



# UU Update

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

• FEBRUARY 2015 • Volume 59 • Issue 2 •

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

**Theme: OUR SOURCES OF AUTHORITY**

**TODAY - ONE SERVICE ONLY at 9:15  
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at 10:45**

## **FEBRUARY 1**

### **“KNOW THYSELF! EMERSON FOR TODAY”**

**Service Leaders:** Rev. Chris Bell, Susan Bartholome, Nancy Hargis, Claire Beery

**Music by** The UUsual Suspects, Piano by Paul Gilger

*Is my little self really a trustworthy source? Our First Source of Unitarian Universalism is “Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.” We can trace this affirmation right to one of our greatest prophets, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who taught that we must trust ourselves, our own experience, thinking and intuition, first and foremost.*

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING 10:45**

## **FEBRUARY 15**

### **FAITH AND BELIEF**

**Service Leaders:** Rev. Chris Bell, Eric Fischer, Sharon McCarty, Roger Corman

**Music by** the UUsual Suspects, Piano by Roger Corman

Harvard Scholar Wilfred Cantwell-Smith described faith as “the motivating force *behind* different religious expressions whether they be in symbols, beliefs, rituals or scriptures.” Beliefs are sets of propositions. Faith is a mode of being, a way of responding to life with trust and intention. Today we’ll consider the differences between faith and belief, which is more authoritative, and what it means to have one or the other tested.

## **FEBRUARY 8**

### **“THE CHALLENGE OF LOVE”**

**Service Leaders:** Robin Rogers, Frances Corman, Veronica Jordan

**Music by** The Choir, and Robin Rogers and Friends

All the great prophets spoke of unconditional love as a pathway to enlightenment. But boy, that’s no easy challenge on the planet today. We will be discussing some of the human behaviors that prevent us from being loving to our family and friends. And how we can change those behaviors. The choir sings us a Latin love song. We take a look at our UU Principles, Valentine's Day Edition. There will be plenty of Love to go around!

## **FEBRUARY 22**

### **“THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY”**

**Service Leaders:** Rev. Chris Bell, Susan Panttaja, Jen Collins, Sadie Sonntag

**Music by** the Choir

Nature, the Universe, Love, Life, Mind, Matter, the Tao, or the Great Big Thing? It doesn’t quite matter what you call it, what matters is how you understand and relate to the Ultimate. Emerson said that people always end up worshipping something, good or bad. Idolatry is worshipping anything less than God. But who knows what That is? Today we’ll consider how UUs can both share an understanding of the Ultimate and still deeply honor the diversity of religious expressions.

## **MARCH 1**

### **SACRIFICE REQUIRED!**

#### **New Member Sunday**

**Service Leaders:** Rev. Chris Bell, Andy Levine, Robin Rogers

## The Next Decade



As you most of you know, a team of the Board recently used an electronic survey to gather some information and attitudes from the congregation. We wanted to discover what really mattered to us, the members and friends of this community, and use that as a basis for conversations with our neighbors about the future of UUCSR.

The survey, although an imperfect instrument, did reveal some interesting things about us. We affirm that worship, religious education and pastoral and neighborly care are the most essential components of congregational life, and that we are doing a good job providing those things. We appreciate music and like making it. We are more interested in growing our own congregation than in founding others.

Oh, and no one particularly cares for the Revival. Ok, ok, I hear you! Thanks for letting me try new things.

When asked to describe the congregation of the future, these phrases were at the top:

People are growing in love.

Children and youth are empowered and active members.

The path to membership is clear and inviting.

Elders are embraced and included.

Members know the UU Principles

Isn't that a lovely picture? Could there have been any better answer to find its way to the top? "People are growing in love." That is as fine a distillation of our spiritual project as you can find. What a noble goal!

For me, the most useful question was, "Why do you PERSONALLY attend UUCSR?" When we were forced to rank a variety of reasons, "Personal Growth and Transformation" was the clear winner, with "Fellowship and Community" a solid second and "Worship" in third.

The complete results will be publicly available soon, and you can learn more about the survey at the imminent House Meetings.

At those gatherings with your UU neighbors you will also be invited to consider the following questions.

1. What are your goals for yourself as a person?
2. How could the congregation better facilitate your own personal growth and transformation?
3. How could we facilitate a deeper sense of fellowship and community?
4. On a local level, what public issues are of the greatest concern to you right now?

The Board, the UUCAN team, the Committee on Shared Ministry and myself will collate all the answers we hear from you, and create a statement that we hope will guide us into the next decade.

The survey also revealed some of our most important priorities for improvements to the building, and to our programs and ministries. We want kitchen improvements most of all! We

also desire coffee hour improvements such as sound baffling in the Social Hall, and more chairs, umbrellas, heaters and awnings to move people outside. We want to be solar-powered, and we recognize the need for an Assistant or Associate Minister. All of those things take money, of course, and so we also need to talk about how to get there together.

Even as the Board is seeking clarity for our vision and direction for the next decade, we are also implementing a new way of handling the financial side of things.

Upon my return from sabbatical, Linda Balabanian presented me with a fine little book called *Making the Annual Pledge Drive Obsolete*. This book is full of proven ideas for an approach to fundraising that eliminates the burden of constructing an annual pledge drive from scratch every single year.

Of course, our past canvass efforts have generally been quite successful in meeting our needs and allowing us to stretch into some new goals. This has often been achieved at an enormous cost of labor and hours and stress. But what if, instead, we were all just constantly striving to get to, and then maintaining, a pledge of 5-10% of our income, whatever our means? What if we made giving an ongoing, easy, unpressured thing to do? What if we kept a year-round emphasis on generosity, through sharing the basket every week and other actions? What if people simply made a sustaining annual pledge and it stayed there until they were inspired to raise it, at ANY point during the year?

Such bold ideas will need your input and support. Hence the need for a second round of house-meetings. In light of our newly crafted vision, in March we will realistically consider the many good (if often costly) ideas we have before us for improving UUCSR. We will describe our new way of thinking about fundraising and (as long as we're at it) to collect your sustaining pledge to make these future dreams real.

Speaking of dreams of the future, of all the many growth spurts we are experiencing, perhaps the very most exciting can be seen every week during story time on the chancel. We had 44 children in the service the other morning, a new record! Our patience and prayers have paid off, and we have reached a critical mass in the Children's Religious Education program. The preschool is overflowing, and we may soon need to use the Board Room on Sunday mornings for the elementary school kids! Accordingly, the draft budget that the Board will present to you on Sunday, Feb. 1 will include provisions to make the position of Director of Religious Education full-time. I trust that we will rise to the occasion and make it so!

Finally, the Board and I have finally completed a Covenant of Ministry (first called for eight years ago in my Letter of Agreement!) that fully describes our partnership, the nature of the ministerial role, my specific duties and my goals for the next year. This document is a living organ, which will be revisited at least once a year. You can find a copy of it in an insert in this newsletter, and I warmly welcome your feedback.

Out of space, so off I go! May we continue to respond to the lure of the Spirit of Love in imaginative and forward-looking ways. May UUCSR continue to be a place where each of us can grow and change into our best self, and may we all find a true sense of belonging here.

## Greetings from Our Board President

**By the time you get this** we will have met as a congregation at our Congregational Meeting, February 1. You will have heard from many in our community about their work, will have selected board members for the next 2 years as well as our DA and GA delegates and you will have heard about our draft budget which sets our goals for the next year. Our bylaws, which can be read at our wonderful website, dictate some of what must be included in our Congregational Meetings. In addition, this forum is an opportunity to bring forward members of the congregation who have information to share. This practice of coming together three times a year to discuss the business of our community is a key piece of our democratic process. Thanks to all who participate.

### House Meetings

As you have heard many of us say, in many ways, we are undertaking a visioning process this year, the results of which will serve as a road map for us going forward. We will all learn what our congregation's priorities are now and what we hope for in the next 10 or so years as we grow and evolve. As the first step in this process we all completed a survey...either online or on paper. We are now taking the next step, to take place in the next few weeks: face to face meetings with neighbors. These house meetings will be a time to share what is important to you and hear what is important to others. The results of these meetings will be folded into the survey results to give a full picture of our congregation members' wishes. It is our hope that we will have amazing attendance at our house meetings so that we can feel that we have heard from everyone. Every voice counts!

### How Many Smiles

I just must end this with a few words about how I feel, and what I see at UUCSR. Whether I am at the Board table, the Advocates for Social Justice table or just moving through the wonderful crowd of all of us before and after services, I am met with smiles, conversation, good will in all forms. I see this all around me. Folks are talking, laughing, hugging....what a community! I walk away each Sunday stirred by a rich service and warmed by the contact with you all. I suspect you all have the same experience. Pretty nifty, I think.

*~ Jeanie Bates, President, UUCSR Board of Trustees*

## Faith and Fitness

After canceling January's Bodega Head hike because of weather, we have decided to reschedule it for Saturday, February 7 with our fingers crossed.

The location offers both light to moderate hiking and whale watching this time of year.

We will meet at the usual carpool spot by the Redwood Credit Union office in the Fourth Street Safeway parking lot at 9:30 (drivers always needed) and at Bodega Head (at the end of West Shore Road) by 10:45. No parking pass required.

Mud friendly foot wear and wind resistant layers as well as binoculars, water and snacks/lunches are suggested. Dogs are not allowed on the trails. There are picnic tables adjacent to the parking area as well as restrooms and (hopefully) volunteers to help us spot whales.

Questions? Plan to meet at the carpool? Please reply to Gretchen Paradis, [gretchen@sonic.net](mailto:gretchen@sonic.net) or call 707-889-3007.

## Sign up for Automatic Pledge Payments

*Did you know in the future banks are expected to charge fees for depositing checks?*

Instead of writing a pledge check every month, please consider setting up an automatic transfer from your bank. Janis and our volunteers will save time, and our cash flow will keep steady. Think of all the time you'll free-up in your day!

Please explore this nifty and handy feature on our website. Click the green "Donate Now" button, fill in the blanks, and in a few minutes 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.

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*District Assembly 2015—Save the Date!*

**Saturday, April 25, 2015, at the First UU Society of San Francisco  
WALKING A FAITHFUL PATH**

### CALL FOR WORKSHOP PROPOSALS!

The district staff is looking for interested individuals and groups to present workshops grouped by four broad themes:

Nuts and bolts (the daily work of UU communities);  
Deepening (spiritual practices and theology);  
Reaching out (social justice & connecting outside our usual boundaries), and  
Religious exploration (shaping the faith of all ages in our complex world).

[Please see the Request for Proposals \(RFP\) for more information!](#)

Join us for dynamic worship, workshops, connections, and celebration!

<http://www.pcd-uaa.org/>

## Treasurer's Report

### Treasurer's Midyear Financial Update

**We've hit the mid-year already, it's hard to believe!** Our finances look good. Our pledges, Sunday basket and fundraising revenues are all over-budget and our expenses are under-budget, leaving us with \$14,000 in net income. This is considerably over-budget. A good place to be!

**That said, pledge revenue is down significantly compared to this time last year.** Many people pay pledges in advance in December each year to take advantage of tax benefits. Last year at December 31<sup>st</sup>, 60% of our expected pledges had been received. That is a fairly normal occurrence. This year only 53% of budgeted pledges had been received at December 31st.

I'm not sure what this means – are we headed in a negative direction with our pledge revenue or is this just a blip and we'll continue to move forward with over-budget pledge revenue? I will be doing some analysis during February and March and will keep you all apprised.

~ Linda Balabanian, Treasurer

## Evening Book Group

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

The February selection is *The Girls of Atomic City* by Denise Kiernan.

In March we will be discussing *Cat's Cradle* by Kurt Vonnegut.

Visitors and newcomers are welcome! Questions? Contact Judy Taylor.

## Home Stay Wanted

A 63 yr old male UU member from Olympia, WA, coming to Santa Rosa for a week-long Qi Gong Teacher training intensive March 16-21, is hoping to find a member's spare room available from Sunday March 15 thru Saturday March 21st. Willing to pay a modest daily rate.

For more information please call Chris Stegman at 360-451-8838 or email [cstegman007@gmail.com](mailto:cstegman007@gmail.com)

## Dedicated Saturday Breakfast Chair to Step Down

Dear Friends,

I will resign as chair of the Saturday Breakfast program effective March 31, 2015. I have had a lot of fun during the many years I have served, but my energy is slowing down and I would like to pursue other ways to serve. I am most happy to mentor the new chair as much as needed.

It was an honor to follow the originators of the program and the early volunteers; such wonderful people including Sally Fife, John Dumbrell, and the early crew chiefs and supporters: Art Rosenblum, Tom Bond, Laura Jean Hageman, Louise Ostland, Linda Harlow, Robin & Elizabeth Marrs and many other great helpers, including John Durr.

The list of current volunteers to thank is lengthy: Crew chiefs: Nicole Hatley & Sara Jones (supported by Tom & Laura Jean), Pam Rich and Carla Flarety (non-members but folks who care), Bob & Monica Anderson, Sybil Hunt & most recently John Ray are the folks who open the doors at 5:45 AM & "run the teams". Daniel Reid brings potatoes every time and has from the start, Mel Jones brings potatoes too. We have some who shop at Costco & the Food Bank: Melinda Napier, Robin & Elizabeth Marrs.

A team led by Andy Laird rolls knives, forks & spoons in a napkin (200 or more) so the guests can easily grab them. Another team goes to Panera for the donated bread, pastries, etc.: Mac Freeman, Bryan Hargis, Michael Larsen. Many thanks to Micheline Justman who launders tablecloths & towels every week. David Hope & Eric Skagerberg alternate Saturdays to come in about 8 and wash pots, pans, tableware & serving dishes. And all the wonderful volunteers who serve on the teams and show up once a month to work.

I have loved working with you, it's been an honor and a great pleasure.

Big thanks to all UUs who donate to Saturday Breakfast. Without that financial backing, it simply wouldn't happen. And thanks to Mary Louise Jaffray who applies for any grants possible.

My heartfelt gratitude to you all.

- Gretchen Vap

## CHAIRPERSON Needed! Saturday Breakfast Group

Many thanks to Gretchen Vap, outgoing chair of the Saturday Breakfast, for her dauntless leadership. Her departure will leave vacancy for the Chairperson position, starting April 1, 2015. Interested in a rewarding service opportunity in the midst of a loving group of busy bees? Contact [Saturdaybreakfast@uusantarosa.org](mailto:Saturdaybreakfast@uusantarosa.org)



## Building Vision and Power with UUCAN/NBOP

**Dr. Cornel West, black American author, philosopher, and activist, has famously said, "Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public."**

**Our Unitarian Universalist values call us to realize those values in the public arena** through the work of organizing in the larger community. North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP) is one of the avenues for doing just that.

Within the UUCSR our Unitarian Universalist Conversation and Action Network (UUCAN) acts as the liaison to NBOP.

NBOP is made up of more than 25 local organizations that include other churches, synagogues, and advocacy organiza-

tions. Throughout the year there are many opportunities for participation by individual members of UUCSR.

**This year NBOP/UUCAN will be "threshing" issues, to lift up two or three issues with shared importance for the member organizations.** A large Issues Assembly in March will determine the final choices, but we can have influence now through expressing our priorities in the neighborhood house meetings that the Board is sponsoring this month. If you haven't received an email or phone call inviting you to one of these meetings, please contact Carol Kraemer, [707-838-3736](tel:707-838-3736), Sibyl Day, [707-695-6665](tel:707-695-6665), or Deborah Mason, [707-568-5381](tel:707-568-5381).

## "A Perspective and Invitation: From the Nomadic Shelter to NBOP"

**Participating in the Nomadic Shelter project has been a wonderful experience for me.** I look forward to next year. We really accomplished something, and it was so much fun working with, and getting to know better, so many of you wonderful UUs. I've found that working together with UUs has allowed me to know I belong, and helped me find friendships as much, if not more so, than participating in a TIE group.

**I want to invite you to join me in a new endeavor, working with the North Bay Organizing Project's (NBOP) issue groups.** NBOP are doing really good work, very effectively. The Leadership Council meeting last week was impressive—they were very organized, respectful of one another and clearly accomplishing things. Carol Kraemer, in her article above, explains their structure and February and March's agenda. If enough of us come to the issues meeting and vote on what we want NBOP to address, affordable housing may be chosen for this year's focus.

My jump from the Nomadic Shelter to NBOP is because rents are skyrocketing drastically. Affordable housing is crucial to prevent more homelessness and ruined lives. Homeless Services Action Group (HSAG), now that the Nomadic Shelter is established, will probably play a more limited role in addressing homelessness in our County, especially since other groups in our county focus on helping people who are homeless. Therefore I want to shift my efforts, to affordable housing. I believe NBOP can be a powerful vehicle for this.

**We at UUCSR have demonstrated our support of NBOP by voting to join and supporting them financially.** A large contingency of us (one of the largest) attended their big end-of-the-year celebration. However, less than a dozen of us have been working in any of the NBOP groups on the issues that NBOP addresses. I know we all have to choose, from all the many problems in our world, which ones we are able to give our precious energy to. But being united in effectiveness is so rewarding. Many people donated one night a month to the Nomadic Shelter. Why not rally also to the NBOP call?

**If you want to contribute but hesitate,** or if you know you are interested in working on Affordable Housing, I'd love to talk with you. If many of us joined together, maybe we could spread the work among us so that no one person has to do too much. It would also be a great way to build the bonds in our community.

**I urge you to come to the meeting in March to vote up Affordable Housing** as an issue to be tackled in 2015., even if you can't give your time to an issues group!

Thank you! - Sara Jones

## Nomadic Shelter Needs and Updates

**"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it." Hebrews 13:2**

The Nomadic Shelter, a cooperative multi-congregational effort to give shelter to people without homes during the coldest months, steered by the Redwood Gospel Mission, has gone smoothly for our congregation.

I've been thrilled to see how many people participated, really enjoyed themselves. If you haven't joined in, I encourage you to do so for our final hosting of this year.

**Volunteers are needed to bring food for dinner for our final Nomadic Shelter Night on February 27<sup>th</sup>.** Everyone who is interested in providing a potluck dish, please call Stacy Sincheff

at 528-6603. She will tell you which dishes we still need and how much to bring, and other information.

**We also need magazines and newspapers to share with our guests,** and people to come early and help set up. I'm happy to say that we already have our night monitors all lined up. Questions? Please contact Sara at 527-6257 or at [schatzis-mom@comcast.net](mailto:schatzis-mom@comcast.net).

The first two nights we provided Nomadic Shelter, we had about 15 congregants each night who brought wonderful food and enjoyed talking with our guests at dinner. Both nights we had about 30 guests who seemed to enjoy the sumptuous meals replete with bottles of sparkling cider on decorated tables with table cloths, real china and real flat ware.

## ADVOCATES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (A4SJ)

A4SJ Meeting monthly on the 2nd Wednesday, at 12 noon

*Interested in what we do? Visit us in the teen room on February 11!* At the Advocates for Social Justice table we have a collection of DVDs to borrow. From Climate Change to a history of Reproductive Rights. Stop by and have a look!

### SHARE THE COLLECTION

*Our congregation has decided we are going to share our collection every week.* Advocates for Social Justice will continue to select the recipients, asking for suggestions from our congregation. We hope our members will let us know which of the many helping agencies in our community are of special interest to them. This "Sharing of the Collection" gift should be representative of all of us as a whole. Leave your ideas at the Advocates table in the yellow suggestion box, or you may phone Mary Louise Jaffray at 538-4668.

#### UPCOMING SHARE THE OFFERINGS:

Feb. 1 Canine Companions is a non-profit that for 40 years has enhanced the lives of people with disabilities by providing highly trained assistance dogs free of charge. This local organization is world famous for its quality in breeding, raising and training Service Dogs, Skilled Companions, Hearing Dogs and Facility Dogs. Many volunteers help in raising these dogs.

Feb. 8 Santa Rosa Community Health Centers. Last month at our Hot Topics we had a speaker who told us about how SRCHA serves the health needs of the underserved in our community, regardless of ability to pay. The SRCHC believes, as we do, that equal access to health care is essential to social justice. This growing organization provides excellent patient centered health care at a number of sites in Santa Rosa.

Feb. 15 Social Advocates for Youth (SAY) provides support, opportunities and hope to children, youth and families. It is dedicated to creating and supporting a caring community where all children, youth and families grow and strive to succeed. This year will see the opening of the SAY Dream Center, to be housed in the former Warrack Hospital, which will be used to provide housing and services for young people aging out of foster care to help them face the challenges of independent living.

Feb. 22 Saturday Breakfast - if you don't know all about this program please speak to anyone in the Congregation about it. We at UUCSR started this 10 years ago to provide breakfast for our homeless neighbors on the day of the week when breakfast is not available elsewhere. Please donate to support us! We also welcome volunteers to help cook and serve.

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.

(Nomadic Shelter: Needs and Update, continued from p. 5)

had about 30 guests who seemed to enjoy the sumptuous meals replete with bottles of sparkling cider on decorated tables with table cloths, real china and real flat ware.

The first night we had many leftovers. The second night we overcompensated—although the food was delicious, it was not as plentiful, although no guest went hungry. Maybe on the 3<sup>rd</sup> night, like Goldilocks, we will have just the right amount.

Rev Chris and Judy Elliot played their guitars and we all sang together. Several

guests read comfortably on their mattresses rather than sing. They said they really enjoyed the soothing music. The guests slept comfortably, and were very grateful for our hospitality.

The next morning everything was well cleaned, and smoothly transitioned into Saturday breakfast.

Thanks to all who helped make this such a huge success!!!

### HOT TOPICS

*Gustavo Mendoza, Area Manager and Youth Intervention Specialist for California Youth Outreach, will present on Feb. 8 at 12:45 pm, in the Board Room.* This non-profit organization is dedicated to reaching out to gang-impacted youth, families and community with educational services, intervention programs and resource opportunities that support a positive and healthy lifestyle. Learn about our community!

### VALENTINE'S DAY BOOK PARTY!

**THANK YOU!** You are so generous as a community. Your response to our request for children's books as gifts to our neighbors at the Family Support Center for Valentine's Day has flowed like water. We nearly had our needs met on our first day of registering folks. Pretty wonderful! Would you like to join us on Friday, February 13, 6:30-7:30 at the Family Support Center for our gift distribution party? All are welcome. There will be cookies and crafts for all. THANKS, AGAIN. Becky, Debbie, Jan, Shirley, Jeanie

### Support UUSC!

We encourage our members to support the UU Service Committee (UUSC), which advances human rights and social justice in the U.S. and around the world. UUSC works with 48 partner organizations in 21 countries bolstering economic justice and opportunities; promoting the human right to water, defending political and civil rights and protecting rights in the midst of humanitarian crises.

Many of our members already donated through the Guest at Your Table program, which started on Justice Sunday in November. This charitable giving will help communities both overseas and at home. Donation envelopes available at the A4SJ Table in the Lobby.

## Religious Education for Children and Youth

After an incredible MUUGs weekend here at UUCSR, (I am sure you noticed the extra 38 youth in worship) I thought I would tell you about this amazing program.

MUUGs is an acronym for **M**iddle **S**chool **U**nitarian **U**niversalist **G**atherings, a program which serves youth in 6th-9th grade, of the Pacific Central District of the Unitarian Universalist Association (PCD-UUA). MUUGs brings together youth from many different congregations for weekend events to build a safe and affirming community and deepen UU values. MUUGs has 4 weekend long retreats a year, and a week long camp in the summer. The mission of MUUGs is to serve, support and empower youth by organizing inter-generational, safe, and inclusive gatherings, that affirm Unitarian Universalist values.

Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal faith, and MUUGs places high value on engaging youth in the process of creating a covenant which guides the program. Since MUUGs commits to empowering youth to have a substantial voice in their community, the youth review and change their covenant every year. This means new youth participate in making the agreements their own. This covenant is not a list of rules, it is how we *covenant* to be with one another in community. The covenant is read at every retreat and appears on the registration form for every retreat as well. MUUGs has other policies, and major rules created by the Ministry that are explained (and agreed to by parents and youth) in the registration form.

Each MUUGs retreat is unique, but they all include some standard activities. Every night the youth worship together. Worship is held in a circle, is lead by an adult staff member and one or two youth, and is very participatory. Worship includes the lighting of the chalice, readings, chants and songs and sharing. Another standard element is Touch Groups. Youth are put into small groups of 8 to 10, lead by a youth and an adult,

where they touch base several times throughout the retreat for check in, bonding games and discussion. There are youth lead workshops at every retreat on such varied themes as improv games, crafts, and yoga. There is a talent-not-required-talent-not-prohibited show on Saturday night that is usually quite hilarious and inspiring. All- retreat activities happen once or twice each retreat. They can be serious in nature or just plain fun. The most recent all-retreat activity was a session about "hate speech". Together the group worked to identify it, examine how it feels to the self and to others and brainstorm responses to it. All retreat activities are often related to social justice, community issues or spiritual development. Within all of this youth find new friends who share their UU experience and learn about creating a caring community. They have tons of fun!!

MUUGs is an all volunteer program. Its governing body is called The MUUGs Ministry and is comprised of adults and middle school youth. I serve on the MUUGs Ministry as co-retreat coordinator and I participate as a staff member at most retreats and the summer camp. The ministry organizes the retreats and camp, acts as staff, creates policy for the program and oversees its development. One of the goals of MUUGs is to fulfill the 6th UU Pillar for a balanced youth program through intentional youth-adult partnerships. To this end, each retreat is "deaned" by one youth, one young adult and one adult adviser, each with an equal voice in the leadership of the retreat. These partnerships spawn wonderful things, and we want to encourage positive youth/adult relationships as much as possible. Our retreat staff is also multi-generational and is comprised of adult advisers, who are at least 25 years of age; young adult advisers, 18-24 years of age who have demonstrated exceptional leadership skill, and who serve as positive role models for the younger youth;

(Continued on page 8)

## Here's What's Happening in RE Classes This Month

The Sr. High Youth Group meets every Thursday from 4-6pm. Deborah Mason and Rev. Chris serve as Youth Advisers. Contact Deborah ([debmasonuu@gmail.com](mailto:debmasonuu@gmail.com)) for more information. 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 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays children meet in grade groups, as described below. Childcare for babies, toddlers and preschoolers will be provided by Fiona Mackenzie and Shawna Hoxsie.

	<u>Grades K-2</u>	<u>Grades 3-5</u>	<u>Grades 6-8 (MUUGs)</u>
<b>Feb 1 (9:15 today)</b>	<b>Children's Chapel</b>	<b>Children's Chapel</b>	<b>MUUGs "Touch Group"</b> Youth will touch base, play group
<b>Feb 8</b>	<b>Wisdom Stories: <i>PJ Funny Bunny: It's Not Easy Being A Bunny</i></b>	<b>Bibleodeon: Solomon, Part 1</b>	<b>Neighboring Faiths: Islam</b> Wrap up of section on Islam
<b>Feb 15</b>	<b>Cake Auction</b> Children will decorate cakes during RE to be auctioned after the 11:00 Service		
<b>Feb 22</b>	<b>Wisdom Stories: <i>Old Turtle and the Broken Truth</i></b>	<b>Bibleodeon: Solomon, Part 2</b>	<b>Neighboring Faiths: Catholicism</b> Overview

## Adult Religious Education (ARE)

**Rev. Chris' Tuesday Scripture Class on the Old Testament continues.** These are drop-in classes being offered both at 8 am and 5:30 pm. See the readings schedule posted in the lobby.

**Learn to develop a deep writing practice and tap into your inner voice with Write and Connect.** It meets every Monday at 10 am. New writers are welcome. Come and check it out! A \$10 donation is requested.

**In March several new classes will be offered:**

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. Offered from 12 noon to 1:30 pm, you are encouraged to bring your bag lunch to eat while we watch and discuss. March 5, 12, 19, 26, April 4 and 9. If these times don't work for you, you can check out copies of the DVDs to watch at home – alone or with a group. 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 for questions on DVD checkout.

**Cultivating a Path to Joy in Your Life** is the goal of a four-session class beginning March 18. It offers a curriculum of principles and practices that are designed to foster well-being, happiness and ease. Themes such as mindfulness, gratitude and intention are explored in a rich format that includes lecture, small group discussion and short inspiring videos. A class text is recommended (Awakening Joy by J. Baraz and S. Alexander) and can be obtained at the Santa Rosa library. Presented by Dena Lash, MA and Catherine Reisman, MA the meetings will be from 7 to 9 pm on Wednesdays March 18, 25, April 1 and 8. A \$75 fee is payable at registration. There are opportunities for two people to attend free in exchange for assisting the presenters in setting up and during the presentation.

**On Friday, March 27, at 7 pm we will welcome back Rev. Gaetano Salomone** who will offer 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.

***To find out more about these workshops and others to be offered in April and May of 2015,  
stop at the ARE Table on Sundays or call Kathy Norman (523-2787)***

The Adult Religious Education committee presents classes and related events consistent with the UUCSR Vision, Purpose and Principles in hopes of strengthening our community and facilitating spiritual growth. 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.

(Youth programs, continued from page 7)

and youth who serve as small group co-leaders, assist with worship and facilitate workshops. The young adult advisers were a big part of this programs formation, and continue to help move it forward.

New adult and young adult advisers usually come to the program through a word of mouth process. Before becoming a staff member they are asked qualifying questions about their UU congregational affiliation and standing in their congregation, their interest and background with youth programs and their motivation for becoming a MUUGs retreat staff member. All candidates go through a criminal background check and personal references are contacted. Being a Ministry member and a staff member of MUUGs retreats is one of the great joys of my life. I am filled with hope for the future when I am in the presence of these young people. And I always look forward to the next retreat. We are always looking for new adult staff. If you are interested please contact me.

In faith,  
Deborah



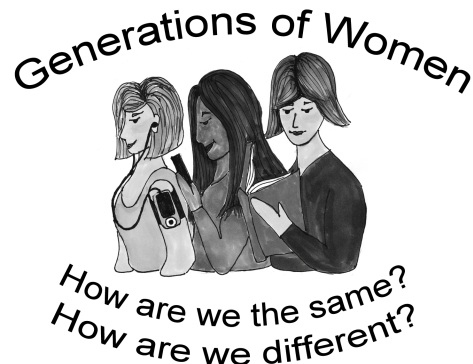
## Our Last Pledge Drive!?!?

*This year we are planning to have our last pledge drive.* Yes, that's right. It doesn't mean that we won't continue to pledge, or that we shouldn't continue to strive to be as generous as we can be. It simply means that we will no longer focus energy on a once a year drive and instead focus on generosity year round. Members and friends will be able to renew, increase or decrease their pledge amounts whenever they are moved to do so.

*In this last year of pledge drives, we will make "Sustaining Pledges" which will remain in effect until we initiate a change to our pledge.*

Next month kicks off our last annual pledge drive which will take place as part of the visioning process that starts this month. In March and April, members will attend a second house meeting – with the same participants as the first – to talk about the results compiled from the first house meetings, to celebrate the generosity that enables our congregation to provide avenues for personal and spiritual growth and to make our sustaining pledge.

## The Women of Unitarian Universalist Association Pacific Central District invite you to The Women and Religion Annual Women's Retreat.



**Feb 27 - March 1, 2015**

*with Thursday arrivals coming on the 26th.*

*On going since 1977 this is the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Gathering*

Enchanted Hills Camp in the hills above Napa, California

The weekend includes two nights lodging 7 meals, workshops for mind, body and Spirit, conversations with new and old friends, rituals, a boutique, silent auction, book swap and, for the adventurous, a ropes course! There is also an option for early arrival on Thursday evening which would include breakfast Friday (additional fee) or Saturday only with all three meals, but no overnight stay (for a reduced fee).

*This year's optional book group discussion: **Amy Tan's, "Joy Luck Club"***

Join a wonderful group of women for a time away from the everyday world, with beautiful surroundings and delicious meals in a nurturing community.

Register online <http://www.womenandreligionpcd.org/> (Early Bird Discount by Jan 15)



## Music Notes



Although we are starting to interview and audition candidates for the position as our new pianist, it will probably take us until later this month to make a final decision. This is because we are very fortunate to have received resumes from several pianists that appear to be well qualified. Therefore, you will be hearing from our volunteer pianists for services again until we are able to hire someone for that position.

Beginning for services on February 1, you will be able to hear Paul Gilger play piano once again. Special music will be a song written by the Indigo Girls titled "Watershed," which will be sung by Susan Panttaja and Claire Beery, accompanied by Robert Howseman on guitar and Ted Dutcher on bass.

On February 8, Robin Rogers will be leading the services and also providing music for both the Prelude and Postlude. Jenny Harriman and Pat Russell will play piano. The choir will be singing for both services an arrangement of "Ubi Caritas" by Maurice Duruflé. This is a [Gregorian](#) melody composed sometime between the 4th and 10th centuries. Here is the translation: Where there is charity and love, God is there. The love of Christ has gathered us as one. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Let us honor and love the living God, and from a sincere heart let us love one another.

Roger Corman will play piano for the services on February 15, and Jenny & Pat will do so on February 22. The choir will sing for both services on February 22 a song composed by a local musician, Sarah Saulsbury, who sang

with the Occidental Community Choir for many years and directed that choir from 2009-2013. The lyrics are from a poem titled "Let Evening Come," which was written by Jane Kenyon, who was New Hampshire's poet laureate at the time of her untimely death in 1995 at age 47. She was noted for verse that probed the inner psyche, particularly with regard to her own battle against the depression that lasted throughout much of her adult life. Here is her poem:

*Let the light of late afternoon shine through chinks in the barn, moving up the bales as the sun moves down. Let the cricket take up chafing as a woman takes up her needles and her yarn. Let evening come.*

*Let dew collect on the hoe abandoned in long grass. Let the stars appear and the moon disclose her silver horn. Let the fox go back to its sandy den. Let the wind die down. Let the shed go black inside. Let evening come.*

*To the bottle in the ditch, to the scoop in the oats, to air in the lung let evening come. Let it come, as it will, and don't be afraid. God does not leave us comfortless, so let evening come.*

Submitted by Jenny Harriman, Music Committee Chair

## WOMEN TOGETHER—Movie Night and Spring Retreat Weekend!

### **Women Together Movie Night**

Will Friday the 13th bring good luck to the feisty women in "A League of Their Own"?

Come see this true story at 6 pm in the Teen Room. Coffee, wine, and soft drinks will be provided ~ you bring a dessert to share.

### **Women Together Weekend Retreat: "Sisters"**

Mark your calendars for the first weekend in May for our Annual Retreat at Saint Dorothy's Rest. This year our theme will be "Sisters".

This retreat has proved to provide the best sense of connection for our women, particularly new(er) members and friends. And it's great fun!! (Ask anyone who has attended.) More information in the months to come but we don't want anyone to miss out because they didn't get it on their calendars in time!

- Linda Harlow/Women Together

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:**

E-mail Submissions

Newsletter@uusantarosa.org

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2014**

Newsletter Assembly

10 a.m.— February 25, 2015

**Welcome to Spring Circle Dinner Groups!**

*Fearless Leaders -*

If your name is in bold at the top of a dinner group, please contact the others in your "circle" to arrange for your first gathering. You get to decide on the time and place with your group. You also get to decide who brings what (ie: appetizer, salad, main dish, dessert, beverages/ bread)!

Please try to contact everyone within two weeks so no one feels forgotten!! As part of your after dessert conversation, don't forget to decide where and when you all will meet for the next month's gathering.

*Not contacted?*

If, for some reason, you are not contacted by the folks at the top of your circle" group by the middle of February please call them. If they don't respond or another problem arises, please contact Lynn Riepenhoff at 525-8424 or Kitty Wells at 952-0620. We'll do our best!

*Can't make it?*

If you cannot make a dinner, have to cancel, or (as the host) need or want to fill in an empty seat or two, please consider calling someone from the "Substitute List". They will be glad to hear from you. Enjoy your time together in food, fellowship, and fun!

**CIRCLE DINNER GROUPS**

*(For a complete copy of contact list, email newsletter@uusantarosa.org with "circle dinner list" in subject line; or stop by the church office!)*

**EVENING GROUPS:**

**Kitty & Brian Wells**

- Jere & Jenine Giblin
- Richard Allen
- Maggi Koren
- Glen & Lorrie Colwell

**Judy Wismer**

- Fred & Sandy Brewer
- Cathie Wiese and Robert Lunceford
- Nancy Steinbock
- Maggie Morley
- Lisa Rice

**Dee and John Ray**

- Robin Rogers
- Margaret Bregger Costan
- Joan Thatcher & Lois Gilbert
- Drew & Mark Lichtenberger

**Deborah Wigg**

- Betsy Thagard
- Claudia Mayfield
- Jenny Sebastian
- Katherine Latour
- Judy Elliot

**Patty Somlo and Richard Fung**

- Jen and Ralph Murray
- Carol Weisker & Mary Lil Lee
- Penny Slater
- Phyllis Metalis

**Elizabeth & Robin Marrs**

- Lynn & Leonard Riepenhoff
- Wayne & Sharon Smith
- Gail Alford
- Marilyn Holmes

**EVENING GROUPS (cont):**

**Judith Redding & Michael Randolf**

- Jo & Jim Katon
- Susan Miron
- Chris Wildlake

**Skipper & John Taylor**

- Gretchen & Gene Vap
- Katie Trieller
- Jacquie Robb
- Natalie Brundred

**Jim and Mary Wolfe**

- Nancy Fitzpatrick
- Micheline Justman
- Carolyn Mcleese & Charles Rettke
- Linda Balabanian and Tim Kennedy

**Phyllis & Bob Clement**

- Anne Bandy
- Nyla Larsen
- Janice & Olga Lee Mayberry

**Richard Gauthier & Debbie Hight**

- Phyllis Fitzgerald
- Bruce & Judy Taylor
- Sharon and Joe McCarty
- Sandy Moore

**DAY GROUP:**

**Heather & John Mutz**

- Peggy Hulse
- Dorris Lee
- Donnah Judah
- Kitty Bownass & Cliff Christensen
- Dan Nuebel

**Meet the Minister**

**February 15 & March 15**

**Meet the Minister** once a month in brief, informal meetings held following the 11 A.M. Sunday Service. They provide an opportunity for visitors and guests to meet our minister, Rev. Chris Bell, and one or two lay leaders.

Questions are not only welcomed, but encouraged!

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



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Send submissions to [Announcements@uusantarosa.org](mailto:Announcements@uusantarosa.org)  
**Editor:** Janis Brewster  
**Deadline:** Wednesday, Noon, prior to Sunday Service

**UU Update Newsletter:**  
Send submissions to [Newsletter@uusantarosa.org](mailto: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](mailto:Administrator@uusantarosa.org)*

**Minister Reverend Chris Bell, [minister@uusantarosa.org](mailto:minister@uusantarosa.org)**

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