



UU Update

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

MARCH 2015 • Volume 59 • Issue 3

THEME: SACRIFICE

(Sunday Services 9:15 am and 11:00 am)

MARCH 1

"ON SACRIFICE"

The original Hebrew word for sacrifice means "to draw near." Although the practices of ancient sacrifice may shock us today, the need behind such practices remains: building a bridge to the Divine. Membership asks us to sacrifice time, talents and treasures to our community, and promises that the sacred will indeed draw nearer when we do.

Service Leaders: Rev. Meghan Conrad Cefalu (preaching), Andy Levine, Jeanie Bates, with music by Roger Corman, Robin Rogers and some UUsual Suspects.

MARCH 8

"BUILDING A HOUSE AND A HOME"

The Youth Group will share reflections, poems, pictures and songs inspired by their service trip to Taos, New Mexico last summer as we reflect on the burdens facing those who are houseless and homeless, and consider the justice issue of affordable housing.

Service Leaders: The Youth Group, Rev. Chris Bell, Deborah Mason, and Eric Fischer, with music by the Choir and the Youth Group.

MARCH 15

"ON CAREGIVING"

Many in our congregation have experienced the uniquely challenging situation of being cared for during serious illness or disability. Many others have experienced being a caregiver for a loved one during their serious illness or disability. If you haven't experienced that situation, you very likely may yet. What spiritual resources can sustain us during such a time? What do we discover inside ourselves?

Service Leaders: Gretchen Vap (preaching), David Hope, Sharon McCarty, with music by Robert Howseman and some UUsual Suspects.

MARCH 22

"WORLD WATER DAY / JUSTICE SUNDAY"

Water - essential to life—yet a tenth of humanity lacks clean drinking water. Millions die yearly from contaminated water. Most in Sonoma County are blessed with high-quality water and good infrastructure— can we help ease the suffering of others, both locally and around the world? Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry partnership with communities in need of safe, clean, affordable, and accessible drinking water. Let's celebrate World Water Day and the Gift of Water by seeking a more just and equitable use of this precious resource.

Service Leaders: Susan Panttaja (preaching), Rev. Chris Bell, Sadie Sonntag, with music by the Choir.

After 11:00 service— Film "Thirsty for Justice," powerful stories of people in California who fought for their right to water, and successful efforts of communities who supported CA's human-right-to-water bill.

MARCH 29

"SUSTAINING OUR VISION"

Oh, what a glorious future you imagine for this beloved institution of ours! Today we'll consider deeply the vision for the next decade of the congregation as uncovered at our recent house meetings, and get real about what we will have to sacrifice to achieve that vision. We will also celebrate the occasion of the Last Pledge Drive.

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Frances Corman, Nancy Hargis, and Eric Skagerberg with music by the Choir.

BRING YOUR PLEDGE CARDS IN TODAY PLEASE!!

APRIL 2 MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE (7:30p – 8:30p)

We mark the night of the Last Supper with a modern celebration of the ancient rituals of communion & foot washing. All welcome! **Service Leaders:** Rev. Chris Bell, Sharon McCarty, Natalie Brundred.

APRIL 3 GOOD FRIDAY VIGIL (12:00p – 3:00p)

Meditations on suffering & grief interspersed w/ inspirational readings & periods of extended silence provide space to discover the presence of the Spirit of Life even in times of death & despair. Come & go at any time during service as you are able.

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Sharon McCarty, Ben Ford.

APRIL 5 EASTER FLOWER COMMUNION /Intergenerational

WELL DONE



My friend, the Rev. Greg Ward, visited our congregation this past Sunday. Greg is the interim minister at the UU Church of Berkeley (in Kensington), where his calling is to help the congregation transition from the 17-year ministries of Revs. Barbara and Bill Hamilton-Holway toward their future ministries, and thus toward their next called minister. Greg has also served congregations in At-

lanta, Monterey and the D.C. area.

We went to lunch after the service and had a lovely long talk about the congregations we serve. Berkeley has 383 members; we have 341, so there are some key similarities in the dynamics of the groups. There are key differences, too. We have the equivalent of about 4 full-time positions, they have the equivalent of 10.5! (They do make over 1/3 of their nearly \$1 million budget from rentals that require 3 full time people.)

It's so nourishing to consider our congregation, and my ministry, in the light of a colleague's observations and experience. And what Greg said made me feel great.

Greg said that we have a "remarkable vitality and positivity" that is "really very rare." He observed that we appeared to be relaxed and having fun as we worshipped together. He thought the service was beautifully constructed in the way the elements wove together. He liked our message and finally understood my more spontaneous style of preaching (I had preached to him in a clergy support group I used to be part of, and I don't think he was quite sure what to make of all the jokes!). He found people to be cheerful and full of good energy. He loved loved LOVED how there were kids running through the Social Hall and romping through the Courtyard during the whole fellowship time. He was so impressed that we had paid off the bank by going in debt to ourselves, and that we owed so little on the building only a decade after moving in. He strongly felt we would benefit greatly from an additional minister, and was glad to hear that our draft budget for next year includes at least a 6% increase to bring our Director of Religious Education position to full time. He was intrigued by our efforts to create a 5-10% Sustaining Pledge system, and delighted to see us sharing the basket each week.

Greg did mention that, although he was warmly welcomed by the official greeter at the front door as he came in for the 11:00 service, when he continued to mill about he wasn't spoken to again. He felt a bit ignored, in fact. I forgot to ask if the friendly handshakes during the service itself improved the welcoming experience. (This was his only critique, by the way, and I had asked for the brutal review.)

I absolutely understand why no one wants to be pushy toward visitors. Perhaps you remember how nervous you were when you first came through the doors, and that you

might have wanted a little time to check things out. Or you might hesitate to talk to an unknown person because you don't want to say, "Are you new?" to a twenty-year member.

I say risk it! Our covenant calls us, "to acknowledge our own shortcomings and be quick to forgive them in others." I guarantee that long-time member won't mind meeting you.

New people appreciate friendliness. They say so!

When all is said and done, most of us are drawn to a congregation because its people are generally happy, hopeful and caring. That is the surest proof for most sane and modern people that one's religion is working. So, please do risk talking to someone standing there alone. You might say, "Hi, I'm (insert name here). I've been coming here (for awhile/for three weeks/for years and years/for 30 minutes). What's your name? What do you like to do?" And off you go.

Rev. Greg's experience notwithstanding, you should know that one of the main reasons people cite for joining us in their new member meetings with me is how friendly and positive the congregation is. And one of the most beautiful things I saw in the reports from the house meetings was a repeated affirmation that all members must all take responsibility to be warm and welcoming to neighbors and newcomers alike.

The result of that attitude is that the next New Member Ceremony on March 1 will be one of the largest in quite some time, with at least 12 new folks joining into our Covenant. Such growth is simply the natural by-product of a community that actually makes people's lives better, gentler, more hopeful, more courageous, more just. I so appreciate how you aren't afraid to invite people to share in that gift; instead, you understand that we have to give away what we ourselves receive. Well done, dear servants of God / Goddess / Insert Name Here!

Speaking of the House Meetings, the community organizing team here, UUCAN, will be bringing your local issues and concerns forward at the Issues Assembly here at UUCSR on March 8th from 3:00 – 5:00, and we need your support. If you want to effect social change locally, this is the meeting for you.

Also, please plan to attend the Board's Forum on March 15th after the 11:00 service to have a conversation about the lessons and insights we gained from those meetings, as we continue our year-long Next Decade Vision process. That event will provide everyone an opportunity to hear the great ideas, broad themes and repeated concerns that the Board has discerned from the records of the meetings.

Finally, please keep your eyes open for our Last Pledge Drive materials in your mailbox at home, and plan on bringing your pledge cards in on March 29.

Be well, Neighbor-Lovers! Thank you for all your hard work. May the Spirit of Life and Love bless you and your families. Enjoy the blossoms in the courtyard, and the warm winter sun, and I'll see you on a Sunday soon.

Greetings from Our Board President

We are all a part of a wonderfully active, engaged community here at UUCSR. We care for one another, responding to the hardships in each other's lives. We celebrate our joys together. We look forward in our congregational life....coming together to talk about our hopes and dreams for our future. And our engagement doesn't stop at our doors. We work to make positive change in the world in so many concrete ways. We are rich in our generosity as we give of our talent and energy within and without our four walls.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING I want to appreciate everyone's energetic participation in our most recent (Feb. 1) Congregational Meeting. I have to think that the democratic foundation of our faith allows us to feel empowered and find our places in the ongoing work of our congregations. It is still remarkable to me that so much of what keeps the congregation going is volunteer time, competence and energy.

Speaking of volunteer time, competence and energy, we will have a new board on July 1. We elected our new board members for 2 year terms at the Congregational Meeting. We welcome Gretchen Vap, Tom Bond, Bill Haigwood, John Jaffray and Sam Miller as they join the returning board members Susan Bartholome, Marge Wright, Linda Stabler, Pam Tennant and Marilyn Beckerbauer. Joe, Alan and I finish our 4 years as board members at the end of June this year.

At the Congregational Meeting we also selected delegates to DA and GA. Delegates to DA are: Andy Laird, Dorris Lee, Richard Senghas, Susan Bartholome and Andy Levine. Our GA delegates are Carol Kraemer and Art Rosenblum. GA is in Portland this year, actually a doable destination for many of us. If you decide you want to attend, please let me know and I will bring your name forward to the board for approval, that being the process mandated in our bylaws once the Winter Congregational Meeting has passed.

HOUSE MEETINGS I have had the privilege of facilitating 2 house meetings as part of our visioning process. I was touched by people's thoughtfulness, responsiveness and genuine care for our community. With so many nurturing hearts and minds we are sure to grow well.

FINALLY, words from Sister Simone Campbell from the Ware Lecture delivered at the GA in Providence, Rhode Island, June 28, 2014:

...if you walk towards community, we become deeply aware of the truth that we're in this together. That we are not separate, that there is no real discernible difference when you get right down to it...We may have different stories to tell, but it's the same hunger, the same desire, the same passion to make a difference in our world, to care for our family, to be who we are called to be.

In community, *Jeanie Bates*, President, UUCSR Board of Trustees



"MEET THE MINISTER"

These brief, informal meetings are held once a month following the 11 A.M. Sunday Service (see below).

They provide an opportunity for visitors and guests to meet our minister, Rev. Chris Bell, and one or two lay leaders.

Bring your coffee or tea and join us in the Green Room, located at the opposite end of the hall from the social area.

Questions are not only welcomed, but encouraged!

March 22

April 19

Mark Your Calendars!

It's too soon to buy Christmas decorations in September.

It's too soon to make your New Year's Resolutions in October.

But it's *not* too soon to mark your calendar for the

**UUCSR Annual Auction!
November 7, 2015**

Do it now—While you're thinking about it!

Auction Coordinator Dee Ray

Treasurer's Report

Missed the congregational meeting? Here are the Cliff Notes...

2014-2015 Six Month Financial Highlights - Good year so far!

Pledge Revenue and Donations are over budget.

Fundraising revenue is over budget.

Expenses are under budget.

Glaser Center net income is on budget.

We've paid our full UUA and PCD dues for the first two quarters.

Overall our finances are stable.

Also, \$64,000 in Member Notes have been paid off since paying off the bank mortgage two years ago. Twenty-six members currently hold Member Notes.

Sustaining Our Vision - Annual Pledge Drive Is Underway!

Join us for Pledge Sunday on March 29 as we celebrate the conclusion of our annual pledge drive. This year, when we make our annual pledge, it will be a sustaining or continuing pledge. This means our pledges will continue in the same amount year after year until we, the pledger, change that amount. And changes can be made at any time during the year. For more explanation and commentary, please see Ellen Skagerberg's excellent article elsewhere in this newsletter.

We may still be asked periodically to consider raising our financial commitment to fund increases in our budget. And remember most increases in our budget are for additional programs and projects that we all want to fund. This year our draft budget calls for a 6% increase in pledge revenue. Here's what we will fund with that 6% increase:

Moving the Director of Religious Education position (our wonderful Deborah Mason!) from $\frac{3}{4}$ time to full-time

A new part-time Intern Minister

Contribution of 5% to new Staff Retirement Plan

Nominal Staff Increases

Moving hourly workers to or closer to living wage

UUA/PCD dues at 100%

I think most would agree with me that these are really exciting changes and I very much hope our pledges will increase enough to fund them. But I try not to think of my pledge in terms of funding a budget. I think of my pledge as funding for our mission and vision, not our budget. Yes, we need money to keep the lights on and there is a line item in the budget for that. But if you really get down to it, keeping the lights on is part of our mission too. Everything we do as a congregation/community, no matter how mundane, is related to our mission. So here's how I look at the budget - It's all mission!

Thinking in terms of funding a budget really limits what we can accomplish each year. There are many programs and growth opportunities that aren't included in the draft budget, not to mention building improvements that would help us to better (or more comfortably) utilize our space. If our pledges were to exceed what the draft budget calls for we could potentially be able to add one or more of those during the year.

My personal pledge reflects, as a percentage of my resources, the importance of this congregation/community in my life. My UUCSR community is here for me – celebrates with me the joys of my life, comforts me in my sorrows. It helps me when I am sick or hurting. But more than that, it helps me to formulate, and often execute, meaning and purpose in my life. It pushes me to ask big questions that are often not easy or comfortable and look for big answers and solutions for the greater good. It is making me a better person, a more open and giving person. Maybe someday, I will become the person I want to be, that I am called to be. I truly believe that is only possible because of my involvement here, at UUCSR. What it has given me and continues to give is immeasurable. For these reasons and more, my pledge to UUCSR is about 10% of my gross income.



The acclaimed film "Thirsty for Justice," will be screened in our sanctuary after service on March 22.

"The struggle for the human right to water In the richest nation on earth, and wealthiest state in the nation, how can so many people lack access to safe affordable water for their basic human needs? Thirsty for Justice shares powerful stories of those who suffer from this assault on their personal health and human dignity, as well as the inspiring story of the grassroots movement that made the human right to water the law of the land in California. Let's make that right a reality!" [<http://ejcw.org/thirsty/>]

This film was produced by the [Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry of California](#), in association with the [Environmental Justice Coalition for Water](#), and the [Unitarian Universalist Service Committee](#).

Bring a Friend!

Linda Balabanian, Treasurer

Committee-on-Shared-Ministry Chair Steps Down

As of the end of this month, I shall be stepping down from my role as chair of UUCSR's Committee on Shared Ministry.

I shall in fact be vacating my membership on COSM altogether, as I have served the two full terms allowed under COSM's guidelines.

I'm very pleased to let you know that Lucia Milburn, who brings compassion, a deeply caring spirit, natural optimism and great organizational skills to bear wherever she places her time and energy, will assume the role of chair of COSM.

It has been a great honor to serve as a member of the Committee on Shared Ministry for the past six years, and I am grateful to the other members, past and present, for their confidence and support (and sometimes patience) during my time as chair. It's difficult to step away from this wonderful group of people and their great dedication to our community. I'm going to miss working with them!

I also want each and every person who has come to COSM for help or been approached by COSM for help in resolving an issue during my tenure to know that I am also

deeply grateful to you for placing your trust in us. You have all touched my heart and been a part of my own spiritual and personal growth.

In case you missed Mary Lill Lee's excellent overview at the recent Congregational Meeting of what COSM does and who we are, let me remind you: The Committee on Shared Ministry is charged with monitoring the general health of the congregation, supporting the minister in his various roles, facilitating the minister's yearly evaluation, and providing conflict resolution when needed.

When difficult feelings arise in congregational life, COSM is here to listen and offer support.

Please feel free to speak with any member of the Committee on Shared Ministry about any concern, observation, joy, or other matter concerning our shared life at UUCSR.

The current members of COSM are: Bob Anderson, Rev. Chris Bell, Alan Bell, Bill Foshee, Judy Hutchinson, Mary Lill Lee, and Lucia Milburn. You can find them between or after services, and will know them by their lavender nametags.

With love and gratitude,

Cathy Read, Chair (Emeritus)

Time to Vote at the NBOP's March 8th Issues Assembly!

"This democratic process is the heart of NBOP. Together we will decide on our collective work for 2015."

North Bay Organizing Project's (NBOP) mission is to unite people to build leadership and grassroots power for social, economic, racial and environmental justice. NBOP is a diverse, multi-issue organization that believes that participation of our members is essential for the survival of democracy. NBOP is a member of Gamaliel of California, an emerging multi-issue, multi-racial faith-based network of regional organizations dedicated to building a powerful and effective statewide, grassroots movement that will change public policy for racial, social, and economic justice.

[\[http://northbayop.org/\]](http://northbayop.org/)

The NBOP Issues Assembly is on Sunday, March 8 from 3-5 pm at the UUCSR. This is a VERY important meeting. It's time to for you to vote for the Issues that you want the North Bay Organizing Project to work on this year. Everyone who attends will vote for the issue on which she or he wants to see NBOP focus their organized and effective work. Your vote is very important.

Free Child Care will be available.

If you have questions, call Sara Jones at 527-6257 .

Do You Know Your Fellow

Members & Affiliates of NBOP?

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa Rosa
Community Church of Sebastopol
Congregation Shomrei Torah
St. Vincent's Catholic Church of Petaluma
First Congregational Church UCC of Santa Rosa
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Petaluma
Christ Church United Methodist
Centro Laboral de Graton
Landpaths' Bayer Farm
Sonoma County Conservation Action
Living Wage Coalition
Unitehere 2850
SEIU 1021
MEChA – SSU and SRJC
Community Baptist Church of Santa Rosa
Redwood Forest Friends Meeting
North Bay Labor Council
Emmaus Congregation
Comite VIDA

ADVOCATES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (A4SJ)

A4SJ Meetings on the 2nd Wednesday, at 12 noon. *Interested in what we do?* Visit us in the teen room on March 11!

Stop by our table Sundays to buy Delicious Peace Coffee, grown by a cooperative of Muslim, Christian and Jewish farmers in Uganda (Caf, decaf, whole beans or ground) or to **borrow** Social-Justice themed CDs.

SHARE THE COLLECTION

In line with our congregation's dedication to generosity we share our collection each week with a non-profit selected by the Advocates with input from members of the congregation. Here are the upcoming "Share the Offerings:"

March 1 - Adrienne Swenson Award – The ASA is given annually to a local high school senior who is active in peace and social justice activities and who is planning to pursue further education or training in college, trade school or university. This award was created and is administered by the Advocates for Social Justice.

March 8 – The Living Room – This is the only day care center in Sonoma County specifically serving homeless and at-risk women and their children. These families are welcomed into a warm, safe and comfortable environment during the day when overnight shelters are closed. Caring staff and volunteers offer a lifeline during a time of crisis. We value the Living Room and support it regularly.

March 15 – Children's Village – is a unique alternative model for children in foster care. It has existed in Santa Rosa for eight years and provides stable family homes for 24 children in a multi-generational environment. There are four houses with "parents" – and four apartments with volunteer surrogate foster grandparents, as well as a well-equipped community center with library, tutoring, computer equipment, art space and a recreation area.

March 22 – UU Justice Ministry – a UU organization which works to educate, organize and advocate for various kinds of Justice. Our donation will support Environmental Justice in regard to the human right to **Water**, and climate change. Climate change has impacts on California's water supply, and the energy used to pump and treat water can have a profound impact on our carbon footprint.

March 29 – Saturday Breakfast – this good breakfast, served in our lobby to homeless people each Saturday, is primarily financed by gifts from our congregation, and by grants that we apply for. Please be generous.

BOOK-GIFTING VALENTINE'S PARTY at FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER A HUGE SUCCESS

Thanks to your generosity we were able to offer a new book to each of over 60 children and young people, who were able to each pick from the many you all contributed to this project. It was so gratifying to share in the choice-making with the children and their parents. They took their time, turning pages, reading a bit or being read to, thinking over their choice. Books are clearly still loved by our children.

In addition to book selection we all enjoyed a party with Valentine's yummys, sing along music provided by Bill Montgomery and Valentine card making. There was a feeling of warmth and connectedness among us all. This is a lovely collaboration...UUCSR and the Family Support Center. So many are but a paycheck or crisis away from homelessness and it is heartening and humbling to get to know these folks who care for their families in shelter while working to get back on their financial feet.

May we continue to be good neighbors and find ways to offer support in hard times. Thanks again to all who helped make this project such a success. Your generosity has touched many.

HOT TOPICS

Sunday, March 8, our topic will be a conversation with **Sebastopol's Chief of Police, Jeffrey Weaver**.

Chief Weaver is interested in all police matters in our area, and he prefers a conversation rather than a lecture so that he can be sure to address the topics we are most interested in.

This meeting will be at **12:45 in the Board Room**. Bring questions you would like him to address.

UUs Don't Throw In the Towel.. ... they donate it!

March is the month to Donate That Towel! New or not- so-new (as long as it's really usable), and a bar of soap, supports our friends at the Family Support Center!

The gals and guys of TIE group D, Friday from 10-12, will be manning a table all month long to accept your donations of soap and towels. They will bring them over to the appreciative folks at the Family Support Center (the shelter for homeless families with children, just around the block from UU.)

Your donations can be bath or hand towels, as well as washcloths. Nothing needs to match! All will be used. HINT: Small individual bars of soap and bottles of shower gel are preferred. Now's the time to put to great use the stuff you have been "swiping" from hotels over the years!

Look for the "Don't Throw In The Towel" sign and do just that!

~ Sharon McCarty and Art Rosenblum

~ Jan, Becky, Deborah, Shirley, Jeanie

Religious Education for Children and Youth

Results from the recent Visioning Survey are gratifying—so many who responded placed religious education of children and youth in high priority. Notes from the visioning house meetings that many participated in last month reflected a lot of interest in children and youth as well. With so many children visible on Sunday mornings, there is an increased desire for programming that puts adults together with younger folks in a way that will create stronger ties. Some of the ideas that have surfaced are:

- ◆ Multi-generational potlucks timed most conveniently for youngest and oldest.
- ◆ Social events where people intentionally are placed at tables with people of all generations so that new connections can be formed.
- ◆ “Buddy” programs where adults are paired with children or youth to meet one on one to get to know one another. To break down barriers, increase understanding and build friendships.
- ◆ Having elders come to RE classes to tell the children their story.

Relationships between children and older adults are so important, they provide a bridge between the past and the future, they open up doors of understanding and love that are quite different than peer relationships. The youthful spirit of children and youth enlivens elders and the life experience and wisdom of elders enriches children and youth.

Many children in the RE program do not have grandparents that live close by. How wonderful if we could create a community where relationships across the generations flourish.

I am very interested in pursuing ideas for multi-generational programming. I will need help to make it happen. If you are interested and able to devote some time and effort to planning, please contact me and we can get this started.

In faith, *Deborah*

Monthly Happenings in RE

The Senior High Youth Group meets every Thursday, 4-6 pm. Deborah Mason and Rev. Chris serve as Youth Advisers. Contact Deborah for information. (debmasonuu@gmail.com)

Sunday Morning RE classes meet during the 11:00 service. Children grades K-8 begin in the sanctuary and are excused to their classes after a story and the recitation of the children's affirmation. First Sunday of the month is Children's Chapel with all ages together. On the 2nd, 3rd & 4th Sundays children meet in grade groups, as described below.

Childcare for babies, toddlers & preschoolers provided by Fiona Mackenzie and Shawna Hoxsie.

“Our Whole Lives” Sexuality Education Grades 5-6

**March 29—May 10, 2015
Sunday afternoons 1-2 pm**

UUCSR Religious Educators for youth are pleased to offer a 7-week sexuality education program for fifth and sixth graders called **“Our Whole Lives” (OWL)**.

Beginning March 29, the class will be taught by trained OWL facilitators, Ben Ford and Cathie Wiese.

Seven class sessions will be held on Sunday afternoons from 1-2 pm.

Parent Orientation TBA in March.

Contact Deborah Mason
debmasonuu@gmail.com
for specifics and to register.

www.uua.org/re/owl/
www.ucc.org/justice_sexuality-education_our-whole-lives
www.facebook.com/ourwholelives

	<u>Grades K-2</u>	<u>Grades 3-5</u>	<u>Grades 6-8 (MUUGs)</u>
March 1	CHILDREN'S CHAPEL		Neighboring Faiths Catholicism - Overview
March 8	Wisdom Stories <i>The Great Peace March</i> by Holly Near	Bibleodeon <i>Women In the Bible</i>	Neighboring Faiths Wrap up section on Islam
March 15	Wisdom Stories <i>Miss Rumphius</i>	Bibleodeon <i>Jonah— Theme: Belief</i>	Neighboring Faiths Attend Catholic Mass at St.
March 22	Wisdom Stories <i>Quiet Wyatt</i>	Jesus <i>Theme: Life of Jesus</i>	MUUGs Retreat (no class today)
March 29	Arts Sunday <i>Theme TBA</i>	Arts Sunday <i>Theme TBA</i>	Neighboring Faiths Catholicism - Overview

Adult Religious Education (ARE)

Rev. Chris' Tuesday Scripture Class on the Old Testament continues. (See below right)

Develop a deep writing practice and tap into your inner voice with Write and Connect. We meet every Monday at 10 am. New writers are welcome. Come and check it out! A \$10 donation is requested.

New classes offered in March—April:

Long Strange Trip: A Journey Through 2000 Years of Unitarian Universalism. A truly fascinating six-part Friday DVD series on the early history of liberal religious thought and the UU is presented in *Long Strange Trip: A Journey Through 2000 Years of Unitarian Universalism*. **March 5, 12, 19, 26, and April 4 and 9, from 12 noon to 1:30 pm.** You are encouraged to bring your bag lunch to eat while we watch and discuss. If these times don't work for you, you can check out copies of the DVDs to watch at home. There is a \$15 refundable deposit per DVD -- three DVD maximum check-out at one time, with a three-week time limit. Call Kathy Norman with questions on DVD checkout.

Rev. Gaetano Salomone, on The wisdom sayings of Jesus in The Gospel According to Saint Thomas. Friday, March 27, at 7 p.m. We welcome back Rev. Gaetano Salomone who offers an introduction to the wisdom sayings of Jesus in The Gospel According to Saint Thomas. If you are interested in lost scripture, mystical Christianity and its relationship to the perennial truths of the world's religions, this class is for you. Discussion will include topics such as the eternal nature of the soul and the feminine side of divinity. A \$20 donation is requested.

Women in History to be presented by Melinda Napier. We will offer some "herstory" sessions -- a series of lectures on Women in History to be presented by Melinda Napier. There will be six lectures delivered on Monday afternoons starting April 6 at 3 pm and running about an hour and a half each. (See below left)

To find out more about these offerings stop at the ARE Table on Sundays or call Kathy Norman (523-2787).

Some offerings have suggested fees to cover the costs for materials, presenters and contribute to the UUCSR.

However, everyone is welcome and no one will ever be turned away.

WOMEN IN HISTORY

This lecture series examines pivotal roles women have played as social activists, political & religious leaders, and scientists, among other categories.

When: April 6, 13, 20, 27, and
May 4 and 11, at 3-4:30 pm

Where: Board Room

How Much: \$2 suggested per lecture

Register: on Sundays at table in hall

Presenter Melinda Napier, a self-classified "history nerd," has presented this program at the Finley Center for 3 years.

READ THE HEBREW BIBLE

aka the Old Testament with Rev. Chris Bell

We Will explore and discuss The Old Testament. Historical context and critical scholarship are examined, but the main goal is to consider how, of if, these tests might inspire, frustrate, illuminate, confuse, provoke, annoy, amuse, and ultimately deepen our spiritual lives.

When: Oct 7 - Apr 21, Tuesdays at 8 am and/or 5:30 pm

Where: Board Room (8am) or Sanctuary (5:30pm)

Free, Drop in

Presenter—Reverend Chris Bell

SAVE THE DATE

ALL-UU CONGREGATION RETREAT!

August 14-16, 2015 at Enchanted Hills Retreat in Napa

Our second year at this location, everyone last year agreed it was the best camp site ever!

The All-UU Congregational Retreat is designed for everyone in the Congregation – parents, kids, teens, adults, singles and grandparents. From campfire songs, swimming in the beautiful pool, workshops, relaxation and serenity in the redwoods, to dazzling entertainment with the annual UU talent show, and playing softball with Rev. Chris.

The cost, still t.b.a., should be comparable to last year, which was \$170 for adults; \$140 for teenagers (12-17 years old); \$100 for students (6-11 years old); and \$30 for children (3-5 years old). *Be sure to mark your calendar and start saving those pennies!*

We have lots of new members this year – we hope you will be there to make it the BEST retreat ever!

THE LAST PLEDGE DRIVE

Making It Easier Than Ever To Pledge to UUCSR

In the new bestseller *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing*, author Marie Kondo notes that an over-accumulation of possessions takes up too much time – organizing, displaying, dusting, fixing, finding – space, and attention. Even as she outlines her method for discarding and organizing, she assures readers that “tidying” – or, as we Americans might say, “decluttering” – isn’t the purpose. The real goal is the unimagined life on the other side of the process, the passions that emerge once one’s house is finally “in order.”

As Rev. Chris wrote in his February newsletter article, we want to do something like this in our Congregation’s financial life – simplifying that annual exercise known variously as the “Annual Budget Drive,” “Canvass Campaign,” or “Pledge Drive.” After each new budget is written, the Congregation’s leadership has had to scheme how to fund that budget through member pledges. So the Board begs a few visionaries and stalwarts to form a Canvass Committee, which comes up with a plan that includes a theme, newsletter articles, area captains, canvassers, a gala event, a personal visit to each member, and then several months of follow-up with the members who didn’t turn in a pledge card. Quite a cast of characters! Quite a lot of energy expended!

Now, I’ve been a willing and enthusiastic member of the Pledge Drive many times over. However, after a canvass campaign has finally wrapped up, I’ve usually been too exhausted to make any other commitments for several months. Don’t get me wrong; I’ve loved the individual canvass meetings with other members. But since fundraising is not our mission or the heart of our community life, why should it consume so much of our Congregation’s energy every year?

This year, with inspiration from another book, *Making the Annual Pledge Drive Obsolete: How Churches Can Get Out of This Business Once and For All*, we’re “tidying up” our process and phasing out that old model: we’ll be inviting Members and Friends to increase our financial pledges, then to sustain the vision of UUCSR by keeping these pledges ongoing until changed.

UUCSR is a successful congregation. We’re taking care of ourselves, our community, and the next generation. We’re engaged in the spiritual, personal, and social justice activities that brought us here in the first place. Let’s take the time and energy of the old pledge drive and channel it into new ways of connecting with each other and fulfilling our future goals. The recent Congregational Survey and house meetings have helped us clarify our common vision and direction. Let’s go that way.

And look at this box of old, unread books in my garage. Excuse me, but it’s high time for another donation trip to the thrift store.

~~ Ellen Skagerberg, for The Last Pledge Drive Committee

Model Release Forms

The Communications Team thanks the 100 people who have filled out our “Model Release” form.

This explicit permission allows the Web developers to publish photographs of UUCSR events, including these folks’ shining faces!

Our two dozen page editors are eager to start including fresh photos in their articles.

Please see the insert for both adult and child release forms, or stop by the table on Sunday morning!

Faith and Fitness

Our March hike is scheduled for Saturday March 21.

We will be exploring the latest regional park, North Sonoma Mountain.

The carpool will meet at 9:30 at Safe-way Parking lot at Farmers and Fourth near the Redwood Credit Union, drivers always needed. Hike starts at the parking area on Sonoma Mountain Road at 10:15.

We’ll be heading up the trail about 4 miles out and back to a lookout area with further trails going as far as the Jack London State Park entrance.

More information about the park and the trail is available at <http://www.pressdemocrat.com/news/3521578-181/new-county-park-on-sonoma> as well as the regional park website.

Water, snacks/lunch, layers of clothing and good hiking shoes are recommended. Dogs are not allowed on the trail.

Parking may be difficult due to demand at the new park on the weekend. All the more reason to carpool. Planning to come?

Call or email please to Gretchen P. 889-3007 or fitness@uusantarosa.org.



Music Notes



Starting on Sunday, March 1, I'm sure you will be very pleased to hear Tyler Johnson, the new Pianist/Accompanist that we have just hired, play for both services. He studied Classical Piano at the San Francisco Conservatory, followed by studying Recording Arts at Full Sail University in Florida. He then spent several years as a musician for the Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, beginning as a Pianist where he played a variety of music, and then he was promoted to Musical Director. He also studied Music Theory and Composition at the Los Angeles City College, and he is now continuing his study at Santa Rosa Junior College. In addition to Tyler's piano playing, there will be a song, "New Beginnings," for Special Music led by Robin Rogers, along with Natalie Brundred and Ted Dutcher. Robin, Natalie, Ted, and John Ray will also sing and play "Raise Up Spirit" for the Postlude.

On Sunday, March 8, the choir will sing for both services a beautiful piece, "Already Home," composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber for the musical version of "The Wizard of Oz." Here are the lyrics written by Tim Rice: "You think you're lost, but that's not true; you simply lived a dream or two. You've travelled all this way to find you never left your home behind. Home is a place in your heart. Every journey leads you back to where you start. Close your eyes, it's very easy. You'll find that you're already home. We have to finish to begin. We have to lose before we win. And soon we'll see it isn't far from where we were to where we are."

Robert Howseman will be providing Special Music for the services on Sunday, March 15, and the choir will sing for both services on Sunday, March 22.

Jenny Harriman, Music Committee Chair

ELDER TALES—WOMEN TOGETHER

Women Together Elder Tales on Saturday, March 14th at 2 pm—
Come to the Teen Room in the RE wing to hear **Betty Gordon's** life story.

**Our elders aren't just "nice little old ladies" -
they have marvelous and inspiring stories to tell!!**

Please bring finger food to share. We hope to see you there!

Linda Harlow, for Women Together

SIGN UP for AUTO-PLEDGE PAYMENTS

AN EASY AND GREENER WAY TO IMPLEMENT YOUR PLEDGE

Please consider setting up an automatic transfer from your bank. Janis and our volunteers will save time, and our cash flow will keep steady.

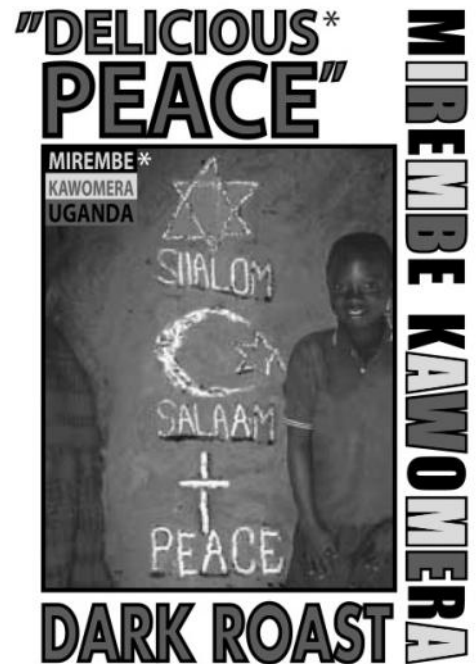
Don't want to write that monthly pledge check?

Click the green "Donate Now" button on our website, <https://web.uusantarosa.org>, fill in the blanks, and you are all set up.

Overcome with gratitude for the great things our congregation does and want to make an extra donation? Click on the "Donate Now" button!
Questions? Please talk to Joe McCarty, Linda Balabanian or Janis Brewster.

DOES YOUR BREW SERVE JUSTICE?

A4SJ are selling DELICIOUS PEACE in the social hall on Sunday mornings.



"Delicious Peace Grows in a Ugandan Coffee Bean—Living in the wake of collapsed coffee prices and lingering intolerance created by the Idi Amin regime of terror, a group of Christian, Muslim and Jewish Ugandan coffee farmers challenged economic and historical hurdles by forming "Delicious Peace Coffee Co-operative" in 2004.

The co-op had twin goals: economic development and the building of peaceful interrelationships. Partnering the next year with a Fair Trade US buyer, the standard of living of the farmers is improving, harmony is flourishing, and their messages of peace and fair wages are spreading to their neighbors as well as their coffee customers in the US."

[from www.mirembekawomera.com]

Donate Now

*I am only one, but I am one.
I cannot do everything, but I
can do something. And because
I cannot do everything, I will not
refuse to do the something that
I can do. What I can do, I should do.*
— Edward Everett Hale

... and from *Starr King School for the Ministry*,
our very own local Unitarian Universalist Seminary,
President Rosemary Bray McNatt's monthly message...

REPENT AND BELIEVE IN THE GOSPEL OF LOVE

Dear Ones—

Wednesday was a busy day, with lots to do—preparation for two big meetings and a retreat, little personal errands I couldn't seem to get done. My head was full, and yet I felt a restlessness, as though I had forgotten something, as though I should have been somewhere but hadn't yet arrived. I figured I needed a break; I stopped for coffee, and drove to my next appointment by a different route, down an unfamiliar stretch of San Pablo Avenue, one of the streets that connects Berkeley to Oakland.

Stopped at a light on the Berkeley-Oakland border, I saw the church with open doors, draped in hangings of red, black, and green, a huge font in the center hallway. I realized it was St. Columba's Catholic Church—and that it was Ash Wednesday. I parked my car, responding to the primal memory of childhood, recalling my old practices of being blessed with ashes, of preparing for sacrifice. If the doors were opened, I reasoned, it was likely that a priest might be there; if anyone could use a blessing these days, I thought, that would be me.

Approaching the altar brought tears to my eyes, surfaced a memory of longing for the church I'd left behind, a longing that still is capable of surprising me all these decades later. As I walked in, one of the women helping to decorate the sanctuary asked if she could help me; noticing my tears, she reached out her hand to me. I said I had hoped to receive some ashes, but thought I had missed the priest. "Oh, no, you haven't, he's here. Father Aiden, she wants some ashes." Even as she spoke, I began to realize that I had entered a place that looked nothing like any church I'd ever seen. Every single icon, all the stations of the cross, Mary holding an infant Jesus, Joseph standing watch on the other side of the room—they were all people of color. Interspersed with the iconography were Adinkra symbols from the Akan people of Ghana I gasped with pleasure as I saw over the sanctuary door a giant Gye Nyame symbol, which I had adopted as my personal motto upon ordination; it translates as "except for God, I fear nothing." The entire room was breathtaking; it was the most Afrocentric space I'd ever seen.

Father Aiden, on the other hand, was Irish, with the brogue to prove it; he greeted me with a smile. "What's your name?" he asked. "Rose," I said, and he reached toward my forehead, and marked it with ashes, and said, "Rose, repent, and believe in the gospel of love." I had been looking for this, I realized: a chance to be ministered to, someone to help me notice and to mark this time of reflection, a person who did not know me but who saw me as I truly am: a beloved daughter of God.

Ash Wednesday is meant to be a solemn day, a reminder of our mortality and of the dust to which we ultimately return. But it wasn't like that for me today, surrounded by portraits of the ancestors and the God of my understanding. The ashes I wore this Wednesday were a talisman of hope, a reminder for my sometimes weary heart that any day is a good day to repent: that is, to turn myself around, and to give myself over to love's good news. May all of us get that same chance, in this Lenten season: the chance to turn ourselves around. May all of us find reason to believe in love's amazing power.



Faithfully,
Rosemary

UU UPDATE NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS DEADLINES:

Paper Submissions—
SUNDAY before 3rd Monday
Newsletter slot in office

E-mail Submissions—
By Noon of 3rd Monday
newsletter@uusantarosa.org

Q's? Susan Rabbit 707-636-4684

Newsletter Assembly
10 a.m.— 4th Wednesdays

UU UPDATE

Evening Book Group

The Evening Book Group meets Thursday, March 12th from 7 to 9 p.m. at 547 Mendocino. We meet in the RE wing.

March's selection is *Cat's Cradle* by Kurt Vonnegut. April's selection is *The Swerve* by Stephen Greenblatt.

Visitors and newcomers are very welcome!

Questions?

Contact Linda Lampson.



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

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Santa Rosa, CA
Permit #298

**TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



MARCH 2015

Please Recycle

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

547 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

707-568-5381

office@uusantarosa.org

Fax: 707-568-5387

http://www.uusantarosa.org

Board of Trustees

President Jeanie Bates, *President@uusantarosa.org*
Vice President Susan Bartholome, *Vice President@uusantarosa.org*
Treasurer Linda Balabanian, *Treasurer@uusantarosa.org*
Secretary Sibyl Day

Board Members:

Marilyn Beckerbauer Pam Tennant
Joe Como Marge Wright
Alan Proulx
Linda Stabler

Recording Secretary Terry Graham

Order-of-Service Announcements:

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

UU Update Newsletter:

Send submissions to Newsletter@uusantarosa.org
Editor: Susan Williamson

Newsletter deadline follows the 3rd Sunday. All electronic deadlines are noon Monday. Please place hard copy submissions in Newsletter mail slot in the office by noon Sunday.

Newsletter by E-mail is available! To sign up, send your name & e-mail address to Administrator@uusantarosa.org

Minister Reverend Chris Bell, minister@uusantarosa.org

Staff

Director Religious Education Deborah Mason, *DLRE@uusantarosa.org, Ext. 131*
Administrator Janis Brewster, *Administrator@uusantarosa.org, Ext. 106*
Choir Director Sadie Sonntag, *Choir@uusantarosa.org*
Pianist Richard Riccardi
Glaser Center Business, glasermanager@uusantarosa.org

Sunday Religious Education Staff

Deborah Mason, Director
Shawna Hoxsie
Fiona Mackenzie