

U2C2 Connection

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

A Month of Sundays

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

9:30 AM Contemplative Services [every Sunday]

The theme of January's 9:30 Contemplative Services will be "The Differences That Unite Us." Join us as we explore diversity of many kinds through readings, music, images and silence.

11:00 AM Traditional Services

Sunday, Jan. 4: "Three Sermons That Shaped Our Faith: Emerson's Divinity School Address" - Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges

Rev. Martha will continue her series on three sermons that continue to be cited as turning points in the Unitarian tradition. In this address, Ralph Waldo Emerson presented a critique that changed the way his contemporaries thought about ministry and Unitarianism. We will consider what was so revolutionary about this sermon and what, if anything, it means to us today.

Sunday, Jan. 11: "All Are Called" - Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges

Peter Richardson, in his book entitled, "Four Spiritualities: Expressions of Self, Expressions of Spirit", suggests that followers of every religious tradition prefer one of four paths toward spiritual fulfillment. These spiritual "types" are based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator personality inventory, which is, in turn, based on the theories of Carl Jung. Rev. Martha will attempt to relate these spiritual "types" to the various ministries of this church.

Sunday, Jan. 18: "What's Race Got to Do with It?" - Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges

This year, we celebrate Martin Luther King's birthday one day before the inauguration of our first African-American president. What can we say about the meaning of race in our country today as we contemplate the convergence of these two occasions?

Sunday, Jan. 25: "Mark Twain and Religion" - Worship Leader: Dick Tarble

Mark Twain had some strong feelings regarding religion and morals. Using quotes from his writing (e.g. "Letters from the Earth", "Huckleberry Finn", "Mysterious Stranger" etc.), Dick Tarble will try to summarize some of his thoughts on the subject.

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Monthly Planner

January 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 New Year's Day	2	3
4 Sunday Services 9:30 & 11:00am Newcomer Welcome after the 11am service	5	6	7	8 Daytimers 10am at church	9	10 Men's Group 9am
11 Sunday Services 9:30 & 11:00am UU Cafe after church Harry Potter Game & Talk Time after church OWL Parent Orientation after church	12 Membership Committee Mtg 7-9pm	13	14	15 Newsletter Deadline Daytimers 10am at church Board Mtg 7:15pm	16 Theatre Group 8pm Sabbath Seminar 7:30-9pm	17 Sat Supper offsite
18 Sunday Services 9:30 & 11:00am FinanceMtg 12pm Women's Group 2:30pm	19	20	21	22 Daytimers 10am at church Church Ops Mtg 7pm at church	23 Sabbath Seminar 7:30-9pm	24
25 Sunday Services 9:30 & 11:00am	26	27	28	29 Daytimers 10am at church	30 Sabbath Seminar 7:30-9pm	31

*AAE indicates an Action Auction Event.

Worship Support Schedule

	Altar	Greeter	Lighter	Usher
1/4	Tonie Darling	TBD	James E.	TBD
1/11	Jim Eastman	TBD	Sophie L.	TBD
1/18	Peter Morse	TBD	Jessie C.M.	TBD
1/25	Gene Anderson	TBD	Ben C.M.	TBD

Celebrating Our Blessings

Well, we made it through the holidays! And now begins that seemingly never-ending stretch of gray days between New Year's and Spring. It's time to reconcile ourselves to breaking our New Year's resolutions and begin the endurance test that, for many, is winter.

Coming as I do from New York State, I am amazed at how quickly one becomes acclimated to the sunshine and warmth that are the typical Sacramento weather. I find myself shivering in the "freezing" weather when the thermometer dips below 50 degrees and greeting yet another gray sky with a gloomy sense of deprivation. Then I have to tell myself to get a grip. In Ithaca, a "cold" day is one that's 15 degrees or less; in Ithaca, precipitation of a special kind (called "Ithacating") is the norm: a kind of steady freezing drizzle. So what am I complaining about?

Well, it's all relative, isn't it? I remind myself that it could be a lot worse. I don't routinely have to don boots and a scarf in Sacramento; nor do I have to scrape ice off the windshield or walk around prepared to fall at any moment. How quickly one forgets to appreciate these things! Winter tends to make us forget our blessings. Some of us experience Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), the winter blues, as a result of sunshine deprivation. Even without SAD, January and February can seem pretty cheerless. So I plan to do a little extra celebrating during these months and to remember to enumerate the things I'm grateful for before I fall asleep at night.

Now, some people can be downright obnoxious in their determination to remain upbeat and productive. Everyone's entitled to the blues, after all, and these periods bring their own gifts. But it's so easy to get used to living in good times – the ease of summer, the comfort of relative prosperity, and periods in our professional and family lives when everything is running smoothly. We become acclimated to those easy times so quickly that, when we hit a downturn in any of those areas, we may react out of proportion to the situation. This is not to say that genuine difficulties and hardships don't

occur. They do, and it's necessary to acknowledge those and attend to the pain we feel. But just as a "cold" day in Sacramento would seem balmy in Ithaca (with college students running around in their shorts to celebrate the spring-like weather at 50 degrees), it really depends on what you're used to. One of the benefits of enduring difficulties in life, disappointments and sadness is that you recognize the blessing of "normal" life when the crisis is over. How wonderful it would be for those who can remain aware of those blessings without having to live through the suffering that, by contrast, makes the normal seem wonderful!

Those who can do this – remain awake during the winter times of their lives and appreciate the beauty of a gray sky, literally and metaphorically – are living with Grace. I hope that you will experience at least moments of such Grace during this month of post-holiday doldrums. I hope you will find something to celebrate, even if you have to look hard or invent occasions for joy. And I hope that you will share your moments of Grace with those around you. We could all use the reminder that even winter is a wonder.

Special Announcement

Allison Claire Goes National

We're proud to announce that Allison has been chosen by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Nominating Committee to serve as the lay representative on the UUA Board of Review. This board reviews appeals of cases of alleged clergy misconduct. The term of this position is eight years and will be confirmed by vote at the next General Assembly in June. Our congregation is rich in talents, skills and dedication. Thank you, Allison, for your willingness to do this essential work!

Growing Together



The Early Service: It Just Keeps Getting Better All the Time

Maggie and Jerry Melnick are among those who have been attending our early service. Maggie writes:

Remember that quieter, more meditative Sunday service that many of us talked about, and some even longed for? After some fits and starts, and much hard work and planning by Reverend Martha and others, "it" has come to pass! The new services are thematic, music is mellow and the readings are well chosen. There is space for ritual and contemplation, prayer and meditation. All that it needs now is you. Think you've already tried it? Try it again. We are confident that this glowing new service will meet the needs of many in our growing congregation. Come celebrate with us on Sundays at 9:30 AM!

Care Team Forming

We all need a little help from our friends from time to time – a ride to a medical appointment, a hand to hold during a loved one's surgery, a hot meal following a birth or death in the family. If we are homebound for an extended time or hospitalized, friendly visitors may be welcome. And in the event of a family or other personal crisis, it is good to have the support of a caring and nonjudgmental community.

Would you like to be part of a Care Team that is on standby to meet these kinds of needs? Rev. Martha, with the help of Jane Thompson, one of our new members with expertise in counseling, is forming such a group. No special skills are required, just an interest in helping others through the rough spots in our lives. Training and ongoing support will be provided and you should plan to meet once a month or so with the Team to check in. If you're interested, please contact Martha.

Keeping the Sabbath

We would all benefit from setting aside a regular time of rest and spiritual renewal. Rev. Martha invites you to join her for a series of six Friday evening sessions in which we will explore the meaning of the Sabbath and experiment with practices you can use to develop your own Sabbath rituals and traditions. Sabbath practices we will look at (and try out) include preparing a Sabbath meal, experiencing gratitude, reconnecting with nature, establishing and attending to a "sacred space" and rediscovering the delights of being "useless." We will meet January 16, 23 and 30 and Feb. 6, 13 and 20, from 7:30-9:00. You need not commit to attending all sessions; just drop in as you are able. Please do let Martha know if you plan to attend, however, so that she can provide sufficient materials for everyone.

Where Are Our Chalice Circles?

They're coming soon! A Chalice Circle is a small group (7-10 members) that meets twice a month for the purpose of connecting on a deep and authentic level with others. Surveys consistently report that more people come to church in search of meaningful community than for any other reason. Chalice Circles are one excellent way to meet this deeply-felt need. Meetings begin with a chalice lighting and reading, followed by a check-in and discussion of a suggested topic approved by the group. Chalice Circles (known as Covenant Groups in many UU churches) are not therapy groups. While deep sharing is encouraged, members are not there to "fix" one another and the facilitator is not a teacher or counselor, but a member chosen for his or her ability to include everyone and keep the conversation on track. Groups are asked to contribute some type of service to the church or larger community at some point, as such service is part of this religious community's values.

UUCB has had successful Chalice Circles in the past and many of you have been eager to see them start again. Group sign-ups will begin in February. Members will need to commit to try to attend all sessions of their group until we "re-group" in the spring. This commitment is part of the covenant that members make with each other in order to develop the trust and comfort with each other that they seek.

Look for February's newsletter for meeting times and other specifics!

Thank You



I would like to thank everyone who participated to make this year's Christmas Pageant a success! I would like to extend a very special thank you to Susan Lange. Without her help, the pageant would not have been as fabulous as it was! Susan your help was invaluable! I would also like to thank all the kids who worked so hard to learn their lines, who showed up for practice and who had a great attitude throughout it all!

OWL Orientation

OWL is a UU developed program that teaches our children about human sexuality in an age-appropriate format. Our Whole Lives (OWL) will be starting in January 2009 for grades 5 and 6. If you would like your child to attend, please contact Paula Braxton for a registration form. There is a mandatory parent orientation that will be held on Jan 11th after church. This orientation must be attended by the parent(s) in order for the child to participate in Our Whole Lives. The facilitators for this class will be Candy Wood and Antonio Gonzalez. There is a \$15 cost for the book that the children will need for the class.

Spirit Guides Needed

The RE department is in need of Spirit Guides. The spirit guide assists in the classroom, helps the teachers do crafts, helps spirited children focus and generally has a good time in class. If you would like to be a spirit guide, please contact Paula Braxton or Annette Emery.

Wee U's Playgroup

Parents of children from birth to Pre-K are invited to attend the monthly Wee U's playgroup. It is on the second Saturday of each month. The location rotates each month. Please contact Paula Braxton for more information, if you would like to attend.

Preschool Program

If you would be interested in assisting with the setup of a preschool program for the second service on Sundays, please speak with Paula Braxton.



RE Update

The RE program spent much of December preparing for the Christmas pageant. A thank you to all the children who participated and especially to the parents for getting your children to church. We will continue with the Hogwarts School of UU Magik in January.

UU Café

The December UU Café was cancelled, but the January UU Café is set for Sunday, January 11. The menu will be baked potatoes with toppings and dessert. The UU Café raises funds to train volunteers to teach Our Whole Lives (OWL).



Harry Potter Book Club Update

The last Accio UU's Harry Potter Book Club meeting has been changed from Jan. 11 to Feb. 8.

Helping Hands

Share the Plate

Loaves & Fishes is the recipient of our November "Share the Plate" donation of \$154.98. From their web site: "We provide an oasis of welcome, safety, and cleanliness for homeless men, women and children seeking survival services. We recognize the dignity and spiritual destiny of each person, and hope by our attitude of hospitality and love, to nourish not only the physical needs of those who come to Loaves & Fishes, but also their spiritual need for love, acceptance, respect, and friendship."

Thanks from Maryhouse

"We reflect on all the things we are thankful for here at Maryhouse - a safe place for women and children, resources to share, mutual respect and love. Each of you who donate to Maryhouse is a part of a network of people who assure that the services to homeless women and children continue. We at Maryhouse appreciate your continued support."

[Excerpt of thank you letter to UUCC from Maryhouse (a program of Loaves and Fishes) - Nov. 2008]

Family in Need

Thank you for the donations to the family in need that we are helping; the generosity of our members and friends is awesome!

~ Annette Emery & Patrick Cody

Ongoing Activities

Saturday Supper

The Saturday Supper is a potluck dinner which takes place once a month. Starting in January, the Saturday Supper will be held on third Saturdays instead of first Saturdays. The next dinner is on Saturday, January 17th. 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. This is a great way to get to know others in our congregation. We would love to have you join us! Thank you to our hosts for December: Maggie and Jerry Melnick, and Richard Leimbach and Terri Riley. Contact Terri Riley if you can host or are interested in coming to our January potluck.

Daytimers Group

Daytimers is a discussion group that meets every Thursday from 10 AM - 12 noon. We are pleased to welcome people of all ages to join us for lively talk, good company, and lunch at a local restaurant afterwards. If interested, please get in touch with Dick Tarble.

Theatre Group

The Theatre Group will see "Neat" at Celebration Arts, 4469 D St, at 8 PM on Friday, January 16. Submit reservations (\$15 & \$13) by Sunday, January 11 to Frieda Fergus.

Women's Group

The UUCC Women's Group is starting up again. The women will be meeting on Sunday afternoons at church. The first meeting will be January 18 at 2:30. Please contact Annette Emery if you are interested in joining us.

Men's Group

The UUCC Men's Group meets monthly for breakfast and conversation. The next meeting will be held on Saturday, January 10 at 9:00 AM at the church. We want to get some new blood into the group and encourage all interested men to attend. If you would like to join the group, please contact Patrick Cody.

Other Events

PCD Stewardship Conference

What exactly is "stewardship" and how is it different from raising money? Wayne Clarke, author of the book, "Beyond Fundraising", defines stewardship as the growing, nurturing, promoting and building of our gifts, call and spiritual vocation. The Pacific Central District (PCD) is offering a special one day workshop taught by Clarke and hosted by the Marin congregation on January 24. If you are interested in helping us become more effective stewards of our congregation's resources, please consider attending and reporting back to the rest of us! Registration for this event is available at <http://www.pcd-uua.org/events/stewardship/stewardship.htm>. The cost is \$20-40, depending on how quickly you register.

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.

Editorial Advisor - newsletter:

Nancy Flagg 689-2008

Website

Website Administrator:

UUC office 689-2008 or uucc@cwnet.com

Editorial Advisor - website:

Nancy Flagg 689-2008

Administration

Administrative Support:

Address:

8231-C East Stockton Blvd
Sacramento CA 95828

Phone: 689-2008/ Fax: 689-2282

Website: www.u2c2.org

Email: uucc@cwnet.com

Office Hours: Tue/Thur/Sat 8am-1pm

Minister's Hours: By appointment only (minister's sabbath on Tuesday)

Leadership

Minister:

Rev. Martha Hodges, 689-2073

uucc_minister@frontiernet.net

Director of Religious Education:

Paula Braxton 689-2008 uucc@cwnet.com

Board of Trustees:

President: Marion Randall

Vice President: John Sugar

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Treasurer: Eric Walle

At-Large Members: Wynne Skow,

Richard Leimbach, Sonia Duffoo

Endowment Trust: Terri Riley,

Terry Chekon, Patrick Cody

Committees:

Church Operations: Alison Navas

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Finance: Martha Carlson

Membership: Rev. Martha Hodges

Religious Education: Annette Emery

Stewardship: Celia Buckley

Worship: Jim Skow

Justice Coordinating Team: Julia Walle,

Antonio Gonzalez

Openers/Closers Supervisor:

Rev. Martha Hodges

Chalice Pendants

Dick Tarble can make you a
cast chalice pendant for \$25.
All proceeds go to the church.



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY CHURCH
Serving Sacramento and Elk Grove, California
8231-C East Stockton Blvd
Sacramento, CA 95828

Postage

Mailing Label

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