



UU Update

*Our Vision: To live as fully as possible our Unitarian Universalist Principles,
and to nurture a liberal religious community in Sonoma County*

NOVEMBER 2015 • Volume 59 • Issue 10
Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

Sunday Services 9:15 am and 11:00 am

November Service Theme: "THE RULES"

November 1 DAY OF THE DEAD

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Roger Corman, Millie Phillips **Music by:** Eric Skagerberg and some UUsual Suspects **Share the Basket:** Restorative Resources

Many traditions recognize this time of year, with its falling leaves, as one when the boundaries between life and death grows thin. This service will give us a chance to honor our ancestors and departed loved ones, and make friends with the reality of death. An Offrenda will be built. Please bring an image or object that represents a person (or more) who has passed away.

November 15

SHINTO AND THE WONDER OF TRAVEL

Service Leaders: Scott Miller, Andy Levine, John Ray **Music by:** John Ray and some UUsual Suspects **Share the Basket:** The Committee on the Shelterless

Travel re-opens our eyes, gives us back a world we've lost. Eyes are "washed" in new seas and hands are touched by new people and new places. The Shinto tradition calls this awakening to the animating presence of spirit. Through sharing experiences of travel (Andy bicycling through the Southwest, Scott sailing around the world with Semester at Sea), this service will invite reflection on these experiences and help us bring the wonder of travel home.

November 8

PRECEPTS, COMMANDMENTS AND RULES

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Eric Fischer, Millie Phillips **Music by:** Sadie Sonntag and THE CHOIR **Share the Basket:** Graton Day Labor Center

UUs pride themselves on being free-thinkers, independents, iconoclasts. But nearly every religious tradition, monastic order, or spiritual community has a clear set of rules and guidelines. At UUCSR we profess a Covenant, a Mission, and our Principles, all of which demand clear actions from us. How do we resolve this tension? And what are the benefits of subjecting ourselves to "the Rules?"

November 22

CHOOSING DEATH WITH DIGNITY

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Nancy Hargis **Music by:** Sadie Sonntag and THE CHOIR **Share the Basket:** Breakfast with our Neighbors (100% Share!)

Governor Brown just signed a bill allowing certain terminally ill patients to choose to end their lives under circumstances of great suffering. Yet, for a long, long time the Hippocratic Oath appeared to keep doctors from allowing patients to choose to end their own lives. What might the UU approach to this delicate issue be? Where do you stand?

November 29 THE POWER OF HABIT

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Andrew Hidas **Music by:** Ben Ford and some UUsual Suspects **Share the Basket:** The YWCA Shelter (aka "A Special Place")

Consciously or not, most of us impose rules and limitations upon ourselves through habituated patterns. Whether mystics, addicts or somewhere in the middle, whether choosing a spiritual discipline or simply stuck in a rut, habits shape our lives everyday. Our whole culture often maintains unjust or short-sighted ways of being. What is the secret to using the power of habit wisely?

December 6

PEACE IN OUR HEARTS

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Veronica Jordan **Music by:** TBA **Share the Basket:** Voices Youth Center

Welcome to The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa Rosa!



GOD IS....

At our Worship Associates retreat, I asked the crew to take five minutes to reflect on completing a simple statement that would begin, "God is..."

I knew not every person present uses the word "God" to describe the Ultimate, but knew that they do concern themselves with the Ultimate, the True Nature, the Ground of Being, and that what we are all trying to do

each Sunday is open ourselves and the congregation to a connection with that Great Big Verb/Thing, the source of all meaning, all life, all hope. We took five minutes for silence, then five minutes for writing, and then we mixed up these statements and read them to each other anonymously. Here are those statements. Mine is among them.

I thought you might like to know who or what your Worship Associates are worshipping each Sunday morning. May God bless you and keep you, dear lovers of Love!

– Rev. Chris.

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**"God is the life force** within us ALL; including nature, and the universe. Everyone and everything is connected. We are one."

**"God is a – no the – Great Mystery,** the origin of love, design, beauty, compassion in our Universe and beyond. God is deeply experienced in the depths of silence, the honesty of real communication, laughter, rain, and also pain. God is found in the moment of insight which is beyond my creation. God is beyond what I can define or capture, but only glimpse like a deer running into the forest."

**"God is a baby's smile** first thing in the morning; my mother's love; the sound of the rain this blessed wet day. God is acceptance of our most marginal neighbors, e.g., the Redwood Gospel Mission opening its doors to the sickest, most lonely and unloved, our mentally ill, our addicts. God is love of all the good and bad parts of us, of our greatest mistakes and most wonderful successes. God is patience with individuals who tax us, with societies that keep getting things wrong. God is trust that we are good, that the world is good, that there is something bigger than ourselves that holds us to that."

**"God is this moment,** the totality of all being, the mind behind each of our minds; the spirit of creativity manifesting in an evolving creation; the order and beauty of nature; both utterly beyond personhood and able to be in relationship as a person; It is me, It is you; It is Love – complete, inclusive, endlessly generous and all-embracing love, which has room for everything "good" and everything "bad." It is LIFE."

**"God is infinite energy** and flow. God is infinite love and compassion. God is the eye and heart of the Cosmos, guiding us always toward knowledge of the self and the Universe, toward the knowing without knowing, toward faith that the rhythms and stories that go before and after us are all a part of the infinite whole."

**"God is a higher thought/knowing/depth/connective**

tissue running through all that we see in our world. (and beyond?) It is benevolent, or at least kind. It is this depth that I reach out to when on rocky ground and serves as a network that I access to send love and prayers and healing thoughts. God is always with us, in all."

**"There cannot be a name** because a name is like a boundary. The Universe expands in all directions and never ends, yet we call it a name, which is then a container to put it in so that we might pass it back and forth in conversation. There cannot be a name, only a sense that exists in all of everything. I have felt a presence at times that I thought might be 'God' and it is a feeling of deep compassion and watchfulness and I am grateful for this feeling, yet question if I have conjured this sense out of my own need, but then I realize that it is not for me to know because it is so much larger than me and not for me to define."

**"God is what is left** when we let go of all our images of how things are and should be? What is left when we stop worrying about whether we are loved or whether we are good enough or work hard enough or have enough? What is left after all our accumulated judgments dissipate? I imagine that the divine is what is left, vibrating or humming along underneath everything."

**"God is the web** of existence – all people, animals, plants, the Earth and Nature."

**"God' is not a word that I use much** because it has too many meanings for too many people, some of which may be negative or oppressive. I intuit a connective life force. If I have to give it a name then Mystery would be more resonant than God. I don't know what it is and I am content not knowing. I experience this life force in many ways: alone in the beauty of nature, in music, in others when I experience or observe acts of love, compassion, commitment, ritual and shared reflection. It is what makes life worth living.

**"God is the force for good** that there is in this world. That there is life at all – and that there is more than we can ever guess at – is God. Some say that diversity is a gift from God, but I think that diversity (the fact that there are SO many things) is God."

**"God is not a physical being** but rather the ether all around us. It comforts me to think that God is all around bearing witness in good times and bad."

**"God is the power that bestows the spark** of life. Be it a human, an insect or a single-celled amoeba. It is the Spirit of Life."

**"Whatever God is, God is not the Word,** unless the 'the Word' is taken to mean the wordless word beneath, in front of, behind, around words. God is beyond all language, so the task here is inherently challenged. That said, for me God is real in the sense of my abiding creator, sustainer, and redeemer. I have in my life been too blessed – carried, I would say – by an infinite loving presence (sometimes an active presence) to at this stage, turn and say that God is 'just' an idea or a reflection of something everyday and human. I take very seriously the Biblical injunction to know and love God, to be grateful to seek to grow into God's idea of all that I should do and be."

[Continued on next page]

## Greetings from Our Board President...

**It's downright autumnal and I love it!** Fall brings to Sonoma County its own special version of Fall with that subtle change in the light and the purple and red swaths of grape leaves in the vineyards. Pumpkins seem to be everywhere!

**Our Fall Congregational Meeting saw that the Church fiscal year was off and running** with an encouraging report from our treasurer, Linda Balabanian. Your new Board of Trustees was formally introduced: John Jaffray, Marilyn Beckerbauer, Marge Wright, Sam Miller, Tom Bond, Gretchen Vap, Linda Stabler, Pam Tennant and the new Vice President, Bill Haigwood.

I am pleased to say that the proposal for the kitchen remodel was passed, if I remember correctly, by unanimous vote. Work is scheduled to begin after the holidays on January 4.

October brought good weather and good vibes to the woods of Camp Meeker. **I hear that the annual Men's Retreat at St. Dorothy's Rest was a rousing success**, the largest turnout yet. There were 18 first time attendees

In the past few months as your Board president, I have found it helpful to reacquaint myself with our Congregational Covenant:

*We pledge to seek unity in our diversity, to welcome divergent opinions and beliefs, to listen to one another with open hearts and minds, to*

*acknowledge our shortcomings and be quick to forgive them in others, and to keep our focus on our Mission.*

**I see this covenant as a kind of glue that holds us in unity** within our wonderful diversity. Being human, I find it difficult at times to honor this commitment to my fellow congregants. I need reminding to open my heart and mind when I'm dealing with people whose opinions and perspectives differ from my own. Forgiveness can be a real challenge. I think a regular habit of reading or hearing the "promise" we made to abide in right relations within our religious (and greater) community will help keep me (and all of us!) in tune with pursuing our UUCSR Mission:

*Celebrating life, empowering people, caring for one another, and helping to build a better world.*

**I love being a part of this growing and thriving congregation** whose mission reflects my personal values and aspirations. It is certainly an honor and a privilege to serve as your Board president.

Peace and love,  
**Susan Bartholome**

President UUCSR Board of Trustees

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[Reverend Chris Bell and the Worship Associates, continued from prior page]

### God is...

The source

The ground

The context

The symbol

The depth

The projection

The go-to

The fall-back

The explanation

The elaboration

Of all that is

All that is holy

All that is common

All that is meaningful

All that is gratitude

All that is fierce

All that is comforting

All that is rapturous

All that exists in everyday life.

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**UUCSR COVENANT** *We pledge to seek unity in our diversity, to welcome and respect divergent opinions and beliefs, to listen to one another with open hearts and minds, to acknowledge our shortcomings and be quick to forgive them in others, and to keep our focus on our Mission.*

## Treasurer's Report

**I have vivid memories of the Christmas mornings of my childhood.** We always had a beautifully decorated Christmas tree and would all gather in our pajamas to open our presents. It was warm and cozy inside, usually snowing outside and I had everything I needed and wanted. I was very lucky and for the most part, I knew it.

The memories of my childhood Christmas are dominated by my father. **Every Christmas morning he lost it and began railing against the commercialism and consumerism that drove the holiday season of giving.**

Our Christmas tradition was to watch my father start his simmer and try to distract him into not boiling over. But it was inevitable. He was very angry that we (himself included) were manipulated into enriching large corporations by buying items that we didn't need. He was frustrated that everyone around him fell for it and that no one could see the immorality of it, especially while others suffered without even their basic needs met. He felt these things very deeply.

**I am so grateful for the example he set me,** growing up. He taught me to always question authority and to do what was right whether I wanted to or not. He instilled in me the values that are reflected in the UU Principles and he was also one of the most generous people I have ever known.

**I marvel at how much worse the clarion call of consumerism has become over the years.** We are entering the season during which massive consumer-goods companies try to chide, entice and shame us into buying

their wares. How many of us are the recipients of gifts that are now lurking in the back of the closet or in the garage never used? I think over the years of the things I just had to have and now have no use for.

**The idea of living a simplified, uncluttered life with less stuff sounds very attractive.** Consider the benefits of owning fewer possessions: less to clean, less debt, less to organize, less stress, more money and energy for our greatest passions. Folks who attempt to rid themselves of the extraneous stuff they have amassed, report feelings of freedom, unburdening and relief.

Last year in the December newsletter, I wrote that I was planning to make a donation to UUCSR equal to the amount that I spent on gifts during the holidays. There were two things I hoped to accomplish. First, of course, was to provide additional funds to UUCSR. And second, I was hoping that, knowing whatever I spent I would have to match, I would be much more conscientious and selective with the gifts I purchased. It worked! I bought less for my family than in previous years ... and it was okay!!! Everyone was very happy and we had a wonderful time.

This coming holiday season I plan to again match what I spend on gifts for my loved ones with a donation to UUCSR. Will you join me and make an extra gift to the congregation? Consider directing your donation to the Breakfast with our Neighbors or our Endowment Fund.

*This holiday season I plan to match what I spend on gifts with a donation to UUCSR. Will you join me?*

Linda Balabanian  
Treasurer

### Share the Basket - SEPTEMBER RECIPIENTS:

Each week our practice is to split our offering basket contributions. Our social action committee, Advocates for Social Justice, selects a program to receive this special donation from our Congregation.

The Living Room           \$ 414.08  
Becoming Independent   \$ 528.61

Lake County Fire Victims Fund   \$3098.96  
Breakfast for our Neighbors (100%) \$ 698.22

*Thank you for your very generous support!*



UUCSR 2015 Auction

## UUCSR 2015 AUCTION

November 7, 5 to 8:30 pm

**UUCSR's biggest and most fun fundraiser!  
Join us for the festivities**

Bid on cool events or services! New to the Congregation?

A great way to get to know us!



**NEW TIME**  
1st Thursdays  
6:30—8:30 pm

**ADVOCATES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (A4SJ)**  
Come find out what we do - we meet on 1st Thursdays 6:30 – 8:30 pm!  
Next meeting NOVEMBER 5, at 6:30 pm in Room 1

**A4SJ**

Stop by our table Sundays to buy Delicious Peace Coffee – Grown by a co-op of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian farmers in Uganda - the decaf coffee is from Mexican co-op. You can also borrow social justice themed CD's.

## Share the Collection

The Congregation shares our Sunday Offering weekly with a local non-profit that serves our greater Sonoma County, including our Saturday Breakfast For Our Neighbors. The schedule of giving is arranged by A4SJ several months in advance, from suggestions by members of the Congregation. Please request a future-recipient form at the A4SJ table on Sundays.

**November 1: Restorative Resources** - A Sonoma County program to provide restorative justice circles and school Programs. Restorative Justice is a community-based approach to dealing with crime, the effects of crime and its prevention. In schools it provides a framework of respect and trust between students, teachers, parents, administrators and staff, foster an inclusive school culture, develop positive discipline practices, and create a safe learning environment.

**November 8: Graton Day Labor Center** (Centro Laboral de Graton [CLG]) a worker-led day labor center, organizes domestic workers and day laborers in W. Sonoma County for advancement of workers' rights and dignity. CLG coordinates democratic, fair, and transparent hiring.

**November 15: COTS** (Committee On The Shelterless) provides programs in Sonoma County to empower homeless families and single adults. Every year, 2200 adults and children are served, 124,000 hot meals are served, and 750,000 pounds of food delivered to homes in the community. COTS also provides 350

beds of shelter every night to families and single adults.

**November 22: Breakfast For Our Neighbors** is our own program that feeds people in need every Saturday in our Social Hall. Volunteers are from UUCSR, and the community. We rely on the generous financial support of the Congregation.

**November 29: YWCA Shelter** - The Safe House provides refuge in a confidential location for women and children fleeing domestic violence. Established in 1977 as one of the first 15 battered women's shelters in the country, women seeking safety from domestic violence can call the hotline (707-546-1234) to be screened for the YWCA's therapeutic 60-day residential program. 200 women and children served annually.

### Social Justice Film Project!

*Coming to a Board Room Near You...*

Calendar these dates!

Show Times for November and December:

|             |                   |                |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------|
| November 1  | 12:45 pm (Sunday) | #blackmendream |
| November 20 | 7:00 pm (Friday)  | TBA            |
| November 22 | 12:45 pm (Sunday) | TBA            |
| December 18 | 7:00 pm (Friday)  | TBA            |
| December 20 | 12:45 pm (Sunday) | TBA            |

For updates, stay tuned to the Focus/Open Lists and the Order of Service

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ADVOCATES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE FILM PROJECT NEWS

We are busily previewing films on the topic of Racism and will let you know as soon as we have chosen the next two. We appreciate your responses and are so gratified that this project is meaningful to so many of you.

Jeanie Bates for Social Justice Film Project Group

Hot Topic Hot Topic Hot Topic

November Hot Topic - "Affordable Housing"
Sunday, November 8, at 12:45 PM

What do we mean by "Affordable Housing?" How can we retain what we have? How can we get more?

This month we have a panel of distinguished advocates for low income housing: Santa Rosa Council Member Julie Combs, Affordable Housing Advocates David Grabill, John Lowry, and Matthew Lawrence, will discuss the issues that we face in Sonoma County in our effort to retain and create more affordable housing. They will take questions from the audience and talk about what we can do to help.

Come early to get a light lunch which will be available for a donation.

Meet The Minister

After the 2nd service on the 3rd Sunday of each month, visitors & guests are invited to meet informally with Minister Rev. Chris Bell and a few lay leaders. Bring your tea and join us in the Green Room at the end of the hall.

Questions not only welcomed but encouraged!

UUCSR Board of Trustees

Approved

OCTOBER Minutes

Available Now in the Congregational Office or online at uusantarosa.org

Religious Education for Children & Youth

“Covenanting” at Home

What are the rules? Are there any rules?

How do I get my kids to follow the rules?

“My teenager wants to make up their own rules.”

“My toddler doesn't believe there are any rules.”

Setting and keeping rules in the home is a time honored challenge for parents. Cultural norms about family rules have come, gone, and come round again.

In the 50's, rules were sacrosanct. Arguing with parents about the rules more often than not got you nowhere but in trouble. The rationale of the more permissive style of the 60's was that the only way to fully support the budding individuality of childhood was to free children of the constraints of rules and the punishment that came when rules were disobeyed. But this often left children without structure and boundaries necessary to navigate challenges of growing up.

Since the 80's the necessity of rules, guidelines and boundaries in child rearing has been established by most parenting experts. Children will grow up into adults who must live in a world wrought with policies, restrictions, laws and regulations, and need to learn to function with a form of these as they grow up.

Structure and limits provide security for children.

Setting limits and rules that keep children safe, teach them respect, and promote peace in the family can be made in a

way that does not limit the blossoming of the child's uniqueness and creativity. It is not an either/or proposition.

Children thrive when there is predictability in their life. When they are provided a structure that includes both restrictions and freedoms they will develop an understanding of what is expected. The discipline that comes with following rules teaches kids when they are better off toeing the line, and where the creative approach is the best way.

Rules must be set in accordance with a child's developmental physical and reasoning abilities. So rules are not stagnant but can change as a child matures. This can create conflict when a younger sibling is held to a tighter structure than their older sibling.

Rules can create conflict in many ways. Rules are enforced by parents, and the job of children is to individuate from their parents. Sometimes children and youth see the rules as an obstacle in their process of becoming their “own person.” **Parenting is a tough job!** Finding the balance between allowing the freedom to be and the structure for respectful, responsible and safe living is not an easy task. Consistently enforcing consequences is even harder.

One idea is to apply what we do at UU in the home. In all our RE classrooms you will see on the wall a covenant that the children and youth have created. The covenant is a list of behaviors and guidelines that the children have come up

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What's Happening In RE Classes this Month?

The Sr. High Youth Group meets every Thursday from 4-6pm. Deborah Mason, Ben Ford, Millie Phillips and Rev. Chris serve as Youth Advisers. Contact Deborah Mason.

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 children's affirmation.

First Sunday of the month is Children's Chapel with all ages together. On the 2nd, 3rd & 4th Sundays children meet in grade groups, as described below.

Childcare for babies, toddlers and preschoolers provided by Fiona Mackenzie and Shawna Hoxsie during both services.

	GRADES K-1	GRADES 2-3	GRADES 4-5	GRADES 6-8 (MUUGS)
Nov. 1	Arts Sunday Day of the Dead			
Nov. 8	Wisdom Stories <i>Blowing in the Wind</i> by Bob Dylan & Jon Muth	<i>In Our Hands</i> Friends & Enemies	<i>In Our Hands</i> Creative Conflict Resolution, Part I	MUUGs Retreat at the UU Society of Sacramento No Class Today
Nov 15	Social Justice Session <i>The Power of Consent</i>	Social Justice Session. <i>The Power of Consent</i>	Social Justice Session. <i>The Power of Consent</i>	Social Justice Session. <i>The Power of Consent</i>
Nov. 22	Wisdom Stories <i>The Secret of Saying Thanks</i> by Douglas Wood	<i>In Our Hands</i> Friendships with People Different from You	<i>In Our Hands</i> Creative Conflict Resolution, Part II	<i>In Our Hands</i> Building a Utopian Society
Nov. 29	All Ages Together Theme- Giving Thanks			

Adult Religious Education

SPIRIT OF LIFE WORKSHOPS

presented by Reverend Chris Bell

Tuesdays at 7:00 pm November 3, 17, 24; December 1

Don't need to sign up just show up!

Join us for the last workshops in our *Spirit of Life* workshop series, which offer participants space, time, and community to explore their Unitarian Universalist spirituality. Each focuses on a different aspect of the spiritual life, framed by the lyrics of Carolyn McDade's song "Spirit of Life." The workshops are designed to be welcoming to Unitarian Universalists of many spiritual and theological persuasions.

Participants are invited to claim an inclusive definition of spirituality and recognize the spiritual aspects of their lives. Reflecting, speaking, and listening are core activities in each workshop.

Barbara Hamilton-Holway's *Spirit of Life* program seeks to be like the eponymous song, and bring meaning, beauty, inclusivity, and growth to Unitarian Universalist adults as they deepen their spiritual awareness and connections.

The *Spirit of Life* program taps into one of the central functions of religion, eloquently described by minister Kendyl Gibbons: "... how we—each of us, in our uniquely constituted beings—recognize and understand and make sense of that unbidden, overwhelming awe at the wonder, magnificence, danger, demand, and delight of being alive."

Giving Life the Shape of Justice: The Spirituality of Working for Change

Roots Hold Me Close: Tradition, Teachers, and Spiritual Formation

Wings Set Me Free: Hopes, Dreams, and Expanding Visions

Come To Us: Closing and Continuing On

The Long Strange Trip Video Series

On the history of Unitarian Universalism available to rent. Take home, view at your leisure. Contact Kathy Norman to arrange disc pick-up.

LOOKING AHEAD . . .

Covenanting with Youth at Home

[continued from prior page]

with to make the classroom a peaceful and productive place for learning and growing. Once the list is made, they are each asked if they will promise to adhere to it. Then, if there is a time in the class when someone steps out of the covenant the teacher has their own promise to refer to. New covenants are made at the beginning of every year.

Some rules in the family are not negotiable, things related to health, safety, school performance etc. It can backfire to put a hard rule in the covenant process if there is no option to take it out. In the MUUGs (Middle School UU Gatherings) program we have program rules and we have a covenant. Rules are made by the MUUGs Ministry (the governing body – which includes youth and adults) for the safety and health of the community with consequences for breaking the rules also set by the Ministry. The covenant is made by the youth and is upheld by the whole group.

Using covenant in the home is one way to include your child in creating structure in the home for the benefit of every member of the family. It is not a panacea for every conflict inherent of the setting and enforcing rules, but it is a way to encourage children to join parents in the process of building a peaceful family culture.

In faith,
Deborah

Youth Religious Education Director

JANUARY

"A Sampling of Unitarian Universalist Scientists"

Presented by Phil Harriman

- ◆ Joseph Priestly - one of the first Unitarian ministers in the colonies (Jan 6)
- ◆ Ada Lovelace - the only (legitimate) child of poet Lord Byron (Jan 13)
- ◆ Linus Pauling - only person to win two Nobel prizes in two different areas: chemistry and peace. (Jan 20)

"Spirit of Practice"

Presented by Reverend Chris Bell
A series of Tuesday evening talks

FEBRUARY

William R. Stanton's "Adult Sexuality Course"

Presented by William R. Stanton in a series of four classes. *Final dates to be confirmed.*

What's COSM up to lately? Think minister evaluation.

We're the Committee on Shared Ministry, and, as the name implies, we're all about working with the minister in various ways, such as conflict resolution and member outreach, among others. One of those ways is through the annual minister evaluation.

This year, following two Sunday services in December, we will be distributing a questionnaire to the congregation at large. That's right, a non-electronic, non-digital survey using actual paper on which you make marks with such analog tools such as pencil, pen, marker, or other appropriate physical device. Then it can be returned either to a box with a slot on top or via the old-school kind of mail that doesn't have an "e" in front of it. (The USPS will certainly appreciate delivering something besides Christmas catalogs.) *More information will be forthcoming from your friendly, local COSM members. Bob Anderson, Alan Bell, Bill Foshee, May Lill Lee, Kitty Wells, Lucia Milburn (Chair)*

— **Alan/Linda Bell, Santa Rosa, CA**

The Education Justice Task Force Forges Ahead

The Education Justice Task Force of the North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP) is progressing on three major goals for the 2015-2016 school year:

- Establish high quality **Ethnic Studies** classes in Santa Rosa district high schools. Responding to our advocacy, the district agreed to aim for the reductions of Latino out-of-school suspensions by 50% and expulsions by 40%. The most promising new development is a strong wave of Latino youth, parents and education professionals, committed to positive action, who joined NBOP's Education Justice Task Force during the summer and fall of 2015.
 - Ensure the implementation of **Restorative School Discipline** programs effectively on all its middle school and high school campuses. The process aims to create communities among students to build confidence and relationships, an approach found to significantly diminish discipline problems. District administrators spoke to RSD implementation at the Hot Topics event on October 18.
 - Create a pilot project using the breakthrough **Algebra Project** teaching method — which enables students who have not been able to do so through traditional math instruction to successfully learn Algebra. (A high school science teacher and an SRJC math professor are members of our Algebra Project Working Group.)
- In addition, the EJTF trained community advocates to review Local Control Accountability Plans ("LCAPs") which — under a major revision in California's Education Code — govern school districts' use of funding earmarked for programs benefiting educationally disadvantaged students.
- The Education Justice Task Force meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30-8:00 p.m. (preceded at 5:30-6:20 by a study of Radical Equations by Algebra Project founder, Bob Moses). Join us. We would appreciate your participation in this important work. To volunteer, or for info, contact David Hoffman or Linda Lambert.

Saturday Breakfast needs volunteers and funds !

- ◆ Feeds 200 people each Saturday morning, especially in the colder months
- ◆ Food donations cover only a portion of the food costs.
- ◆ Grocery and dry goods costs range from \$800 to \$1100 a month
- ◆ Substitute volunteers (cooks, servers, shoppers) are needed in August and September
- ◆ Monthly Share-the-Basket provides only some of the funding
- ◆ Majority of the funding comes from individual donors

Please make an ear-marked donation of any amount

Write a check to *UUCSR* with *Saturday Breakfast* in the memo line.
To Volunteer:
Contact John Ray

[Donate Now](#)

World Affairs Council of Sonoma County presents, at the Glaser Center...

"My Incredible Journey with Nicholas Kristof to India and Nepal" by Austin Meyer, journalist and educational design engineer. **Saturday, November 21 at 4 p.m.** Glaser Center 547 Mendocino Ave, Santa Rosa. Members & SLV free: Visitors: \$5 suggested donation 0

Thanksgiving Thoughts

For many Native American Indians of present day, the traditional "Thanksgiving" holiday is ... a day of sorrow for the fallen lives of those who were lost so long ago, and shame for living in a country who honors people who used religion and self-righteousness to condone murder, treachery and slavery.

For the many in the Native community, "Thanksgiving" is a day to reflect on what has happened (past and present); to pray to the Creator that more people will know of the truth and show respect towards the fallen culture; to fast the body; to protest the commercialization of Thanksgiving; to share their time with the less fortunate in soup kitchens or shelters; and some take part in a family meal, honoring the spirit of Chief Massasoit and his initial charity and intentions of the Wampanoag Indians — who first came to initiate a peace agreement between them and the newcomers. Celebrating the spirit of the holiday - without the propaganda that is attached, is a respectful way to share the day with the Native American people. their efforts led to be, is even more important. Without the assistance of Squanto, and the agreement for peace made between the two cultures, I find it unlikely that the settlers would have lived so well or even lived at all...

By Terri J Andrews , <http://www.angelfire.com/biz2/turquoisebutterfly/thanksgiving.html>

UUCSR MISSION Celebrate Life, Empower People, Care For Each Other, Help Build a Better World

"Giving Tuesday"
December 1, 2015
...Pass the Word...

From the Philanthropy Team

November – fall colors, the cooler weather, pumpkin spice – everywhere. Headed toward the holiday season, with all the extra activities that generally come with the holiday season, it can be easy to forget what makes it meaningful in the first place.

We invite you to join in Giving Tuesday, a day to celebrate generosity, as an antidote to consumerism represented by Black Friday, Cyber Monday and countless other marketing ploys designed to make us want to buy "stuff." Giving Tuesday provides an opportunity to practice generosity in those ways that are close to our hearts.

Giving Tuesday as a designated day of giving seeks to encourage philanthropy as an expression of gratitude in which we all can participate. This year, Giving Tuesday falls on December 1, the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving, Black Friday and Cyber Monday. We kick-off the holiday *giving* season with Giving Tuesday.

Many of us give our time, talent and treasure, in other words, practice generosity, on a regular basis. Our generosity is evident all around us, within our congregation, weekly Share-the-Basket, Saturday Breakfast, Family Fun Night and in countless drives during the year for food and other needs. Every day is a giving day.

For me, focusing on Giving Tuesday provides a respite from blatant consumerism which can often overcome us with nonstop commercialism. I am reminded of the importance of real gifts, the true gifts that I can give to others, and in so giving, nurture my soul. Let's use this day as a reminder and a starting point, from which to reflect and act on our generosity of spirit, and to give to those causes with which we feel aligned.

...true giving is not an economic exchange; it is a generative act. It does not subtract from what we have; it multiplies the effect we can have in the world."

Simple Truths, Kent Nerburn

**The Editor's
 Raise-Your-Pledge
 Club**

**Your Name *HERE*
 in *DECEMBER***

From the Editor...

In Honor of "Giving Tuesday," and following the example of other members of UUCSR, I am bumping up my monthly pledge 25%, from \$20 to \$25, starting this December.

Will you join me?

Raise your monthly recurring pledge and see your name in print here next month.

Haven't yet gone electronic?

Automate your pledge payment to UUCSR and see your name in print here next month! (Why not increase it at the same time?)

Register with Janis Brewster in the UUCSR Office to be part of the Editor's Raise-Your-Pledge Club and be thanked in print!

Calling all UUCSR Women!

**Women Together Annual 1 - day Retreat
 Saturday, November 14th**

We have chosen to go deeper into October's Services theme, "Transformation."

Welcome Circle at 10:00 a.m. followed by small groups responding to three theme-related questions. A break for lunch, then games to enjoy, or relaxing and informal talk with old and new friends.

This retreat is especially good for women with young children who can't get away for our May week-end retreat, and for those who find ambulating at St. Dorothy's Rest too much. New(er) women encouraged to attend, as we've found our retreats are a wonderful way to make new friends and re-connect with old ones!

Coffee at 9:30 a.m., Activities at 10:00 a.m.

Please bring a lunch dish to share that does not require cooking.

At Friends House, 684 Benicia Drive, Santa Rosa.

Questions? Contact Linda Harlow

We're looking forward to a fun day!

P.S. Mark your calendars for our Annual Holiday Party at Helga Lemke's, on Saturday, December 12th!!!!

~ **November is Native American Heritage Month** ~

Thanksgiving at UUCSR

November 26, 3 pm

(VOLUNTEER OR TEAM NEEDED TO SHEPHERD THIS EVENT!)

We celebrate our Annual UUCSR Thanksgiving Day Feast this year with our UU friends and family in the Social Hall on Thanksgiving Day, beginning at 3:00pm. A lovely way to celebrate the true meaning of Thanksgiving!

Look for the sign up sheet on the Bulletin Board in the Social Hall.

Please RSVP by November 22, that you will be joining us and what dish you will bring to share, so we have plenty of places at our tables for all. We will have tables set and decorated, music playing, and a warm welcome for all. Every year we have a wonderful array of delicious food! If you have special dietary needs, bring your special dish to share. Always plenty for our vegetarian friends, too!

Volunteers needed for **organizing, set up/clean up**—gratefully welcome!

After our feast, stay and enjoy Scrabble or other games.

Contact Cathie Wiese

From the Nominating Committee

Mark Your Calendars! GA and DA are Coming!

The UUCSR nominating committee is charged with finding and encouraging UUCSR members to attend and represent UUCSR as voting delegates at the following Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) conferences: Pacific Central District's regional District Assembly (DA) from April 22 to 24, 2016, in northern California (location TBA); and the General Assembly (GA) from June 22 to 26, 2016 in Columbus Ohio.

GA 2016 Theme: "Heart Land: Where Faiths Connect"

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of the UUA. Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the UUA through democratic process. You may have heard or attended several UUCSR sessions where delegates brought their heartfelt experiences back to our congregation to share. An experience not to be forgotten! YOU can be an attendee this year! YES you can!

The UUCSR Board of Trustees has allocated a small amount of money this year to help pay for registration fees for up to 2 delegates to GA, and to DA, so they can experience these wonderful and enriching events and represent our congregation as voting delegates.

This is a FIRST for our Congregation to provide a small amount of support to encourage members who might not otherwise be able to attend. The Board of Trustees feels it is important to support our members so they included this amount in our budgeted funds for this year. Plan your vacations and travel now - and add these enriching events to your calendar. If you are considering attending either of these events (with or without the monetary support) please contact any of your nominating committee members: Linda Harlow, Eric Fischer, Joe Como, Barrie Noe, and Kirsten Olney. (Member requests for funds to be used for GA and DA registration fees considered by the Board of Trustees on an individual basis).

UU Update is a monthly publication of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa Rosa, California.

Send electronic submissions by the Monday after the 3rd Sunday of month: newsletter@uusantarosa.org Paper submission must be received by Noon on 3rd Sunday in the Newsletter mail slot in the office workroom at UUCSR 547 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95401.

All submissions should have **Topic and Month** in email subject line. Articles 200-400 words. Ads and Announcements 20-70 words. Email newsletter@uusantarosa.org or call 707-568-5381, ext. 106, for more information. Announcements for non-congregational events only as furthers the mission of the congregation and as space allows.

PHOTOS ARE HERE!

If you had your picture taken for the photo directory, your complimentary 8x10 photo is here. Please look for it next to the name badges on Sunday morning or pick it up in the office. If you ordered and paid for a package, you should have received it directly from LifeTouch. Help? Contact AnnaLisa

Evening Book Group

Second Thursdays, 7-9 pm

The Evening Book Group will meet on Thursday, October 8th from 7 to 9 p.m. at 547 Mendocino. We meet in the RE wing. November: *Finding Nouf* by Zoe Ferraris.

December: *Euphoria* by Lily King. Visitors and newcomers welcome. Questions? Contact Linda Lampson.

Drawing Wednesdays!

Open drawing group 1-3 Green Room

Judy Hutchinson facilitates a group from beginners to experienced artists. Bring your paper and pencils for some meaningful fun. Instructional books, masters' drawings, ideas and encouragement all available. Call Judy for info.

Faith and Fitness

Next hike: Saturday November 14 Pomo Canyon to Shell Beach—"Best hike in Sonoma County." Redwoods, Douglas firs, ridge-tops, grasslands, mountain views, picnic overlooking the Russian River. 3 miles, mod. climbs. With carpooling no need to retrace our steps. Bring lunches, water, snacks, layered clothing, wind breakers. Santa Rosa Carpool meets 9:30 am at 4th & Farmers Safeway parking lot, near the Redwood Credit Union. To Shell Beach parking lot on Hwy 1, by 10:15, where we'll leave some cars and continue to Pomo Canyon trailhead parking. We'll retrieve the cars at Pomo Canyon at end. Back to Santa Rosa @2pm.

Contact Gretchen to sign-up. Please let us know if you plan to join so we won't miss you!

Volunteer Newsletter Assembly: 10 a.m.— 4th Wednesdays.



From Millie Phillips, Our Intern Minister

First of all, congratulations to the youth group for organizing the collection of a very large amount of food for the Lake County fire victims!!! Working with this team is wonderful – I'm so impressed with the teens in our congregation.

I've also been getting to know some of the eldest and even founding members of the congregation. Your history is inspiring and it is so obvious to me what a strong foundation you have laid in order to have such a thriving church today. It's great to be

getting to know many members more than just recognizing your faces in the office or at social hour and then struggling to remember your names. I'm even getting lots of names right now.

Some of my other activities include attending a different committee meeting every week, ranging from the Operations Team to the CUUPS; discussing creating and facilitating an adult RE class in the spring based on the UUA's new Preliminary Report on Class; and meeting with congregants and others for pastoral care, either with Rev. Chris or on my own.

Samhain and the Day of the Dead are speaking to me right now as my household has faced an unusual number of deaths and serious illnesses among friends and relatives these last few months. I'm enjoying the fall; definitely feeling more energetic as the temperatures drop and the holiday season approaches.

Thanks for your feedback on the service I helped organize on "The Amazing Grace of UU Journeys." I experience you as grace in my own journey.

With much gratitude,
Millie Phillips, Intern Minister

Nurture Your Spirit. Help Heal Our World.



Our Unitarian Universalist Principles

- ◆ *The inherent worth and dignity of every person;*
- ◆ *Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;*
- ◆ *Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth;*
- ◆ *A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;*
- ◆ *The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregation and in society at large;*
- ◆ *The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;*
- ◆ *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*



Music Notes

On Sunday, November 8, the choir will sing for both services "To Wonder at Beauty," composed by Kate Janzen. The text is a poem by Rudolf Steiner, who was an Austrian philosopher, author, social reformer, architect, and esotericist. Steiner attempted to find a synthesis between science and spirituality. Here is the text:

"To wonder at beauty, stand guard over truth. Look up to the noble, resolve in the good. This leadeth us truly, to purpose in living. To might in our doing, to peace in our feeling. To light in our thinking, and teaches us trust. In the working of God, in all that there is in the width of the world, in the depth of the soul."

For both services on Sunday, November 22, the choir will sing a piece by Handel, "Lascia Ch'io Pianga," which he originally composed as a solo for his opera "Rinaldo." However, he had also used the original melody previously, and it is now very well known. Here is the English translation:

*"Let me weep over my cruel fate, and sigh for liberty.
May sorrow break the torture of my sufferings, for pity's sake."*

Jenny Harriman, Music Committee Chair

KITCHEN REMODEL ALERT

The kitchen remodel begins January 4. The floor project will take all week. The kitchen is closed until the following Monday, January 11. This affects both Saturday Breakfast, and Sunday Social Hour (suggest paper cups that Sunday).

ALERT - the materials used cause odor. The vendor will bring big fans, and we will run a large capacity air-purifier, but we are concerned about individuals or groups meeting at UUCSR that week—Sensitive to chemical odors? You might make alternate plans.

We are a Welcoming Congregation:

We are committed to being a diverse congregation, fully inclusive of gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender people.

Op Team Members

Kirsten Olney
olney@computer.org
Janis Brewster
John Jaffray
Bud Willis
Peter Wilson

UUCSR Operations Team *News Flash*



The operations team is on a mission!

"A place for everything and everything in its place."

The operations team, in one of its duties as building-stewards, is reviewing our space uses and needs. We are planning for our future as well as serving our present needs.

We have inhabited this building now for over 10 years. The space needs, and assigned space uses, have vastly changed since when we first arrived.

Our goals include:

- ✦ **Move the Saturday breakfast storage and gear downstairs!**
- ✦ **Get rid of broken and unused items!**
- ✦ **Clean and organize various committee spaces!**
- ✦ **Become more efficient in our space usage!**
- ✦ **Allocate or re-allocate space in a more organized plan!**
- ✦ **Include all committees in this process!**

We are adding shelving to storage spaces instead of piling things on the floor.

We are re-allocating space to better utilize all areas.

We are organizing the upstairs to meet storage needs better.

We are also getting rid of what we don't need!

(We have over 7 artificial Christmas trees scattered throughout the building...)

We may ask some committees to change to more convenient storage spots. Some committees have already begun to clean up and organize their space. *A Big Thank You to the flower committee for their hard work in keeping their space upstairs organized!*

How can you help?

If your committee is in charge of a storage area, cupboard, bin, drawer, shelf, floor, or closet — Review your committee's storage areas and bins; Clean out extra items that never get used; Contact operations team for help if items are in your area that are not yours; Contact an Operations Team Member if you would like to change to your storage area, or if you need to get rid of stuff and are not sure what to do.

Re-organizing will take several months — please be patient during periods of extra piles of messes.

Questions or concerns? Contact Kirsten Olney at olney@computer.org, or any of the other Operations Team members: Janis Brewster, John Jaffray, Bud Willis, or Peter Wilson.

*Thank You,
The Operations Team*

(More) Great News from the Operations Team

Your voices are being heard!

Many of our requests from the visioning survey and backlog building improvements are coming to fruition. **Kitchen Remodel scheduled for January 2016. A Big Thanks to Gretchen Vap and her kitchen remodel crew!**

We are reducing social hall crowding and noise by moving coffee and conversations to the patio & courtyard areas. By spreading ourselves into all areas of the building and courtyard, conversations may be heard. **Sunshades for the courtyard are due to be installed before the end of the year**, thanks to the Sunshade Team of John Jaffray, John O'Hare, Gene Hottel and Bud Willis. **Another Big Thanks to the Kitchen crew for serving the coffee and tea outside under the covered patio.** We will be purchasing more durable outdoor furniture to enhance our courtyard experience.

We will be installing some much needed security enhancements over the next several months including an electric door monitor for staff during business hours, and a new key card system. This will allow easier access during non-business hours, and for temporary and long-term renters. At some point, we will ask all current key holders and any group leaders to come in and receive their new key card. The Operations Team will keep you informed of progress. Our staff, volunteers, and members' security and safety are of high importance to us. Yet accessibility to the building must be balanced too.

Stuff and Less Stuff!

Help! Please stop dropping off items that you feel may have a use around UUCSR. UUCSR does not have the capability to store or re-purpose randomly donated items. **If you have something of value or of possible use, contact the committee chair receiving the donation.** (Yes there is a form for that.) In some cases the Aesthetics Committee and the Operations Team need to approve it too. *For example if you wanted to donate a guitar you must get permission from the Music Committee* as they would be responsible for the care, maintenance and storage. If there are costs associated with the donations such as repairs or shipping, then that accepting committee would be responsible from their committee's annual budget. Thank you for your understanding regarding donated items.

Please don't bring used batteries and fluorescent light bulbs to UUCSR for disposal. Our bucket overfloweth. Member volunteers have emptied it in the past, but not on a regular schedule. **The Sonoma County Waste Management Agency considers UUCSR a business when it come to toxic waste and thus charges a fee.** For households it is free. Use your free household option to dispose of hazardous waste.

A word from our Sexton:

No Plastic Bags, Plastic Wrap or Stretch Film of any kind in our blue recycling bins! Our waste management company will no longer accept Plastic Bags, Plastic Wrap and Stretch Film of any kind in our blue recycling bins. They are taking a NO TOLERANCE approach — ***we may be charged for contaminated loads!*** Thank you for your cooperation.

KITCHEN REMODEL ALERT

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ALERT - the materials used in Kitchen Remodel will cause odors

The vendor will bring big fans, and we will run a large capacity air-purifier, but we are concerned about individuals or groups meeting at UUCSR that week— if you are sensitive to chemical odors you might need to make alternate plans .

Rev. Chris Bell of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa Rosa (UUCSR) sent the following letter to the UUCSR the Focus List in late August. It is reprinted here for those who do not participate in our Focus List.

SAD NEWS ABOUT THE NOMADIC SHELTER

Dear Friends,

It is with some real sadness and a bit of anger in my heart that I write to tell you that our congregation will not be able to participate in the Nomadic Shelter program in cooperation with the Redwood Gospel Mission this year, because their Board has decided that all of the participating congregations and communities must teach a spiritual lesson that is in accord with their particular take on Jesus and the Bible.

Accordingly, there was a lengthy "Statement of Faith" that needed to be signed, and I could not in good conscience do so, even with my ability and willingness to interpret dogma and theology as metaphor and poetry. For example, I know of no Unitarian Universalist who believes that God will resurrect "the lost" to condemn them to "eternal damnation" and I certainly would never teach or preach that. I offered to sign something that would affirm that we would in no way detract or deter people from following their path, but that was not an acceptable compromise.

With all that said, I know that the volunteers and staff of the Redwood Gospel Mission are a wonderful, devoted, caring group of people. The two staff members who presented their Board's decision to me seemed genuinely saddened by it, and thanked us sincerely for the good work we did with them last year. We were respectful of each other's integrity, and parted as friends. I hope you will receive this news in that spirit.

And so we will continue our efforts to serve our homeless brothers and sisters in other ways. Many thanks to Sara Jones, and the many other volunteers and leaders who allowed us to do these good works last year.

I am available for your questions and comments.

*Yours,
Rev. Chris Bell*