as comments and questions from the members.

Ministerial / Congregational Evaluation Process – Cathy Read; Chair, Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM)

A draft of the proposed ministerial evaluation process was available to BOT members. An earlier considered process suggested by UUA didn't adequately capture specifics. The plan is to conduct the evaluation earlier in this fiscal year so that it is complete prior to the start of Reverend Chris' sabbatical. The COSM is looking for as wide a source of inputs as possible in addressing the evaluation of and by the congregation and the minister. Cathy solicited BOT inputs re omissions to be added and/or specifics that should be deleted. On-line and hard-copy comments to Cathy were requested NLT Friday, 25 October 2013. Cathy's request for approval of the process was accepted by the BOT.

Treasurer's Report – Kirsten Olney, Financial Stewardship (FineStew)

Kirsten's handout and presentation covered three items (1) Fiscal first quarter status, (2) Funding for electrical panel and (3) Proposal to contract with PayPal for credit card processing.

(1) Pledge revenue is 12% over budget; due to FY2012/13 late payments occurring in FY2013/14. Sunday basket revenue slightly under budget but not yet cause for concern. Total expenses approximately \$10K under budget. Net income is approximately \$5K positive. Cash position has been strong and steady.

Cont. on page 11

Board of Trustees Minutes Cont.

Cont. from page 10

- (2) FineStew unanimously supports funding the replacement electrical panel via \$20K from the Building System Replacement Fund and \$15K from Cash with overruns coming from the Repairs & Maintenance budget. Alan suggested that the funding come from the Emergency Fund (EF) but counter positions contended that the EF is not to fund normal replacement. He also expressed some concern that the organization was putting itself in a potentially “cash poor” situation. Kirsten countered, indicating that, per the handout, adequate cash is planned and will be expended for this purpose rather than invested. John offered that the most recent quotes put the cost at \$35,200. John moved and Laura Jean seconded a motion that the replacement electrical panel be funded at \$35,200; \$20K from the Building Replacement Fund, \$15,200 from Cash with overruns, if any, funded from the regular Repairs and Maintenance budget. Motion passed unanimously (8-0).
- (3) The Treasurer and FineStew requested that the BOT approve their proposal to contract with PayPal for credit card processing. Details of the relationship, including expected costs and revenues were centered on the points in the handout. Rollout may be completed by calendar year end. Cathie moved and Alan seconded a motion that the BOT accept FineStew’s proposal to contract with PayPal for credit card processing. Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

Music Director Status/Update – Reverend Chris

The search for two temporary, part-time positions; choir director and accompanist, is progressing. Each position is for 8-hours/week. Until the positions are filled, volunteers will fulfill the accompanist role and maintain the choir. A celebration for Nancy Hayashibara is planned for 27 October.

Group Goals

Facilities – John

- Facilities have received a time & materials NTE bid of \$3K with target of \$1,400 for installing the electrical panel, partitioning the electrical service between the rental unit portion and the congregation’s facility. There will be ample capacity for electrical service growth. Installation will take 3-days, scheduled for January. John recommended that BOT accept the bid from Lunardi Electric. The recommendation was accepted unanimously (8-0).
- Facilities is working on a proposal achieve more efficient lighting.
- Possibilities for social hall sound improvement are being pursued.
- The Facilities Team wants to expand membership
- In response to Laura Jean’s query re the closing-in of the breezeway, John responded that the initial investigation indicates that code requirements are likely to make the project cost prohibitive. This is an item for Facilities to consider within

a long range plan.

Financial – Alan

No progress since last report.

Community Support & Communication – Susan

· Susan has been searching for BOT liaison volunteers for the various committees/teams. Many groups don’t currently have a designated liaison to act as a communication conduit between the teams and the BOT. Susan distributed a sign-up sheet to the members.

· A new “Talk to a Board Member” station will be setup for Sundays – a BOT volunteer is expected to be available.

Sabbatical Committee Report – Jeanie

· The Human Resources (HR) Committee reviewed and modified a Letter of Agreement between UUCSR and Reverend Kathy Huff who will serve in the capacity of Sabbatical Minister. Following a motion by Alan to accept the letter of Agreement, a second by Laura Jean and discussion, the motion passed unanimously (8-0).

Total Compensation Statement – Sibyl

Sibyl, representing the HR Committee and Linda Stabler, presented a draft “Total Compensation Statement” for review. Individualized statements will be created annually for the minister and each staff member on the regular payroll. These statements have become a best practice throughout organizations and industry. They will delineate UUCSR annual benefit expenditures for each individual. Lois moved and Laura Jean seconded a motion to accept the content and format of the Total Compensation Statement. Discussion ensued, including a memo from absent BOT member, Joe Como, questioning the objectives of the annual statement. In response to a question from John, Sibyl stated that HR members and supervisor will present the statement to the individual staff members. Cathie expressed concern regarding a specific sentence of the statement. As a result of Cathie’s concern, Lois moved and Laura Jean seconded to accept the content and format of the Total Compensation Statement as modified by deleting the 1st sentence of the 2nd paragraph of the submittal. Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

Sonoma Clean Power – Alan

Alan presented a qualitative case for opting to Sonoma Clean Power when that option is to be made. The discussion touched upon related energy savings aspects, viz. heating, lighting, insulation. John advised that a quantitative assessment be made by the Facilities Team. Jeanie requested that Alan work with John, keeping the BOT advised.

Final Reflections, Questions, Appreciations

Jeanie thanked Cathie for the pre-meeting meal and Kirsten for the Treasurer presentation.

Closing Words – Jeanie

Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Graham



Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa
547 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95401-5241

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December 2013

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Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

Mailing Address: 547 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95401 Telephone: 707-568-5381

Email: office@uusantarosa.org Fax: 707-568-5387 Website: http://www.uusantarosa.org

Board of Trustees

President: Jeanie Bates,
President@uusantarosa.org
Vice President: Laura Jean Hageman
Vice President@uusantarosa.org
Treasurers: Linda Balabonian
Treasurer@uusantarosa.org
Secretary: Sibyl Day

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Order of Service Announcements:

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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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Glaser Center Director: David Templeton, Ext.103, glasermanager@uusantarosa.org
Sexton: Phil Butterfield

Sunday Religious

Education Staff
Shawna Hoxsie
Fiona Mackenzie

What is a Sabbatical?

And What Does it Mean for UUCSR?

A sabbatical is a complete break from congregational responsibilities to provide rest, renewal and reflection. This extended leave of absence will give Rev. Chris a chance to pursue some of the personal and professional goals that he has neglected under the demands of full-time ministry in our rapidly growing congregation, and will provide us with an opportunity to develop our own lay leadership. Since August 2006, Rev. Chris has accumulated one month of sabbatical for each year that he has served here (up to six). With a month of vacation time tagged on the end, he will be gone for a total of seven months.

Beginning in January, Rev. Chris has planned a ski trip with his son Aaron. This will be followed by visits with family and friends in Colorado, Chicago, Cleveland, Columbus and Boston. Then he will undertake a 30-day Zen practice period in Massachusetts during February and March before returning home for a month of drum and guitar lessons. In mid-April he will head east again to visit his daughter Caitlin in North Carolina, and to be present for the birth of his and Rita's first grandchild. (Yay!) Following another period of hometown rest and reading, he will spend much of late May and early June in Mexico learning some Spanish, again with Aaron if possible. He will attend Ministry Days and the UUA General Assembly in Providence, RI, in June and spend time there with his friend and teacher Rev. James Ford. He will return to Santa Rosa in time for the 10th Anniversary of the Glaser Center on July 13th, and will return to regular duties on August 1, 2014.

Along the way he intends to do a lot of writing and reading, lose 15 pounds, and return to us tanned, rested and ready for the next seven years!

Frequently Asked Questions

How has the Sabbatical been funded?

Over the past years we have budgeted for the expenses of the sabbatical period. Through wonderful fiscal planning by your financial stewards, the funds are in hand!

Can I contact Rev. Chris during his sabbatical?

No. To ensure a successful sabbatical experience for us all, Board President Jeanie Bates, in consultation with Lucia Milburn, chair of the Sabbatical Committee, will be the only person in the Congregation to contact Chris. This will occur only in the event of a major congregational emergency.

Whom do I contact for rites of passage?

For weddings, union ceremonies, memorial services and dedications of children, contact Intern Minister Bryan Plude.

Whom do I contact for pastoral care?

Pastoral care needs will be coordinated by Bryan Plude and Caring Connections (Chair, Gail Alford).

Role of the Board

The Board will function as it always has during this sabbatical period. They will oversee the business of the congregation at their monthly meetings and convene the winter and spring congregational meetings as calendared, February 16, 2014 and June 8, 2014. They will continue to remain available to all members of our congregation to address concerns and field questions. Bryan Plude, our Intern Minister, will provide a ministerial presence at our meetings and provide spiritual leadership to the Board during the period of Rev. Chris' sabbatical. The Board expects to have a productive Sabbatical period and looks forward to a time of opportunity for all of us as a congregation.

Role of the Sabbatical Minister

Our Sabbatical Minister, Rev. Kathy Huff, will be deeply involved in planning and participating in worship during the sabbatical period. Additionally, she will serve as supervisor for our Intern Minister, Bryan Plude. She will be available for consultation with the Sabbatical Committee and other entities within the congregation if necessary. Rev. Kathy will make herself known to the congregation through contributions to the Newsletter as well as from the pulpit.

Role of the Intern Minister

Bryan Plude, Intern Minister, will be with us twenty hours a week. He will plan and participate in worship regularly, will continue his contributions to the Newsletter, and will become more involved with the functioning of some of the groups within the congregation, including the Board, Caring Connections, TIE Groups, and the Membership Committee. Bryan will be a key figure in providing pastoral care.

In the Pulpit

- January 5: *Milestones Service*
January 12: *Rev. Kathy*
January 19: *Bryan*
January 26: *Rev. Kathy*
February 2: *Bryan*
February 9: *Rev. Kathy*
February 16: *Robin Rogers*
(After Congregational Meeting)
February 23: *Rev. Kathy*
March 2: *Guest or "In-House"*
March 9: *Rev. Kathy*
March 16: *Bryan*
March 23: *Guest or "In-House"*
March 30: *Rev. Kathy*
April 6: *Rev. Kathy*
April 13: *Bryan*
April 20: *Rev. Kathy*
April 27: *Guest or "In-House"*
May 4: *Bryan*
May 11: *Rev. Kathy*
May 18: *REVIVAL!*
May 25: *Guest or "In-House"*
June 1: *Guest of "In-House"*
June 8: *Bryan*
(After Congregational Meeting)
June 15: *Rev. Kathy*
June 22: *Guest or "In-House"*
June 29: *Guest or "In-House"*

For further information
or other questions
please feel welcome
to contact members of the
Sabbatical Committee

Lucia Milburn
(chair)

Jeanie Bates Gretchen Vap
Deborah Mason David Templeton
Linda Balabanian Janis Brewster

Useful Email Addresses

Rev. Kathy Huff
(Sabbatical Minister)
revkathy@uusantarosa.org

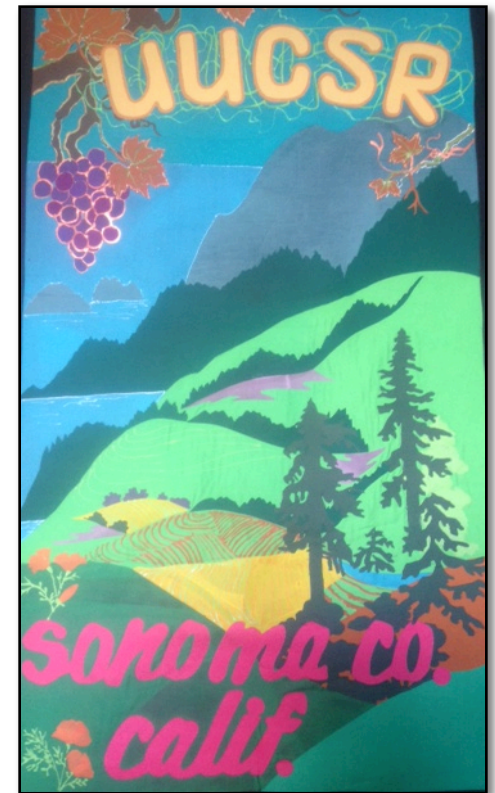
Bryan Plude
(Intern Minister)
internminister@uusantarosa.org

Gail Alford
(Caring Connections)
Galford58@comcast.net

**The Unitarian Universalist
Congregation, Santa Rosa**

Celebrating life, empowering people,
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THE SABBATICAL COMPANION



A CONGREGATIONAL GUIDE for UUCSR

GLASER CENTER HAPPENINGS

UUCSR Presents

Ensemble Galilei

Winter Solstice Concert
with NPR's
Neal Conan

A stellar troupe of musicians performing Celtic and modern music to celebrate the return of the sun, with lyrical spoken word narration

Friday, December 6
7:30 p.m.



Santa Rosa Children's Chorus A Choral Celebration

Plus
Choral ensemble Cantiamo
Harpist Wendy Tamis
Cellist Laura McClellan
Clarinetist Roy Zajac

Music from the Renaissance to the present: including Benjamin Britten's 'A Ceremony of Carols.'

Sunday, December 1
3:00 p.m.

Holiday Concert

Healdsburg Chorus

Sleigh Bells Ring!

Ring in the season with a heartwarming and festive concert of holiday songs and surprises!

Sunday, December 8
3:00 p.m.



Holiday Comedy

BABES IN TOYLAND THE MOVIE

As riffed on and made of
by the improv comedians of

OPPOSING MEDIA

Friday, December 13,
7:30 p.m.

Robin Rogers'

Festival of Friends

with pianist
Nancy Hayashibara

her alter-ego "Rudy"

The UUsual Suspects
& Kevin Russell
on electric guitar

Saturday, January 11
7:30 p.m.



Jade Dragon
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MIRACLE JUNKIE

A new comedy by
Lito Briano

Organized by Deborah Huth, this spectacular yearly sale of beautiful art from Southeast Asia raises vital funds supporting important educational and infrastructure efforts in impoverished Cambodian areas.

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Dierk's Parkside Cafe

Elegant Nails

Eye Care Institute Optical

Fabiani's Ristorante

Flamingo Resort and Spa

Flavor Bistro

Flying Goat Coffee

Gaia's Garden

Hank's Creekside Restaurant

Heidi at Divine Design Salon

Jahnthong Banbua

Jane McKay, editor

Kindred Fair Trade Handcrafts

La Gare

La Vera Pizza

Main Stage West

Mauritson Wines

Mike's Imports and Engines

Monti's (at Montgomery Village)

Dr. David Marcus

Cynthia Anderson at Rascals

River's Edge Kayak & Canoe Trips

Riviera Restaurant

SRJC Theater Arts Department

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Santa Rosa Symphony

Shelton's Natural Foods

The Pottery Studio

Ting Hau Restaurant

Tone: Pilates, Dance and Yoga

Toy Chest

Toy Works

Trader Joe's

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Tudor Rose English Tea Room