

U2C2 Connection

A monthly newsletter published by the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Sacramento
April 2009

A Month of Sundays

Sunday Services [9:30 & 11:00 AM services are held every Sunday unless otherwise noted]

9:30 AM Contemplative Services [every Sunday]

Join us for a quiet time of reflection as we seek to reconnect to ourselves and the Eternal through readings, silence, music and images.

11:00 AM Traditional Services

Sunday, Apr. 5: "The Wisdom of Olive Trees" - Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges

The olive tree lives for 500 years and puts forth new branches even when chopped to the ground, yet it takes awhile to begin bearing fruit. We will celebrate the beginning of our annual Stewardship Drive by taking a hard look at economic realities and their challenges to UUCU. We have an opportunity to deepen our roots and grow stronger during this time of fear and uncertainty. Rev. Martha, Pres. Marion Randall and others will share their thoughts.

Sunday, Apr. 12: "Born Again Unitarian Universalists" - Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges

What does Easter mean to us as UU's? What does the improbable tale of the death and resurrection of Jesus have to say to us? Rev. Martha will lead us in a celebration of Easter that looks for the meaning that resides within this story for liberal Christians and non-Christians alike.

Sunday, Apr. 19: "Earth Day Celebration" - Worship Leader: Paula Braxton

Join us for this special day of celebration led by our UUCU children with the guidance of Director of Religious Education, Paula Braxton. This is an intergenerational service. There will be childcare for the littlest ones, but no RE classes this Sunday.

Sunday, Apr. 26: "The Gentle Art of Procrastination" - Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges

Stopping to smell the roses is a spiritual practice that can make life rich and meaningful. It can also keep you from reaching your destination and meeting your responsibilities. What is procrastination really all about, and what are its spiritual, ethical and philosophical implications as a way of life? Rev. Martha will offer one procrastinator's reflections.

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Monthly Planner

April 2009

If you have a meeting or event this month and don't see it listed, please contact the office at 689-2008 or uucc@cwnet.com.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Daytimers 10am at church	3	4
5 Sunday Services 9:30 & 11:00am	6	7	8	9 Passover Begins Daytimers 10am at church	10	11
12 Easter Sunday Sunday Services 9:30 & 11:00am Kid's Book Club 12:30-1:30pm	13 Membership Committee Mtg 7-9pm	14 Finance Mtg 7pm	15 Newsletter Deadline Passover Ends	16 Daytimers 10am at church Board Mtg 7:15pm	17	18 Sat Supper offsite Men's Group 9am
19 Sunday Services 9:30 & 11:00am Women's Group 2:30pm	20	21	22	23 Daytimers 10am at church Church Ops Mtg 7pm at church	24 Theatre Group 7pm	25 UCC Ori- entation 10-1pm
26 Sunday Services 9:30 & 11:00am	27	28 Women's Group 7:00pm	29	30 Daytimers 10am at church		

Worship Support Schedule

	Altar	Greeter	Lighter	Usher
4/5	Tonie Darling	Jane Thompson	Cheyenne B.	Jim Eastman
4/12	Jim Eastman	Rose Kohn	Alex R.	Bev Boido
4/19	Peter Morse	Stephan Lange	Sophie L.	Tonie Darling
4/26	Gene Anderson	Dick Tarble	Jesse C.M.	Tom Rintoul



Every day, it's the same... More news stories about layoffs, plant closings, banks in trouble, businesses going under, credit denied... Phrases like “toxic assets” and “federal bailout” have become so commonplace we barely hear them anymore.

In the meantime, a couple of phenomena have caught my attention. As I write this, Wall Street has had a couple of good days, and people are “cautiously euphoric.” What would have been considered catastrophic news several months ago is now looked upon as great news because it is less bad than it might be. I am touched by how little it takes to inspire hope and the willingness of Americans to believe in ourselves. And why shouldn't we hope? As a nation, we have been blessed with decades of relative prosperity. We think of ourselves as a people beyond the reach of true want, a people protected by “safety nets.” Sometimes an event like Katrina forces us to acknowledge the falsity of this sense of security. No one wants to be in a position of personally testing the strength of those safety nets. Hence the fearfulness of these times.

One other behavior I've been reading about is the reluctance of those who still have wealth to flaunt the fact. People who can afford luxury items pass on buying them. There seems to be an implicit kind of shame associated with having “too much” when others have so little.

I don't claim to understand the ins and outs of our current economy. One thing I can understand without a degree in Finance or Economics, though, is the struggle to deal with moral and ethical issues. These times are stripping away some of our worldly sophistication, as these two phenomena suggest. Have you noticed? Fundamental questions about trust and hope and faith; questions about entitlement, sharing and compassion; questions about what constitutes the good life are asserting themselves in ways we cannot ignore. In some ways, these hard times have made us more innocent.

This is a time of opportunity for churches and other religious communities. Churches around the country are feeling the crunch and are preparing for the worst as their members find themselves unable to deliver on pledges. On the other hand, studies show that church contributions remain a high priority for people and church attendance is up all over. People turn to their religious communities in time of need – as well they should. Where better to look for help in addressing those fundamental questions about values, where better to turn for support and hope?

We have a Minister's Discretionary Fund for members who need a helping hand. I encourage you to give me a call if you need help meeting the rent or buying gas. Our fund is small, but so far untouched. This is what it is there for!

On a related note, I'm aware that some members who have been forced to fall behind on their pledge payments may be reluctant to come to church out a sense of embarrassment. I urge you not to isolate yourselves when you most need the support of this community. No one – no one – need be ashamed to participate fully in this community because of lack of money.

I would like to offer a support group for dealing with financial difficulties and the anxieties they present. I invite you to contact me about what you might find helpful. How we might better support one another? A class on managing stress? Concrete advice about financial matters? A series on Living Simply? Talk to your friends and fellow members about this and let me know your thoughts.

I am very hopeful about the future of UUC. It is hard to see where we could cut corners in a budget that's already stripped down to essentials, it's true. Yet, I believe that we will all give what we can during the Stewardship drive that begins this month. I have faith in our willingness to be generous – even to take some chances – because I know how important this congregation is to all of us. I have faith that we will rise to the challenge of not only keeping our doors open to all who need us, but the challenge these times make to us to reach out to the larger community. This is an opportunity to become a truly serving church, supporting others in ways that we have done only timidly before this.

Our outreach need not be – and should not be — limited to our own members. What can we do as a congregation, beyond sharing our collection plate with local agencies? How should we be getting involved with our neighbors in South Sacramento and Elk Grove? Now, more than ever, is the time to challenge ourselves to expand our understanding of who “we” are to include the stranger.

In the coming months, we have a unique opportunity to live out our faith in action... Our faith in one another, our faith in this congregation and our UU Principles, our faith in human compassion and goodness, our faith in the future.

RE News

from Paula Braxton, Director of Religious Education

and Annette Emery, Religious Education Chair

Accomplishments & Plans

It is amazing to think that the Religious Education (RE) year is fast coming to a close. We had our very first ever batch of Our Whole Lives (OWL) students taught here at UUCC. Thanks to Candy Wood and Antonio Gonzales for teaching OWL, and Paula Braxton for believing that UUCC could accomplish OWL. Now that this is established, we will have many future OWL students.

The smallest UUs have been enjoying the special RE for our youngest children. Our next goal is to have more classes for our older children. As the program expands, we will need more volunteers for teaching, helping out on Sundays and straightening up the supplies in each room. Please let Annette or Paula know if you can help out with RE.

A field trip to the Consumnes River Preserve will be planned in late May or early June. If you are interested in volunteering to chaperone this trip, please contact Annette Emery.

Growing Together

Update on Chalice Circles

You were recently asked to indicate preferred times and topics of possible Chalice Circles. The results are in and the winners are... a Wednesday evening group with variable topics and a Sunday afternoon group to talk about sermons or other UU-related topics.

As is the pattern with such groups, often called Covenant Groups, these will meet twice a month and will follow a format that includes a chalice lighting, opening reading, check-in, deeper sharing on the topic you have chosen, check-out and closing ritual. In either group, you will be able to choose between topics we'll suggest to you and ones of your own devising. These groups will run at least through June and, optionally, through the summer.

As with any Covenant Group, members will decide on a covenant (an agreement on how they will be together in the group) and will commit to making every effort to attend meetings. This will allow a sense of mutual trust and intimacy to develop over the course of your time together.

So... If you have already indicated an interest in one of these two groups, sit tight and you will be contacted. If you would like to join one or the other, let Martha know as soon as possible. Other groups will be forming as the opportunity develops, so, if you haven't already done so, let Martha know what meeting times or topics would interest you!

Orientation to UUCC & Unitarian Universalism

Are you a newcomer to this church, or are you considering becoming a member? You are invited to join Rev. Martha on Saturday, April 25 from 10 AM - 1 PM for an orientation program. We will continue the conversation begun last month at our "Meet the Minister" event, but you need not have attended that day in order to come to this orientation; nor must you have decided to formally join UUCC. This is an opportunity to learn more about our religious tradition, history, theology, practices and challenges. We will also tell you more about how this congregation functions and ways in which you may find your own connections here. Please RSVP to Rev. Martha if you plan to attend so that we may have sufficient materials and refreshments available.

Special Announcements



Italian Dinner

Do something special for mom - skip the crowded restaurants that are serving Mother's Day specials; wait two days and invite her to an Italian feast with her favorite UUs! The Men's Group is hosting an Italian Dinner extravaganza on Tuesday, May 12 (two days after Mother's Day) at the Dante Club. Join us for a seven course Italian meal, wine and dessert for an all-inclusive price of \$35 per person (children's prices are being set). Also included in this price will be entertainment from our many talented UUCers and raffle prizes. Proceeds from this event will go towards UUCC. *Note: Bringing your mother is not required; this is the perfect event for anyone special to you, including yourself!*

You Clean Out, We Clean Up

The annual UCC Yard Sale is back! You can clean out those unwanted treasures, create space for yourself, and make money for your church. This year, we will have two yard sales in a row, so leftover items from the first one have a second showing. And, we have two chances to part with items we no longer need that someone else could use.

These yard sales are also opportunities for us to hone our sales skills. For either, or both, days, you can help set up, staff the sale, or help close. It's a great chance to socialize and find things you really need. I'm still kicking myself for not buying Tom Rintoul's chipper last year.

May 30 is the date of the Sierra-Curtis Neighborhood yard sale. This is a dispersed sale in neighborhood front yards. De Brewer and Stephen Bakken are donating use of their front yard as our site. They will then provide space to store any leftovers.

June 20 is the date of the Parkside Community Church yard sale. We'll set up at the church on Land Park Drive with a second chance to sell our wares. Last year, we received a lot of traffic and were quite successful.

So, please mark those dates on your calendar to spend some time participating, and start looking around the house for items that you don't use and others could. We will have more information as time goes on. If you have questions, please ask Stephen Bakken or John Sugar.

Thank you,

John Sugar
Finance Chair



Books, Anyone?

We are experimenting with a book exchange! If you have a book you no longer want that you think others at UCC might enjoy, consider leaving it on the designated shelf in the Couch Room (aka the Teen Room.) And, if you see one there that you'd like to read, help yourself. No sign-outs or record keeping... Return or keep your "borrowed" book at your discretion.

Helping Hands

Share the Plate

In March, the South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership (SSIP) received our February "Share the Plate" donation of \$111.25. As mentioned in last month's newsletter, the Feinstein Fund is supplementing all donations received by SSIP in February and March 2009. The SSIP Food Closet serves over four thousand people each month!

Thank you, Laura

Thanks to Laura Osborne, we now have a lovely new couch in our Crying Room. The couch formerly in the Crying Room has been moved to the Couch Room. There is now a second couch in the Room of Couches! Thanks, Laura, and thanks to Alison and Dexter Navas for doing the heavy lifting.

Ongoing Activities

Kid's Book Club

The Kid's Book Club had its first meeting on March 8 and selected the following books for the next three months:

April 12: House on Falling Star Hill

May 10: City of Ember

June 14: The Gray King

Remember to bring a sack lunch. If you have any questions, contact the Newmans. Hope to see you there!

Theatre Group

The Theatre Group will see "All My Sons" by Arthur Miller at 7:00 PM on Friday, April 24 at River Stage on Consumnes River College campus, 8401 Center Parkway. Submit your reservations (\$18 and \$15) to Frieda Fergus by Sunday, April 19.

Daytimers Group

The Daytimers Group meets each Thursday morning from 10-12AM at the church. Anyone may join our lively discussion group. We are currently discussing a public radio program called "Speaking of Faith". If you are interested in participating, please contact Dick Tarble.

Women's Group

The UUC Women's Group is changing! Rather than meeting once a month, we will now meet twice each month, generally on 2nd Sundays and 4th Tuesdays. Come once or twice a month; it is up to you. Our next two meetings will be held on Sunday, April 19 at 2:30 PM and Tuesday, April 28 at 7:00 PM. We will meet at church. The April discussion topic will be "moving forward or how to unstick your life". Please contact Annette Emery for more information.

Saturday Supper

Saturday Supper is a potluck dinner held on the third Saturday of each month. Our next dinner is set for Saturday, April 18. Normally we divide up into small groups of 6-12 and share a meal in someone's home. At each dinner, we ask a question and take turns answering, if we choose. It's okay to participate without ever hosting and it is okay to come occasionally. Participants are with a different group of people each month. We would love to have you join us! Thank you to our hosts for March: Lora & Marc Pezzell, De Brewer & Stephen Bakken, and Gayle & Ken Newman. Please contact Terri Riley if you are interested in coming to our April potluck.

Other UU Events



CA Water Justice

Join the UU Legislative Ministry of California (UULM-CA) and Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) for a day of learning and action on the water crisis in California. Learn from experts and activists in water planning and governance, conservation and the environment, social justice and human rights in a day of sharing and mobilizing for California water justice. Learn how your congregation and community can ensure everyone has access to safe, affordable water and a say in water reforms being debated in the California legislature this year.

Where does your household water come from?

What happens to families in your community who can't pay their water bill?

How safe is your water?

Date: Saturday, April 18, 2009
Time: 9:15 AM to 4:00 PM
Place: Mount Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek, CA
Cost: \$15 general, \$5 for students. Lunch provided.

For questions and to RSVP, please contact Kara Smith at ksmith@uusc.org or 617-301-4392.

To learn more about UUSC's Environmental Justice Program, please visit http://www.uusc.org/content/environmental_justice.

District Assembly 2009

Pacific Central District (PCD)
District Assembly 2009
May 1- 3
Fremont Marriott

Join hundreds of other Unitarian Universalists for a weekend of laughing, learning, networking and worship.

Featuring Presentations by UUA Presidential Candidates: Rev. Laurel Hallman, Senior Minister, First Unitarian Church of Dallas, Dallas TX and Rev. Peter Morales, Senior Minister, Jefferson Unitarian Church, Golden CO

Events

- banner parade
- Friday night opening worship with the PCD-UUMA (Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association)
- Saturday breakfast with keynote speaker, Rev. Peter Morales, Candidate for UUA President
- 5 levels of child and youth programming
- workshops for everyone
- PCD Annual Meeting
- Saturday evening banquet dinner featuring Rev. Laurel Hallman, Candidate for UUA President
- Sunday morning worship service, featuring members of the PCD-UUMA
- Old friendships and new faces, engaging conversations and discoveries...
- and much more!

For more information on the District Assembly, please visit www.pcd-uua.org or contact us at pcd@pcd-uua.org or 510-601-1437.

About Us

Mission

The ministry of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church is to foster open minds, caring hearts, helping hands, and growing spirits in a congregation of all ages. By living and sharing Unitarian Universalist values, our spiritual and intentionally diverse community seeks to bring compassion and justice to the world.

UUC is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and the Pacific Central District (PCD) of the UUA.

Membership

Would you like to be a formal member of this congregation? We would love to have you as a member!

If you would like membership information or if you feel ready to sign our membership book, you may talk to Rev. Martha Hodges or Laura Osborne.

Membership requirements are:

- 1) you must be at least 16 years old
- 2) you accept our principles and purposes
- 3) you make and fulfill a commitment to an annual contribution of record through a pledge of money and/or services.

We are a wonderful congregation and we will welcome you with open arms.

Affiliates

All Unitarian Universalist affiliates in California's mountain and valley areas:

www.uuvalleysierra.org

Pacific Central District (PCD):

www.pcd-uua.org

Telephone: (510) 601-1437

Unitarian Universalist Association:

www.uua.org

Telephone: (617) 742-2100

UU Legislative Ministry:

www.uulmca.org

Telephone: (916) 441-0018

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee:

www.uusc.org

Telephone: (617) 868-7102

Sacyouth - Faith-Based Activities for Youth:

www.sacyouth.com

South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership (SSIP)

Emergency Food Closet:

www.ssipfoodcloset.org

Telephone: (916) 428-5290

Contact

Newsletter

U2C2 Connection Editor:

Newsletter contributions should be mailed to the UUC church address, phoned in to 689-2008, faxed to 689-2282 or emailed to uucc@cwnet.com by the 15th of each month.

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Nancy Flagg 689-2008

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Terry Chekon, Patrick Cody

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Church Operations: Alison Navas

Committee on Ministry: Tom Rintoul,

Celia Buckley, Jim Eastman

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Membership: Rev. Martha Hodges

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Worship: Jim Skow

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Antonio Gonzalez

Openers/Closers Supervisor:

Rev. Martha Hodges



The Mission of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church in Sacramento

The ministry of our church is to foster open minds, caring hearts, helping hands and growing spirits in a congregation of all ages. By living and sharing Unitarian Universalist values, our spiritual and intentionally diverse community seeks to bring compassion and justice to the world.



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY CHURCH
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Mailing Label