



UU Update

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

• December 2008 • Volume 52 • Issue 12 •

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

December 7th

UNCONSCIOUS RACISM:

A CHALLENGE TO LIVING OUR PRINCIPLES

Service Co-Leaders: Leslie Giffen and Lucia Milburn

As Unitarians, our First and Second Principles call us to hold sacred the inherent worth and dignity of every person and justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. These are worthy ideals, but a body of research implies that racism is nearly universal and is difficult to eliminate from our psyche because some forms of racism are almost completely unconscious. What do these more subtle forms of racism look like and how can we go about the spiritual work of understanding and becoming conscious of them?

December 14th

CHALICA FAMILY SERVICE

NO R.E. TODAY

Service Leaders: Deborah Mason, Rev. Chris Bell

Worship Associate: Ray Teurfs

Many faith traditions have special practices or holidays at this time of year to kindle the hope that burns bright even in the darkness of winter. Chalica is such a celebration for UUs, a plain and meaningful counterpart to the sometimes overwhelming and commercialized observation of Christmas or Hanukkah. Through the simple lighting of the chalice over seven days, all ages can honor the fire of commitment to our Principles. The choir and the children will sing together, and there will be special dancers as guests.

December 20th

WINTER SOLSTICE SERVICE 6:00 PM

Worship Associates: Maureen Wallace and Cathie Wiese

This is the eve of the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year. This is the stillness behind motion. Now darkness triumphs; and yet, gives way and changes into light. Our Solstice celebration will respect a variety of sacred traditions and we encourage all to participate. Please bring white candles and holders. The Solstice service will be followed by a potluck supper. To make this a green event we ask that you bring your own place settings and serving utensils.

December 21st

WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?

Service Leader: Rev. Chris Bell

Worship Associate: Ellen Skagerberg

From the time of his life and death to the present, there have always been many ways to understand who Jesus of Nazareth was, and what his teachings mean. The Bible itself records open confusion and debate on the part of his disciples, and the Jesus of the Gospel of Thomas or the Gospel of Mary is sharply different from the Christ of Paul. Was he the paschal lamb, the messiah, a prophet, a social revolutionary or the incarnation of God? Only you can decide!

December 24th

CHRISTMAS EVE—6:00 PM

Service Leader: Rev. Chris Bell

Worship Associate: Joe Como

A service of carols and candles celebrating the birth of one of the great prophets of humankind, whose wisdom and example inspired the Unitarians and Universalists who bequeathed their tradition to us, and continues to inspire many UUs today. A folk band and other very special music will enrich our Christmas spirits. All are welcome!

December 28th

MILESTONES

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris and the Worship Associates

Worship Associates: YOU!

In this annual tradition, the members of the congregation are invited to speak about the most meaningful events of the past year, the lessons they have learned, and to offer their dreams and hopes for the coming year. Benjamin Taylor will offer spe-

Our 9:00am Service

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

Inside & Outside—Rev. Chris

At the First Unitarian Society of Newton, where I was an intern, during the holiday season the ageless music director would offer the "Instant Halleluiah Chorus." In the middle of a service anybody who wanted to sing was invited up front, given a few sheets of barely legible sheet music, and we were off. "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords!" The choir was expanded sevenfold, and there would be more people on the chancel than in the pews.

Totally fun, but a little odd. Who, after all, was this instant messiah that these UUs were suddenly conjuring?

The concept of a messiah (literally an "anointed one" - a person with a divine mission or calling), arose in ancient Judaism out of a complex set of needs and aspirations. Thus, even in the Hebrew Bible we find many different ideas about who or what the messiah was or would be, when he would come, and why. In *Isaiah*, for instance, Cyrus the Great, the king of Persia who allowed the Jews to return to their homeland after an extended period of exile is called "God's anointed one" (*messiah*). That writer believed that God gave Cyrus his many military victories for the explicit purpose of destroying Babylon and its worship of idols, of freeing the Israelites, and ushering in a new age.

Through the centuries, the concept of a messiah further developed. After a brief era of Jewish rule under the Maccabees (heroes of the story of Hanukkah), the dynasty of Herod the Great and his offspring under the blessing of the Roman empire drove many Jews to develop a more specific, and more apocalyptic, concept of a messiah. According to the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, "they yearned for a promised deliverer from the house of David, who would free them from the yoke of the hated foreign usurper, put an end to the impious Roman rule, and establish his own reign of peace and justice in its place." Some of those yearnings got rather dramatic, with the messiah becoming envisioned as a mighty angelic warrior from the sky.

Such was the milieu into which a poor little baby in the manger was born. Talk about expectations! Is it any wonder, once he burst upon the scene, that his followers couldn't figure out who he was? Or that he likely couldn't either? The people of ancient Israel were desperate for dramatic change and bold leadership, and carried a hundred conflicting ideas about what that would mean, and suddenly here's this brilliant, ambigu-

ous, healing newcomer. "Yes, but, who is this Jesus *really?*" the so-called experts of the day wondered.

Sound familiar?

I observe plenty of messianic expectations today, and I'm not talking about all those poor folks who still think Jesus is en route with his sword and trumpet any day now. After years of weak and corrupt national leadership, and in the midst of national crisis and incredible insecurity, a charismatic figure has arrived on the scene. He has gathered hope and optimism around him like a magnet, and I, too, feel encouraged and reassured to see someone intelligent and far-sighted at the helm.

But we should be wary of messianic expectations, if we have them. First, there is this tricky thing about being an anointed one: you suddenly become a prime candidate for crucifixion. It is just as easy to collapse all our disappointments onto one person as it is our hopes. We human beings just to love to point fingers and cast blame. Indeed, I'm already quite angry with Mr. Obama for not speaking out against Prop.8 more boldly.

Beyond that, my theology - Buddhist and theist - says we all co-create the unfolding universe, and that doesn't mean only the happy parts! Every American shares some of the responsibility for our nation in good times and bad. Even the mess in Iraq and the financial crisis can't all be thrown at the feet of Mr. Bush and company. I am still driving that big ol' minivan, right? And I've certainly got my share of debt. No one person got us here; no one will get us out.

So when we're tempted to crown another messiah, let's try to remember that the slogan wasn't "Yes, HE can," it was "Yes, WE can." Strong leadership is essential, but we all have our part to play, however local, however small. Here at UUCSR our part is "celebrating life, empowering people, caring for one another and building a better world." My prayer is that such a vision will be inspiring enough to enable us to be the friends and allies that our nation so badly needs, and for each of us to grow into leaders ourselves. Perhaps then the ancient hope of this season, that the light will "shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace" (Luke 1:79) might finally become real.

Blessings to all!

Rev. Chris

Splinters from the Board

As I write this just prior to Thanksgiving, I am reminded of a note I recently received from a congregant, expressing gratitude for the fact that at our congregational meeting in October, I had acknowledged the tireless work a sizable group of members had put into developing our new governance structure. I couldn't help but note the deliciousness of her expressing gratitude for my expression of gratitude, so of course, I raised her once more by expressing my gratitude back!

And then it occurred to me that as a model of everyday Thanksgiving, I rather like the circular aspect of nearly endless thanks, particularly in a volunteer-driven religious community that would collapse in a day were members to suddenly withhold their charitable contributions of time and talent (not to even mention money) that they see fit to provide on each other's behalf every day.

We're developing a little tradition at UUCSR of publicly acknowledging various individuals and work groups at our congregational meetings. From a sea of worthy volunteers, the Board picks but a representative sampling of those who have performed key functions that go too much unsung. So we get a group of such folks up on stage, present them with a candle or chalice pin and warm round of applause, and then send them back to their seats and their lives, a significant portion of which will continue to revolve around their quiet and profound commitment of time and energy to the betterment of our community.

Does their commitment astound you as much as it does me?

Does it make you want to clap and just keep on clapping, for fear that no amount of applause or quantity

of candles could ever begin to acknowledge the depth of their contributions to us all?

And then, what about the many people, equally hard-working, whom we have simply not gotten around to acknowledging yet?

Whether you're loading our dishwasher, tending a Sunday table, schlepping furniture, wielding a shovel, planning a service, filling a bowl, changing a bulb, answering a phone, or raising your hand to speak at a committee meeting, I would like you to know, in this season of Thanksgiving, that while it is impossible to thank you enough, either via applause or a candle or a pin, that does not mean we will not try. In the end, our thanks—expressed humbly and as often as possible—is all we have.

An old Steve Martin standup routine has him saying, "And now, I'd like to thank each and every one of you for attending tonight..." And then he goes into a heading-for-infinity, rapid-fire repetition of thankyou thankyou thankyou thankyou.

Martin's is a riotous humor line, but I can't help but think that embracing a nearly infinite repetition of thank-yous may be just the antidote to the fear that our many contributors of time and talent are going either un- or under-acknowledged.

So this week in particular, please count me near the front of the conga line that forms into a circle representing the infinite gratitude that it is our privilege to be expressing to each other.

Care to join me there?

Andrew Hidas, Board President

Winter Solstice

Join us on Saturday, December 20 at 6:00pm for our annual Winter Solstice Service and Celebration. By observing the rituals involved in this ancient celebration of dark and light we will help to acknowledge our kinship with the earth and the cycles of nature and perhaps offer ourselves a respite from what has become the frenzy of this season.

We hope to involve members in the service as they are willing, so bring an open heart.

A potluck supper will be shared after the service. Please bring a dish to share, your own place setting(s) and serving utensils. If you have any questions or would like to help, please contact Cathie Wiese 829-3634 cathie@sonic.net or Deborah Mason 542-0793 debmasonuu@yahoo.com.



Treasurer's Report

At the last congregational meeting (in October), your Treasurers gave the normal overview of the current financial reports, and explained some categories that stood out. For instance, while income was down the first couple months of this fiscal year, that is to be expected. Income generally is down over our slow summer months, but picks up as fall arrives and folks get back to their normal routines. Although current numbers aren't available yet - the September and October reports are already showing improvement in our pledge income. And early reports from David Templeton show that our rentals and events for November and December appear to be increased by more than a 25% increase from last year - way to go, David!

Also, our biggest fundraiser of the year just happened, the rousing and exuberant Service Auction - and it was a huge success! Again, while actual numbers aren't officially available as of yet - it's looking like we netted around \$14,000 (and counting, as some final payments for auction items are still coming in.) Our Auction Committee did a spectacular job of organizing, planning, and carrying out this most valuable and time-honored tradition, and we are all indebted to them for a big job that was (once again) well done.

Also at the last congregational meeting, we gave an update on the property tax issue that has been utmost in our minds over the last few months. Several good questions were raised, and while we still don't have all the answers - you can rest assured that your Board of Trustees and Finance and Rental Committees are working diligently to stay on top of the matter. Since that time, the County has requested even further information concerning our 2007 income - and we have provided very lengthy, detailed reports on our revenue, actual costs, and overhead costs for each organization. (If any of you are not already in total and overwhelming awe of the work that our dear Lillian Reid does on our behalf - take my word for it - you should be). At the time this Newsletter was being compiled, we had just sent in these new reports - and are waiting to hear back from our County contact person. Although we are busy exploring ways that we may choose to change our activities in the future - we cannot make any final decisions before we find out what the actual property taxes are going to be. We are comparing and discussing possible changes to future rental activities that may include more fundraisers and UUCSR-sponsored events, rentals of only certain areas of our building and not others, and practices

that can maximize revenue and minimize or eliminate tax liability. We are also working with an attorney on creating a new Building Use Policy, in the event that we need to make changes to our rental practices beginning January 2009.

Also looking to the future - the Finance Committee will be hosting the Financial Stewardship Council on Dec 9th, which will include representatives from all the committees that generate income - Endowment, Rentals, Events, Canvas, Fundraising, Bookmobile, etc. This meeting is intended to launch the Financial Council with long-term planning, fundraising ideas, and goals to carry us through these times of possible change. In addition, the Finance Committee will start working on the new Budget in January, which will cover our next fiscal year of July 2009 - June 2010.

One other small accomplishment worth noting is the plan of using "Cash Envelopes" during Sunday Services. The idea has been floating around for years, and now thanks to Lillian and Bonnie Daines it may be an actuality by the time you're reading this Newsletter. They have designed (and ordered) an envelope that will be available on Sundays - which will include a place to write down your name and the type of donation you're making. (You may have seen these being used in other churches). These envelopes will be collected during the normal Sunday collection, but can conveniently be used for any type of donation or payment - perhaps something you've been meaning to mail to the office. So, maybe it doesn't sound like a huge whoop-tee-do to some - but this is a great idea whose time has come, and we're excited to finally be putting it into practice! (OK, I hear ya - when it comes to numbers people, it doesn't take much to make us happy!)

So, overall your faithful bean-counters feel quite satisfied with our current financial status, and are steadfastly working to keep things on track. We have some concerns, as everyone does about the economy, and how that may affect the members of our congregation. But, like all good stewards of cash flow, we hope for the best, but plan for the worst. So, in the meantime - there are some wonderful events scheduled in December! So treat yourself to a night out: sit back, relax, and enjoy the entertainment and support the UUCSR while doing so! Warmest wishes to you all for a happy holiday season.

Respectfully submitted,
Denese Pender, Co-Treasurer

Children's and Youth Religious Education (RE)

A few years ago when I was facilitating a UU class called *Owning Your Religious Past* a young man new to Unitarian Universalism asked me why we did not have our own unique holiday. His perspective was that although we come from the Judeo-Christian traditions and we celebrate them still (he was a Mormon converting to UU), we should have a formalized celebration that is reflective of our own principles. And that's when I learned about Chalica. Now, when I first brought this holiday to Rev. Chris' attention he was immediately reminded of "Festivus" the alternative to Christmas lifted up in popular culture on the Seinfeld Show - you know, "Festivus for the rest of us". Well Chalica is NOTHING like Festivus, which has as its central practice "The Airing of Grievances". (You can google Festivus if you are curious!) The central practice of Chalica is lighting a chalice each night for seven nights and taking time to reflect on each of our seven UU principles.

Chalica is celebrated at a time of year when many faith traditions come together to give rise to the hope that burns bright even in the darkness of winter. The brightly lit Christmas tree, the candles of the Hanukkah menorah, and the Kwanza kinara, the fires at Solstice all shine as a beacon reminding us that the promise that spring will come. While winter festivals in our culture have evolved into work intensive, expensive, and stressful events, Chalica stands apart in its simplicity and its connection to meaning.

This year UUCSR will celebrate Chalica beginning with an intergeneration worship service on Sunday with the seven days of Chalica beginning on Monday the 15th and ending on Sunday the 21st. As we prepare for the sometimes overwhelming and usually over commercialized celebrations of Christmas or Hanukkah let us take time to celebrate in very simple ways the fire of commitment we feel to our seven principles. Let Chalica *be not* another thing on the "to do" list, but a simple act of reflection and a renewal of our shared faith.

Here are some suggested ways to celebrate Chalica:

Monday: We light our chalice for the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

- Give gift(s) to honor those you do not understand / agree with / like.

Examples:

- a thank-you note celebrating differences
- words of forgiveness / apology

- a peace offering such as inviting someone to diner
- help someone in need.

Tuesday: We light our chalice for justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

- Give gift(s) to honor those in your local community that are less fortunate.

Examples:

- spend time in a soup kitchen
- look into the eyes of a homeless person and give them a warm hello
- donate clothes to a worthy organization or homeless shelter
- display kindness and care to those around you.

Wednesday: We light our chalice for acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.

- Give gift(s) to honor fellow Unitarians and their spiritual journey.

Examples:

- extend words of peace or forgiveness to a fellow Unitarian whom you may have hurt / not understood in the past
- offer / take part in an event at your church / with your congregation
- organize or attend church potluck

Thursday: We light our chalice for a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

- Give gift(s) to honor another tradition, to honor education

Examples:

- offer / take part in an event that celebrates another religion / tradition
- teach someone something you know and love
- learn something new from someone else
- give a book / read a book
- share a significant reading at the time of the chalice lighting

Friday: We light our chalice for the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

- Give gift(s) to honor democracy

Examples:

- write to your congressperson about an issue that is important to you
- join a committee at church
- write a letter to the editor
- host a dinner / party to celebrate democracy

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Together In Exploration (TIE) Explains It ALL!

Joining a TIE group is a great opportunity to deepen your sense of connection to the UUCSR, beyond just enjoying Sunday services or volunteering for one of our many, hard-working committees. Together In Exploration (TIE) is the nutshell description for a special kind of small group that meets solely for the purposes of exploring a topic of inter-

est to the group and giving the members of the group a chance to learn more about each other's values and concerns. No committee work, homework, or admission charge is required! If you are interested in exploring the meaning of life with others, and are able to agree to meet with your group twice a month from January to May, a TIE group

could be just what you want.

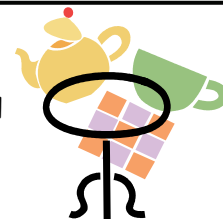
Contact Bonnie Daines, Marie Fox, Dorris Lee, or Carolyn McLeese if you hope to join a TIE group as they begin the January through May cycle. This is the last chance this year!

Submitted by Carol Kraemer

Guest At Your Table 2008-2009

You picked up your boxes the Sunday before Thanksgiving, and you will return them to the church on January 4. In the meantime, please remember to keep the box conveniently on your table and continue, at each meal, to add to the contents a donation for your unseen guest.

UUSC will use your hospitality to feed the hungry of many lands. If you missed out on getting a box, please call Phyllis Clement at 823-0925, or pick one up at the church office.



Women Together

All UUCSR women and their friends are warmly invited to our umpteenth annual Holiday Party on Saturday, December 13th from 12 to 3pm. Helga Lemke will again open her lovely home at 1983 Grosse Avenue, Santa Rosa, for the pot-luck lunch and sharing of the season's

good cheer before the holiday craziness sets in. It's a wonderful way to be with old friends and make new ones! Please bring a lunch dish to share.

Call Linda Harlow at 526-3528 if you have questions or want more information.

UUCSR Writers

The next UUCSR Writers meeting date is Monday, December 1, 2008, from 4 - 6pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 547 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa.

Whatever your creative endeavor: memoirs, letters, history, biography, the Great American novel, short story, Poetry, essays, dissertation, Master's thesis, song lyrics, report, term paper, cook book, web pages, blogging, etc., our focus is to provide an atmosphere where serious writers improve and hone their writing skills.

The UUCSR Writers is open to the novice, the more experienced, and the published author. Membership at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation Santa Rosa (UUCSR) is not required. We meet once a month at

UUCSR in Santa Rosa, CA on the First Monday of the month, except September, from 4:00-6:00pm.

UUCSR Online Writers

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

Information

UUCSR Writers, Georgette G. deBlois, GGdeB@aol.com, <http://uucsrwriters.blogspot.com> and/or visit the Writers Table in the Social Hall on Sunday mornings.

Membership News

Please Welcome Our New Members: Nancy Fitzpatrick and Betty and Sam Miller

In addition to reading the biographical sketches in the newsletter, be sure to check out the New Member Display next to the Member Name Badges. New member photos are posted on the display board as well as in a binder which also includes a brief bio. The photos stay on the display board for at least six months, and the binder includes new members for the current fiscal year.

Betty & Sam Miller are both originally from LA. Sam moved to the Bay Area in 1970 and then to Santa Rosa in 1973. Betty moved to Santa Rosa from Berkeley in 1988. They were married in 1990. From 1967 until last year, Betty was an active Friend. Sam was raised in a Jewish family but rarely attended synagogue. He later attended Quaker services occasionally with Betty. Last November, they participated in an online quiz on spiritual beliefs. Betty scored as a liberal Quaker, but they both scored high as Unitarian Universalists, so they

decided to check out our congregation. Betty has attended several women's activities including the Women's Retreat. Both Sam & Betty attended the Congregational Retreat. They are both now attending Scripture, UU History, and Prayer classes. They are also participating in Circle Dinners and have attended the Movie Group. Betty is a retired library cataloger. She is an active member of the Newcomers' Club of Santa Rosa, and she chairs the Lunch Bunch. She recently joined the League of Women Voters. Until two years ago, Sam worked as a sales representative for law books and online legal research. He is a member of the Redwood Empire Kiwanis, and he participates in community volunteer work sponsored by that organization and others. This year, he assisted in support efforts for Barack Obama. Betty & Sam's other interests include baseball, travel, politics, genealogy, dining out, and movies.

Entertainment 2009—An Easy Win-Win Way To Give To UUCSR

UUCSR Writers have generously agreed to sponsor the sale of Entertainment Books to raise funds for our congregation. The book provides two-for-one dinners at many restaurants both humble and chic, ranging from the 4-star Sizzling Tandoor, to Thai House, to IHOP, Lyons and Bakers Square. Not to mention \$20 off purchases at Safeway, discount movie tickets, discounts on wine, car rentals, motel and hotel rooms—way too much to list here. You can

check it out online at <http://Sonoma.entertainment.com/discount/browse.shtml?overrideLocation=N>, or at the Writers Table on Sundays. What could be better—you save hundreds of dollars, many times the \$25 cost of the book, and UUCSR gets some extra, badly needed revenue. Makes a great gift too.

For sale at Writers table, or order from Geri Randall. GeriRandall@hotmail.com

"Children's and Youth Religious Education (RE) Continued"

Cont. from page 4

Saturday: We light our chalice for the goal of world peace, liberty and justice for all.

- Give gift(s) to honor our global community

Examples:

- volunteer with an organization that has global influence
- learn more about amnesty international
- help the Advocates for Social Justice with a project or hold a fundraiser for them
- donate to a cause such as UNICEF, Doctors without Borders, UULM or UUSC etc.

Sunday: We light our chalice for respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

- Give gift(s) to our earth and/or its creatures

Examples:

- start a compost
- recycle bottles and cans and donate the money to an environmental / animal aid society
- rescue an animal from a shelter
- hold an outdoor worship service (dress warm/bonfire)

Need a chalice? Our children will be making chalices to sell after services on the 14th, with the proceeds of the sale going to the Living Room.

Let me be the first to wish you a Happy Chalical

In faith,
Deborah

Notes from the Music Committee

Defining Music, part II

In last month's newsletter, I shared a brief experience of mine in trying to define music. I then dismissed the question as secondary to the activity itself of music, that of sharing--performer to audience, player to player, etc. But back to that original question: what is it that we're all sharing? Many people feel a spiritual connection to great musical moments. What is that?! So many music lovers find this question so vexing as to dismiss it entirely, or perhaps to vault the very question up as an emblem of music's status as a semi-divine element, a Platonic ideal.

This idea of music as somehow special is as ancient as Plato, and likely far older still. However, those old Greek pals of ours did go quite a ways in actually defining music in scientific terms.

What we hear as "musical" tones are in fact vibrations with regular frequency of energy. When you pluck a taught string, the energy released from your plucking runs up and down the string in evenly spaced waves. These waves, these vibrations, are the musical tone our brains unconsciously recognize as being of regular frequency.

This is just the tip of the iceberg, but the premise is simple: humans enjoy well-proportioned things, and that includes waves of energy we call sound. If the sound (waves of energy) is well-proportioned it is musical. That musical concept of harmony follows this premise. Harmony is defined as an interaction of multiple musical tones (ie a bunch of pitches). Humans generally find harmonies with simple ratios more pleasing than those of very complex ratios. For example, a pleasing harmony would be 1:2 (ie the frequency of energy waves doubles). Less pleasing would be 100:232...how times does 100 go into 232? ugh...

BUT...if this science stuff demystifies music too much for you, if you need some mystery in your sacred vibrations, fear not-- it's still really a mystery! No one really

knows why humans like even proportions! You can then reside with Plato and pals. He was not so much about measurements and ratios but rather more of an ideas guy, and so he followed the effect of music on humans: the "what" instead of the "why".

For me the "what" and the "why" are equally enticing. Music is both of these, the beauty of humans' cognitive capacities in physics and the curiously various effects these physics can have on us all. I believe that these dual components are in themselves a kind of well-proportioned harmony of mind and spirit.

Harmonies

So how can this mystery of harmony apply to our congregation. Consider our hymn-singing. As a congregation we sing together, voices, each singular and strong in their own way, blending together in perfect balance, no voice overpowering and none too soft to not be a part of this great togetherness. By singing together, we create a harmony of voices, an interaction of separate parts that cannot be approximated by one person, no matter the quality of their voice! Here's to our great harmony-- lift your voices to each other in song!

Upcoming music in services

December 7: Our band will be playing in the service!

December 14: Chalica features songs centering on our chalice tradition. Here the choir and the children join together in song!

December 21: Continuing in songs of light, the choir offers songs for Channukah.

December 24: Christmas Eve, 6pm. Come enjoy singing carols with the choir and a folk fiddle band. Also be enriched by solos from our wonderful musicians.

Always interested in harmony,

Ben Taylor, Music Director



Advocates for Social Justice

Share the Basket

Imagine being at a 'safe-house' for Christmas! On Sunday, December 7th, one-half of the collection will go to the YWCA to help them provide as Merry a Christmas as possible for the women and children who have fled domestic violence and are learning to make a new life. The YWCA offers these families counseling, parenting classes, legal assistance, and moral support. When the basket comes your way, please be as generous

as you can! P.S. Last month we gave \$655 to help The Living Room sustain its vital programs!!

POSADA

Please see insert about the event on Saturday afternoon, December 13th from 5 to 7. This will not only reaffirm our commitment to welcome strangers and migrants in our community but also help the families in one of our most economically distressed neighborhoods to have a Merry Christmas.

Covenant & Community Organizing—December 7th

The Puritan churches of 17th Century New England (most of which became Unitarian in the 19th Century) conceived a revolutionary new way of "doing church" called congregational polity. Although we have almost nothing in common with them theologically today, we do retain their basic ecclesiastical structure: democratic, autonomous congregations founded on a covenantal relationship that demands dialogue, collaboration, listening and persuasion among its members. Those same rela-

tional principles are at the heart of the Industrial Areas Foundation, with whom we are partnering to build a broad-based interfaith political organization in the North Bay. On **Sunday Dec. 7th at 1:00pm**, our minister **Rev. Chris Bell** and our IAF organizer **Michael Saxe Taller** will bring together UU theology and history with the principles of community organizing in a unique training. All are invited!

UU Book Cart



We gave it a valiant try, but the book cart, in its current incarnation, is going into hibernation. We were unable to generate the ongoing sales needed to make it an viable concern. Once we have a chance to clear it out and disperse the remaining stock, we'll hand the fine cart itself over to the Diversity Lending Library

for their use. Stay tuned. Thanks to all who helped out over the past couple of years by purchasing items and volunteering, especially this last year: Maureen Rumsford, Sally Fife, Susan Milam Miller, Ollie Ostland, Anne tenBensel, Carol Jones, and Kathy McGuire!

Women's Retreat

GENERATIONS OF WOMEN

Past, Present and Future

The Annual Spring Retreat sponsored by Women and Religion - PCD UUA (Pacific Central District of the Unitarian Universalist Association) is being held Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon, March 6-8, 2009 at Enchanted Hills Camp, Napa, CA. (Enchanted Hills Camp stipulates that the retreat is open to those who are 18 years or older).

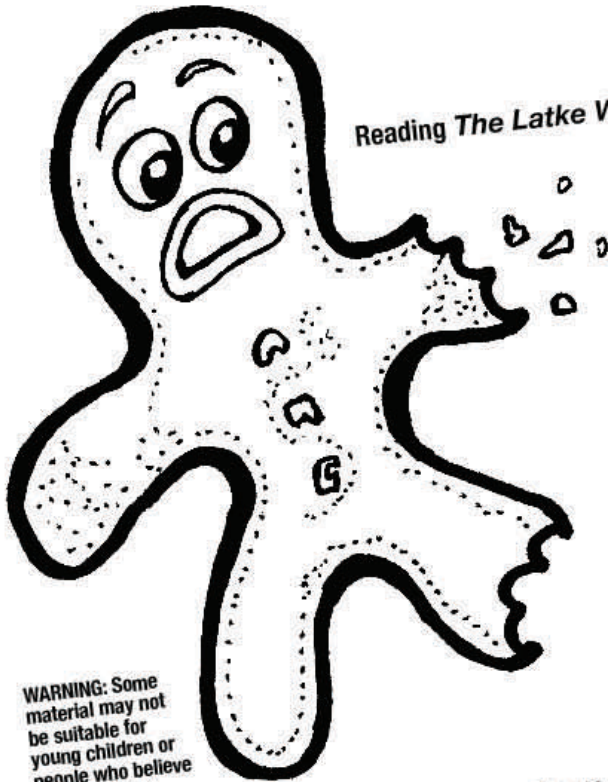
There will be workshops, large group gatherings, small affinity circles, and shared worship, all of which will be provided by retreat participants. There will be time for solitude, meditation, singing, dancing, yoga, tai chi, games, a boutique, book swap, silent auction, and

more. Participation in all activities is voluntary. Sleeping accommodations are in heated cabins and rooms in the lodge that sleep 2 to 4 per room. The registrar will take your special needs into account when assigning rooms. Bedding is provided. Staff will provide a varied menu of homemade healthy family-style meals. Early bird cost by Feb. > 2 is \$230; otherwise \$250. Special food needs can be accommodated if requested in advance. Onsite transportation will be available for those > who need help up and down the hill. To learn more about Enchanted Hills Camp, check out <http://www.uccr.org/ehc.htm>. Questions? Call Jean Nickell, (925) 977-1652, or nejaros@sbcglobal.net for a registration form.

DAVID TEMPLETON'S

TWISTED CHRISTMAS LIVE! 6

An evening of *offbeat holiday tales* read aloud by a wild assortment of the Bay Area's funniest people



WARNING: Some material may not be suitable for young children or people who believe in Santa Claus

comic **Marga Gomez**
Reading *The Latke Who Couldn't Stop Screaming*

Musician **Roy Rogers**
Christmas With Louise

comedienne **Debi Durst**
The Boy Who Laughed at Santa Claus

Reduced Shakespeare Co.'s
Reed Martin
Mr. Spock's First Christmas

Plus more to be named and a super-secret, ultra-surprise appearance by Santa Claus

Also with Danielle Cain, Tim Kniffin, Eliot Finstushel, and John Moran plus a quartet of short films by Daedalus Howell, John Harden and Jeffrey Weisman

SATURDAY, DEC. 6, 7:30 P.M.

GLASER CENTER 547 MENDOCINO AVE., SANTA ROSA

Tickets available at all Sonoma County Copperfields Book Stores, Back Door Disc (in Cotati), The Last Record Store (in Santa Rosa), and on-line at www.brownpapertickets.com.

SPONSORED BY the Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel & Spa, Out to Lunch Fine Catering, Heebe Jeebe General Store, Copperfields Used Books (in Petaluma), the North Bay Bohemian

\$20 IN ADVANCE

\$25 AT THE DOOR

TWISTED CHRISTMAS IS A BENEFIT FOR THE FOOD FOR THOUGHT FOOD BANK & THE UUCSR

Saturday Breakfast

Last year around this time, our congregation was planning a work trip to New Orleans to help with post Katrina reconstruction. I wished I could go but couldn't leave my job during the holiday season. After some thought, I realized that I didn't need to go to the Gulf Coast to be of help to those who needed some. I decided to join the hard-working crew of the Saturday breakfast. Yes, I'd rather stay in bed my 2 Saturdays per month, especially following a night out. But then I think "there but for the grace of God go I" when in the midst of our guests, lining up for sustenance and camaraderie. It keeps me coming back. There really is nothing more pressing than figuring out where one's next meal is coming from.

Our ability to continue this important service to our neighbors is dependent on several things: continuing cash flow, volunteer participation and your continued support and belief in its importance as a ministry. Thanks to all who continue to work so hard both behind the scenes and in front of the lines.

That being said, we are initiating a volunteer drive, especially for the 5th Saturday of the month. They only occur 4 or 5 times *per year* but add an uncertainty to the breakfast organizer's plate each time.

"Will enough folks show up to work this time?" Saturdays later in the month usually serve a large crowd, too, because monthly SSI and welfare money is usually gone by then. So it can be a double whammy for the work crew. If you're considering joining us as a volunteer this could be a more low-impact way to help us out!

We are also collecting donations of toiletries, socks, and other useful goodies with which to create holiday gift bags for our Saturday breakfast guests. In addition, we'll need some hands to help assemble those gift bags after the 11 o'clock service on Sunday, December 14th. Last year, there were only a few folks to do that and it took most of a day. Let's chip in and make it a quicker process!

To conclude, Sally Fife has happily passed the breakfast volunteer coordinator reins to Anne ten-Bensel and me. Anne and I humbly concluded it would take 2 of us to fill Sally's shoes and have begun to take over. Please forward any relevant news or questions pertaining to the weekly breakfast to either/both of us. We'll be happy to hear from you! Thank you—Phyllis Heagney (fpd@sonic.net). Anne's email is an-netb4@gmail.com.

Wanted—Volunteers to Work at F.I.S.H.

**WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO WORK AT F.I.S.H
HOURS 10:30-2:00PM MONDAY THRU FRIDAY—
10:30-12:00PM SATURDAYS.**

F.I.S.H. is an emergency food pantry located in Santa Rosa and serves all of Sonoma County. Volunteer Help Wanted!

1. Telephone Dispatcher—Handles incoming calls from clients requesting food pick-up that day.
2. Bagger—Fills orders prepared by the Dispatcher. Must be able to carry bags 10-15 feet.
3. Door Person—Handles pick-up of food by clients.

Prepares for distribution of items stored in refrigerators/freezers. Must be able to lift/carry grocery bags about 10 feet.

4. Hours are from 10 to 2:30pm M-F and Saturday 10-12:30pm. If you could volunteer one day or twice a month it would be very helpful.
5. Does this sound like something you are called to do? It's a small commitment but very satisfying work.
6. Training is provided. To volunteer, please call Sandra Striepeke at 707/573-8237.

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2008
Newsletter@uusantarosa.org**

**E-mail submissions
Greatly Appreciated!**

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

**TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



December 2008

Please Recycle

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

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

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

UU Update Newsletter:

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

Editor: Janis Brewster

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

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Music Director: Ben Taylor, Ext. 112, musicdirector@uusantarosa.org
Glaser Center Director: David Templeton, x103, glasermanager@uusantarosa.org
Sexton: Tony Crevelli

Sunday Religious

Education Staff
Anne Blevins
Sonja Flores
Kim Bringham

Recapture the Weirdness of childhood with this holiday matinee of an offbeat 1964 Christmas Film Classic

Santa Claus CONQUERS the Martians

When the children of Mars become mysteriously sad, the planet launches a plot to kidnap Santa to cheer the little ones up. When a jealous Martian tries to destroy everything, it's up to Santa to foil his plans, find a new Santa for Mars, and get back to Earth in time for Christmas!

"It's Bad—but it's bad with MARTIANS!"
Roger Ebert

Santa Claus!
Polar Bears!
Aliens!
Popcorn!



Featuring Pia Zadora in her film debut as Girmar, the semi-depressed Martian child!

Saturday
December 13

3:00 p.m.
the Glaser Center
547 Mendocino Ave
Santa Rosa

Tickets

\$5

per person

Tickets available at
Copperfields Book Stores,
Back Door Disc,
& The Last Record Store
Also on-line at
brownpapertickets.com

Featuring the
music of

John Phillip
Souza

Ernesto
Le Cuona

Elvis
Presley

With Plenty of

Rollicking Holiday
Tunes

Musical
Surprises

Classic
Christmas
Carols

The
Earth-shaking,
Rafter-quaking,
World Famous
**NEW
HORIZONS
BAND**
of Sonoma County

70 SASSY SENIOR-CITIZENS IN THEIR ANNUAL NO-HOLDS-BARRED WINTER CONCERT

FRIDAY
DECEMBER 12
7:30 p.m.

**FREE
ADMISSION**
Donations Gratefully Received

GLASER CENTER
547 MENDOCINO AVE.
SANTA ROSA

YOU ARE WARMLY INVITED TO
THE BELL-BUTTERFIELD'S
17TH ANNUAL
CHRISTMAS EVE PARTY

7:30 – 10:30 PM, DEC. 24TH, 2008

(WE NEED ABOUT 30 MINUTES AFTER THE UUCSR SERVICE TO GET READY, PLEASE!)

1346 YULUPA AVE.
IN THE COMMON ROOM
SANTA ROSA, CA
707-528-2714

THIS PARTY NEVER CHANGES. (NEITHER DOES THIS FLYER!)
THE DOORS ARE WIDE OPEN. COME ALONE, BRING A FRIEND, OR
BRING THE FAMILY. DRESS UP, OR DON'T. STAY FOR THE WHOLE
THING, OR STAY FOR JUST A FEW MINUTES. COME EARLY OR
COME LATE. WE WILL PROVIDE NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND
SOME GOOD WINE, BUT YOU ARE INVITED TO BRING MORE, OR
OTHER, BEVERAGES. WE WILL ALSO PROVIDE A BIG POT OF CHILI
IF YOU NEED DINNER, BUT AS WE'VE INVITED THE WHOLE
CONGREGATION – INDEED, THE WHOLE TOWN – IT WOULD BE
GREATLY APPRECIATED IF YOU BROUGHT A LITTLE SOMETHING
TO SHARE, TOO!

WE WILL BE HONORED IF YOU JOIN US. NO RSVP REQUIRED.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!

CHRIS BELL & RITA BUTTERFIELD
CAITLIN & AARON

The Committee for Immigrant Rights
with support from the Coalition for Civil Rights & the
Lincoln School area Latino community

Invites

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

to a

POSADA

Saturday December 13th, starting at 5pm

Lincoln School, 850 W. 9th Street

between Dutton Avenue and Stony Point Road

A Posada is a reenactment of Joseph and Mary's difficulties in finding lodging in Bethlehem and having to end up in a stable. The word "posada" means shelter. The play is partly to remind us of the love and welcome which should be extended to all travelers and migrants.

This is a way you can connect to the Latino community and the County of Refuge campaign.

There will be wonderful Mexican traditional Christmas food prepared by Lincoln School families for all those who attend.

Wise Men will give gifts to the youngest children of the community. The neighborhood of Lincoln School is poor, and a majority of the families are immigrants. It's requested that UUCSR bring 15 -20 gifts to be given to the children of the Lincoln School neighborhood, ages 1-14. Gifts can be toys, games or clothing.

If you have questions, call Linda Harlow at 526-3528 or Dorothy Duncan at 576-6676