

U2C2 Connection

A monthly newsletter published by the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Sacramento
March 2008

Worship Services *10:30am Sundays, unless otherwise noted.*

Sunday, March 2, 10:30am - "A Gentle, Angry People"
Martha will continue her series of sermons on our six Unitarian Universalist sources. Our second source is "words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love." We can easily identify "prophetic women and men" from the past, but what contemporary figures challenge us and what "powers and structures of evil" are we called upon to confront?
Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges/Worship Associate: Karen Gunderson

Sunday, March 9, 10:30am - "Daring to Pray"
Many UUs long for the sense of serenity, inspiration or comfort that arises from a spiritual practice. Many of us are also stymied when it comes to developing such a practice that feels authentic to us. Martha will share her reflections on one such practice: prayer in its many forms. Is it possible to enjoy the spiritual renewal of prayer without believing in a supernatural being?
Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges/Worship Associate: Jim Skow

Sunday, March 16, 10:30am - "The Great Turning"
Palm Sunday marks a dramatic moment when Jesus turns over the tables of the money changers in the temple, radically challenging the established patterns and oppressions of his day. As the Spring Equinox closes in, we will take a look at today's crisis of climate change, and the role of people of faith in this time of our generation's "Great Turning".
Worship Leader: Rev. Lindi Ramsden, Exec. Dir. of UULM/Worship Associate: Jenn Richard

Sunday, March 23, 9:00am & 11:00am - "Days of Light and Gladness"
There will be two worship services this morning, so you may attend either of the two services or even both if you like! At the 9:00 service, Lucy Bunch will lead us in a celebration of the Vernal Equinox (all are welcome, it's not just for Pagans). And then at the 11:00 service, Rev. Martha will lead our intergenerational Easter celebration (and again, everyone is welcome to join in, it's not strictly for Christians).
Worship Leaders: Lucy Bunch (9:00) & Rev. Martha Hodges (11:00)/Worship Associate: Lucy Bunch

Sunday, March 30, 10:30am - "Not Welcome at the Welcome Table: Atheists in America, or What I Did for My Winter Vacation"
Unitarian Universalism is rare among American religions in its open acceptance of both atheists and agnostics. The sermon will discuss the place of self-discovered, individual theology in a purportedly pious society that is skeptical of the atheists' ability to build an individual code of morality without any reference to that of a Supreme Being.
Worship Leader: Nina Weiler-Harwell/Worship Associate: Allison Claire



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March Planner 2008



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 Sat Supper Social Justice Planng Retreat (all day)
2 Sunday Worship 10:30am Newcomer Welcome 11:30- 12:30 Religious Ed Mtg (TBD)	3	4	5 Building Your Own Theology Workshop 6:30- 9:00pm	6 Daytimers 10am at church Worship Committee Mtg 7pm	7	8 Women's Group 9:30am
9 Sunday Worship 10:30am	10 Membership Committee Mtg 7-9pm	11	12 Building Your Own Theology Workshop 6:30- 9:00pm	13 Daytimers 10am at church Board Mtg 7:15pm	14	15 St. Patrick's Day Men's Group 9am Newsletter Deadline
16 Sunday Worship 10:30am Theater Group Reservations Due	17	18	19 Building Your Own Theology Workshop 6:30- 9:00pm	20 Daytimers 10am at church	21 Theater Group (dinner 6pm/play 8pm)	22 Community Mtg 10am- 12pm
23 Sunday Worship 10:30am FinanceMtg 12pm Guest at Your Table Collection at church	24	25	26 Building Your Own Theology Workshop 6:30- 9:00pm	27 Daytimers 10am at church Church Ops Mtg 7pm (offsite)	28	29
Sunday Worship 10:30am	31					

Worship Support Schedule

Altar	Greeters	Lighters	Ushers
3/2 Celia Buckley	Terry DeCrescenzo & Frieda Fergus	Alex R.	Georgene Tarble
3/9 Beverly Boido	Terry DeCrescenzo & Frieda Fergus	James E.	Georgene Tarble
3/16 Sybil Lawson	Terry DeCrescenzo & Frieda Fergus	Elaine C.	Georgene Tarble
3/23 Georgene Tarble	Terry DeCrescenzo & Frieda Fergus	Oliver B.	Georgene Tarble
3/30 Jenn Richard	Terry DeCrescenzo & Frieda Fergus	Miley N.	Georgene Tarble

Minister's Grace Notes

Your Mission, Should You Choose to Accept It



Last month I talked about the vision and mission of this congregation – our vision of who we'd like to be in five to ten years, and our understanding of what that vision calls us to do – our mission: our statement of how we will live out our values in the community. Individuals have visions and missions, and so do congregations. As with congregations, individuals may find it hard to think ahead to where they want to be down the road. As for mission - few of us probably think of it in those terms - but it definitely makes for an interesting exercise.

It seems to be a given that most children have dreams of what they want to "be" when they grow up. When I was very young, I thought it would be fun to be an elevator operator like the one in our department store. He got to open and close the brass accordion doors, use a giant lever to move the car up and down, carefully adjusting it to be flush with the floor, and announce, "Third floor, ladies' apparel and cosmetics." It looked like a lot of fun. As it happens with many dreams, this one eventually became – quite literally – obsolete.

I never really found a good substitute ambition until age forty, when I decided to become a minister. In fact, when our tenth grade class was given a standardized test to determine our occupational preferences, I was called into the guidance office to discuss the results: I simply did not have any preferences. I expect that most of you had a little clearer sense of direction than I did, but sometimes growing up and life circumstances conspire to modify our ambitions several times over during the course of our lives. And so, it is with congregations:

vision and mission keep changing and need to be revisited and updated periodically as well.

I believe we all have a "mission"; we're just not necessarily aware of it. Our choices are guided by our values, whether we can articulate those values or not. Identifying a mission is less about deciding what we think we *ought* to be doing with our lives, than it is about looking at what we actually *are* doing; how we feel about what we're doing - whether our behavior and choices allow us feelings of satisfaction and worth; and what those feelings tell us about what we should possibly be doing instead.

Mission is a question of spiritual identity. Whom or what do you serve? Is it what you truly love or is it a mere distraction from what you long to serve? Whom or what do you love or worship and hold to be of utmost value, deserving of your devotion? Does your life allow you to express this devotion? How do you live out this "call" in your choices about how you spend your time, energy and emotion?

If our answers, as individuals or as a community, reveal that our life is thwarting that mission rather than allowing it to flower, it may be time to make some changes in our priorities. Easier said than done, no doubt. But what can seem like a daunting or even distressing prospect can be carried out in a spirit of wonder and discovery, leading to a life of greater fulfillment. This is my hope for us as a congregation. May your life and also our shared life as a congregation be ones of discovery, affirmation, purpose and joy for us all. Amen!

~Rev. Martha Hodges

President's Message



Looking Forward

Dear Congregation,

As we travel into the New Year, we have much to look forward to. If you have been in church lately, you would have heard Rev. Martha talk about the information that was gathered through the Appreciative Inquiry process. Her February 10 sermon was particularly informative and thought provoking. There she revealed what she heard as it re-

lates to our hopes and dreams for our church and tied this nicely to the need to have a clear vision and to revisit our mission statement to make sure it supports our vision. I liked very much the metaphor of the compass and the map and I couldn't agree more that every decision we make from program implementation to our stewardship efforts should be aligned with that vision and mission. Rev. Martha laid out this concept so well, I felt myself getting a little excited about engaging in the process. I must admit that I was a little surprised by that. I have done this before in other facets of my life, and yes, I remember that at times it can be frustrating. I guess the difference is that UUism, this church and its people, hold a place in my heart that some of the other efforts I've engaged in did not. I hope that you will embrace this process and participate to the fullest extent possible.

On Saturday, March 22, we will be holding another community meeting from 10am -12 pm. These community meetings are planned for the congregation as a way for us to have face to face communication about important things/issues/work that is going on in the church. Some of the March meeting topics will be related to Board governance and stewardship efforts. I believe that there is also a third topic, but at the writing of this letter, I can't recall what it was. Please look for additional information in the weekly bulletins. I hope that you will also mark this date on your calendar and plan to attend. We try our best to make these meetings meaty and value added.

One other message I took away from Rev. Martha's sermon about the compass and map is the need to examine and really think about why UU'ism and this church are important to us. It is

from there that commitment springs in all of its various forms: time, talent and money. Our desires for our church and community are great, and no doubt, they can be achieved and are actually being realized in some ways as we speak. And to continue on this path will require continued or renewed commitment from us all, as well as those who have yet to join us. As your elected President, I tell you that I sometimes have an exaggerated sense of responsibility when it comes to this church's success in meeting out goals and fulfilling our dreams. Then I remember that I am only one person and one person does not a congregation make. I look at our history,

where we have been, where we have come to and then know we will be fine. I remember that I believe in the message of UU'ism. I believe in the strengths and love of our Minister, and most importantly, I believe in you, the congregation, and I am not alone.

In service,
Marion



Your New DRE

Greetings From Paula

Greetings! My name is Paula Braxton and I am the new Director of Religious Education. To come and work with this fabulous congregation, I moved from Mesa, Arizona (a suburb of Phoenix) with my family which consists of my daughter and son as well as my partner Candy. We also brought five cats with us. I am currently a first year Master of Divinity student at Starr King School for the Ministry. Within a few years, I am hoping to become a minister. As part of my training, I wanted to work as a DRE, so that I could become a very well rounded minister. I was very excited to discover this position and was ecstatic when it was later offered to me.



While living in AZ, I worked extensively with my home church in Chandler as a facilitator and coordinator for the Coming of Age and the Our Whole Lives programs. I was also involved in the Green Sanctuary movement, was on the Pastoral Care, Worship Associate, Caring and Concerns and the Calling Program committees.

As the new DRE at UUCC, I would love to speak to each and every one of you about what you think about RE, where you would like to see RE go and things you would like to see happen. Please feel free to talk to me in person at church or email me. I look forward to speaking with each and every one of you very soon.

Blessings,
Paula Braxton



Religious Education News

The RE Committee met on February 3 with Paula Braxton, our new Director of Religious Education. Paula will be at UCC the first three Sundays of each month and has exciting plans for enhancing curriculum and summer RE. A special thank you to Tamara Faber, John Sugar and Patrick Cody for agreeing to serve on the RE Committee.

The RE program has been averaging ten children every Sunday and will be recruiting teachers to offer a 'littles and middles' program again, along with special Sundays for children worship and art activities. The children are continuing to learn about the life and lessons of Jesus and how UUs relate the teachings of Jesus to the UU principles. A special thank you to Patrick Cody and Gene Anderson for helping the children in making valentines for people they appreciate.

~Annette Emery

Helping Hands

Thanks for the Generosity

UCC donated \$126.43 to WEAVE from the Sunday offerings in January and also contributed \$507.00 to the UUA Living Tradition Fund during Rev. Martha's Service of Installation.

~Stephen Bakken, Treasurer

SSIP Food Closet

UCC is a member of the South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership (SSIP). Our main activity is the Food Closet and Gina Guarneri is our SSIP representative who keeps us in contact with SSIP needs. SSIP is planning and fundraising for a new Food Closet Building. Currently, Bethany Church donates space to the Food Closet, but the space is too small. Stay tuned for more fundraising information. Volunteers are needed Monday-Friday from 9:00-11:00 to assist with the "movement of food". This includes rebagging large bags of rice/bean/onions into smaller bags for distribution and moving food from the collection truck to the locker. If you are interested, contact Maggie Cabutage, Coordinator at 428-5290 (and please email Gina as well).

Guest at Your Table

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) "Guest at Your Table" boxes are now available. Simply take one home and put the equivalent value of a meal a day in the box. We will then collect all of these boxes on Easter Sunday, which falls on March 23.

These funds are collected annually to finance UUSC projects including the still much needed Katrina rehabilitation program.

If you are submitting a personal check, please make it out to UUSC.

~Dick Tarble

The Miracle

I have long supported this wonderful phenomena called Unitarian Universalism. Secretly, I have always hoped for a miracle for UCC. On Tuesday night, February 5th, I experienced a miracle! I walked into the sanctuary and a candle was burning! You may recall that our induction for Martha as our new minister was the prior Sunday. The setting was beautiful. Among other objects, several candles were included in the service. Everything was removed after the service and the candles were extinguished. Can you imagine my surprise to discover one shining candle still lit days later? Nothing more than a miracle, if you ask me. Or course, the Jews had this same experience, but chose to celebrate it as an historical event. If we were to do the same, we are only looking at two days of candle lighting. I think a miracle is much more appropriate. Besides, now we can proselytize, (stand on corners, tent revivals etc). By the way, if you don't like my miracle, it's okay, just don't forget to turn off the lights, check the stove, coffee urns, and please make sure to blow out all of the candles.



~Jerry Melnick

Growing Together

Update on Adding a Sunday Service

As you've probably noticed, things are getting a bit "cozy" at our Sunday morning services. It seems inevitable that we will need to add a second worship service, at least until we move into our own larger space when our current lease expires in a few years. While this may cause some anxieties about no longer being able to see everyone at the same service, it is quite a happy and exciting time! We will do our best to provide opportunities for everyone to get together for special occasions and to maintain the sense of intimacy that is of such an important value to many of us here.

Our growing attendance will allow us to share our UU message with more newcomers! It is also a great opportunity to look a little closer at our worship life, and what you, the congregation, would like to see happen in that additional second Sunday service.

A task force consisting of representatives from all the areas of life at UUCG has been formed to plan when and how to make this happen. Its first task is to survey all of you about what time the added service should be and what you want it to look like. Watch for an online survey coming soon and make your preferences known. Those of you without Internet access will be sent paper copies of this survey. We are looking forward to your responses! In the meantime, we will be looking at options for comfortably seating more people at our current service. So, for now, bear with us and the cozy circumstances, and try to get to know your new neighbors!



In Memory

Our Condolences To...

Fred Deneke, whose father, Dr. Milton Deneke, passed away on February 6 in Arkansas following a long bout with an illness.

Sonia Duffoo, whose uncle Johnnie also passed February 6. She was his primary caregiver.

Merry Walle, as well as her family, on the death of Merry's mother, Betty, in January.

This community holds all these dear loved ones in our care.

New Members

Welcome

We warmly welcome our newest members at UUCG: Tina and Kevin (& their child), and Tamara and Antonio (& their children).

Tina Payne and Kevin Chasse officially joined our UUCG congregation on February 2. Tina is originally from Massachusetts and is a third generation UU. Since Oberlin College, she has worked as a singer, voice teacher, and technical writer, and isn't quite

sure yet what she wants to be when she grows up. She currently tutors K-14 grades, takes classes towards her Masters degree and takes care of son. Kevin grew up in Yuma Arizona, and graduated from ASU. He is a computer wrangler for Apple, after stints at Mindspring and Earthlink. Kevin doesn't know what he wants to be when he grows up either. He does a lot of car repairs, reads books, and makes great cat furniture - according to the resident cat.

Tamara Faber and Antonio Gonzalez both joined our congregation on February 3.

They and their children have been attending UUCG regularly since last November. Over the winter holidays, Tamara's parents (visiting from Florida) enjoyed our hospitality as well. Antonio is a native of South Sacramento, while Tamara grew up on Long Island in New York. They met each other as Peace Corps volunteers in Central America and now teach in the Elk Grove Unified School District.



Special Events



The UULM Low Carbon Challenge Kick-Off!

UU's Coming Together to Curb Climate Change

"Carbon Ring"

*A group of people
who support each other
to lower their carbon footprint,
and then share their data with others.*

The average US household produces 55,000 pounds of carbon emissions a year - the average German household 27,000 pounds, the average Mexican household 10,000 pounds. Most of us know the weight of our bodies to within a few pounds, but most likely have no idea how many pounds of carbon emissions that we are creating everyday, nor the appropriate strategy that would work best for our families to reduce our emissions by ten percent.

The UU Legislative Ministry (UULM) has challenged UUs across California to collectively lose 1 million pounds of carbon emissions before Earth Day 2009. The congregation with the highest percentage of households participating will win a prize! And consequently, we will all win by gaining the satisfaction of doing a better job of living out our seventh UU principle which is showing "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

A UU "Carbon Ring" is starting in Sacramento, led by the Rev. Lindi Ramsden, Director of the UULM, and a member of our church. This "small group ministry" style program will help us to move past despair and inertia, and into hope, deeper friendships, and actually making real changes in our lives.

We will be utilizing the Northwest Earth Institutes' beautifully crafted Changing Course Study Guide for the first four sessions. The next four sessions are based on the Low Carbon Diet workbook. Cost for books is \$35 (you'll save way more than that from your household budget!). Proposed schedule: in the evenings of March 17, 24; April 14, 21; May 5, 19; and June 2, 16. Please email Lindi at lramsdn@uulmca.org, if you are interested in participating in a UU "Carbon Ring", whether or not the proposed schedule works for you. Let us know when you can meet, and we will do our best to accommodate your interest. Junior high and high school youth also are welcome – this is a whole household change! Please indicate if you will need assistance with childcare.



Celebrate Peace Corps Week

Get a taste of the Peace Corps at UUCC! On Friday, February (not March) 29 from 7-9PM, Antonio Gonzalez and Tamara Faber will describe their work as volunteers in Honduras and Nicaragua, illustrated with slides and a freshly-prepared Central American dish. Also presenting will be former volunteers, Kathy and Dan Schmitt, who served in Africa. Come and enjoy first-hand accounts of life in other countries from people who have helped heal our world! Email Eric Walle, if you have any additional questions or are interested in assisting us with this special event.

SMS Returns to the Opera

Beloved Opera Choruses
March 8, 8:00PM
March 9, 3:00PM
American River College
Theatre
4700 College Oak Drive
Sacramento, CA 95841

The opera isn't over until...the Master Singers have delighted you with Verdi's famous "Anvil Chorus" from *Il Trovatore*, Wagner's "Pilgrim's Chorus" from *Tannhäuser*, and also

Mascagni's "Regina Coeli" from *Cavalleria Rusticana*. "These choruses are wildly fun for the choir to sing," Hughes says, "as they provide a chance to portray wildly varying

emotions and moods—from the salacious flirtations required by the Habanera from Bizet's *Carmen* to the plaintive cries of 'Ave Maria' in Poulenc's *Dialogue des Carmelites*." Joining us will be both seasoned soloists and upcoming vocal stars from the local Sacramento region. You will also enjoy the brand new venue - the recently completed 360-seat theatre at the American River College.

Tickets at the door are \$20. Advance tickets are available through UUCC singer Celia Buckley for \$17.00. Contact Celia by phone or email.

Theatre Group

The Theatre Group will see "The Dining Room" by A.R.Gurney ("Love Letters") at the UU Society on 2425 Sierra Boulevard, Friday, March 21. Dinner (\$10) will be at 6PM and the play (\$10 general admission and \$8 senior/student) at 8PM. Please contact Frieda Fergus by Sunday, March 16 for reservations.

Saturday Supper

Our Saturday Supper for this month will be held on Saturday, March 1st. These are potluck suppers and all are welcome. Our February hosts were Toni Darling/Kurt Schmidt and Bobbie Kramer and a good time was had by all. Thank you so much, Toni, Kurt and Bobbie! We still need hosts for April, so if you would like to either host or attend, please contact Terri Riley by phone.

Women's Group

The UUCC Women's Group will meet on Saturday March 8 at 9:30AM at UUCC. We discussed the article in last month's UU World on religion and democracy in the early years of the United States. The UUCC Women's Group meets monthly and is open to all women. Plan on bringing the latest issue of UU World and a brunch item to share. Please call Gene Anderson to receive a reminder call. For more information on the Women's Group, please contact Annette Emery.

Ongoing Activities



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 Eric Walle 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 congregations 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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Secretary: Wynne Skow

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Committees:

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Committee on Ministry: Richard Leimbach, Celia Buckley, Tom Rintoul

Finance: Mark Callicotte

Membership: Eric Walle

Religious Education: Annette Emery

Stewardship: Celia Buckley

Worship: Lucy Bunch

Openers/Closers Supervisor:

Rev. Martha Hodges

About the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) represents the interests of more than one thousand Unitarian Universalist congregations, on a continental scale. The UUA grew out of the consolidation, in 1961, of two religious denominations: the Universalists, organized in 1793, and the Unitarians, organized in 1825.



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