



The Communicator

of the [Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Lake County](http://www.uu-lakecounty.org)

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May Programs - Worship Month

11 AM Worship Service

May 3 – “What’s in a Word?” with **Rev. Susan Berryman**. We will begin “Worship Month” by considering our relationship with the language and vocabulary of worship, reverence and the sacred? How do “religious” words affect you? How can we navigate the higher realms of consciousness and spirituality without tripping over arcane and dogmatic terms that we reject?

May 10 – “Mother Love” with **Rev. Susan Berryman**. What could be more appropriate in “Worship Month” than to consider mother love. We can be fairly certain that original reverence by our very ancient ancestors consisted of earth, nature and mother worship. It is natural to feel reverence, love and admiration for the mystery of our very own creation. On this Mother’s Day we will focus on the concept and possibility of unconditional love.

May 17 – Worship, with **Eloise Fisher**. How does worship fit into man’s central longing to understand our place in the Universe? Why are there so many varied ways of worship?

How do you define worship?

May 24 – Faith and Worship in Buddhism, with **Sensei Morris Sekiyo Sullivan**. Because the religion of Buddhism is more a system of practice than a belief system, many people, including some practicing American Buddhists, overlook the importance of faith and worship in Buddhist practice. In this talk, we will discuss some of the ways worship manifests in Buddhism, as well as ideas about how to incorporate some of these concepts into a humanistic religious context.

May 31 – Meditation on Memories of the Dead, with **Rev. Susan Berryman**. We will take time to honor the memory of members of our congregation who died during the past year. As we end “worship month” we will consider mortality, immortality, the prospect of death and our relationship with death as the only inevitable in life.

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9:45 Discussion Group

May 3 – “Low Carbon Planet Friendly Landscape: with **Lavon Silvernell**

May 10 – Discussion of “Worship Vocabulary”, which was presented at the Service on May 3rd.

May 17 – “Sustainability: Nature’s Way of Pest Control” with **Clyde Stephens**

May 24 – To be announced.

May 31 – Open Forum – Please bring your topics for discussion.

Dear Congregation,

What a joyous and beautiful month to be alive! We started April with an Easter celebration that focused on how the spirit rises:-- That any time someone does and says what is needed and tries to repair what is broken, the spirit rises. When we forgive one another, rescue one another and believe in one another, the spirit rises. When someone looks sorrow or death in the face and opens to the mystery of what will follow, the spirit rises. And every time we connect to the web of all existence, the spirit rises. The message of Easter is that the spirit can awaken and arise in anyone at any time. We learn that the bonds of love are stronger than death, that love lasts, that there is something indestructible in each of us, something that wants to live and wants to rise.

This is what it means to have faith.

Do not be afraid to open your hearts to love unbounded and to the wonder at the extraordinary opportunity to be alive and to experience.

In the month of May we will focus on worship, the practice and method of raising our spirits and of being and staying connected.

I am filled with love and hope that we can raise our spirits to bring love, peace and justice to a fractured and divisive world.

Nameste,

Rev. Susan Berryman

Highlights from the April 16th Meeting of the Board of Trustees

The Treasurer's report was made by Chris Higgins, who is serving as the acting Treasurer in the absence of Carl Hommel. The report contained the material which was given to the Congregation on April 12, at the Congregational Meeting. She noted the Budget of \$59,610 with income coming from Pledges of \$48,600, Contributions \$4,000 and Fundraisers \$7,010. The Budget was adopted by a motion and a voice vote.

Eleven chairpersons of their respective committees reported to the BOT. The reports included a calendar of services and speakers for 2015-2016 from WRAP; eleven new members since November 2014 to be installed on April 26; 117 copies of the Communicator are being sent electronically; a new sign to be added to the existing ones on the land to indicate where and when we are now meeting; we are soliciting members to volunteer to lead classes for adult members of the Congregation.

The Building and Design Committee reported the progress being made in the drawings and civil engineering work.

The Design Sub-Committee will be working with an interior designer. The contract with the designer, Mr. Roger Bills, had not been signed at the time of this meeting.

The schedules for Discussion Group and Sunday Services through the end of May were given by Carl Skiles and Rev. Susan Berryman.

Other concerns included a representative chosen by the BOT members to serve on the Ministerial Relations Committee. Rev. Berryman asked Eloise Fisher and Gina Rossi to serve as the two members she can select and they accepted.

A chalice logo to be used on and/or in the new building and will be selected this month from entries made by the congregation.

Kit Tatum, Secretary

President's Message...

A Historic Moment in UU History and We Were There

You may not realize it, but you live in one of the most exciting places to be a UU. I am talking about here in the central Florida area, which includes us and Orlando, and the UU communities around us. An illustration of what I mean is provided by the District Assembly meeting in Orlando last weekend (April 17–19). At this meeting, a landmark decision was made to dissolve the District model of governance and replace it with a regional organization of Congregations called the Southern Region. The region is huge, encompassing 12 states from Florida to Texas on the west and Florida to Virginia on the North. All of its Congregations will be in direct relationship with one another. It is a bold and influential experiment that is being carefully watched by other governance areas of UUA.



What this has done is to move us closer to the UUA – we are the Southern Region of the UUA. Once a few financial details are taken care of, there will be no more Florida District. It's done. Period. End of story. The purpose of this historic change is to break down insularity. INSULARITY – the word comes from the Latin word, insula, meaning island. Within the UU Community there were and are too many islands – the congregations, districts, and “Boston” as we too often called it, as if a group of Boston Brahmins were still running the UUA. All too often these groups were operating on their own -- islands of governance -- and it was sometimes difficult to move between them. This creation of a newly conceptualized Southern Region of the UUA is intended to end that and to allow for an easy flow of ideas and purposive, shared missions. We are a part of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. From here on in we work with the UUA and with their staff to accomplish all the big things that we have always wanted to accomplish and must accomplish. Who is this staff? They are called “the Congregational Life” staff and, as their name implies, their concern is the life and health of individual congregations. Some of you have met our Congregational Life representative as she spoke to our congregation. She is a lovely, bright and committed young woman named Maggie Lovins. Believe me, she is anxious to know our Congregation and to know what we are doing and to help us in any way she can. The other way we as a Congregation meld into the UUA is through an advisory system of “Elders.” These are wise, experienced people from individual Congregations who are recognized as committed to UU causes and have the depth and background to understand where the movement has been and where it is going. Now that the District Assembly is over, the Moderator of the UUA, Jim Key, and The UUA Board of Trustees will begin to work with an initial Council of Elders. The idea is that the elders will have their fingers on the pulses of their congregation and of other Congregations especially through cluster groups.

Some of you are already familiar with clusters. They have been around for quite a while and has traditionally been a group drawn from congregations in geographic proximity to one another that met periodically for workshops, training, and sharing of ideas. Some of you may have participated in one of these cluster meetings. Within the newly envisioned Southern Region, clusters have become more important than ever as they provide an important channel from and to individual congregations and from and to Elders and from and to Congregational Life Representatives and thus to the UUA. The hope is that geographic clusters will be reimagined based on needs and interests and that they will be enlarged through something called “affinity clusters.” Affinity clusters might join widely separated congregations via tele-conferencing. We might meet, for example, with other small congregations to share successful stewardship experiences or to share and enlarge Social Justice and Environment agendas.

The importance of this change in governance was signaled by the presence of our UUA President, Peter Morales, in Orlando for this Assembly. Why Orlando? Because it was in Orlando that the District Executives and Board Members of the four district boards in what is now the Southern Region met in 2010 to do something about a system of governance that was clearly in need of repair. All of the folks that I have heard who were at that meeting have spoken about it in terms that convey the specialness of that time together and of the document that was produced -- The Orlando Platform. Jean Pupke, a UU minister from

Richmond, in her keynote address simulcast to all the Districts in our region, told us that the people meeting in Orlando in 2010 knew that the governance system was broken. They acted with boldness and made something deep and wonderful happen, she said. Al Tweedy, who was a Florida District Board member attending the 2010 meeting, described how those attending looked back at the Cambridge Platform of 1648 establishing the first Congregational church in America and asserting the power of the individual congregation. That was the idea behind the writing of the Orlando Platform -- to reassert the power of the members of the Congregation in covenant with one another and to extend it to the power of the congregations in covenant one with the other. As Al said in his wonderful mild-mannered talk, it was a way of bringing alive covenantal relationships; of how we should be together. "And the more we are together," he said, "the more we get things done." That was what the Orlando Platform was boldly asserting and that was the "wild and dangerous" thing, as Jean Pupke called it, that the Orlando Platform proposed -- a new system of governance asserting the power of congregations working together. And now it has been approved. It gives new significance to our name, the Unitarian Universalist CONGREGATION of Lake County. I had always considered it a rather ugly name and now I am proud of it. I love the thought that we are a "Congregation" in Covenantal relationship with many Congregations that can act together to affect the purposes of our members and of the members of many Congregations everywhere in the Southern Region and the USA. And I am proud that five of our members were there to witness this historic moment and to vote YES! I hope you are too.

...Russ Littlefield

UU Time

There are Calendar Years ... Fiscal Years ... Church Years ... Seasonal Calendars ... WHAT IMPACTS UU TIME?

On April 26, Rev. Susan formally inducted eleven new members to the congregation. YAY! We thought this would be a good time to review some important concepts related to the UUCLC calendar.

Annual Meeting: April 12, 2015 per the UUCLC bylaws (which can be found on our website), "An Annual Meeting of the Congregation shall be held each year on the first Sunday in April unless that Sunday falls on a holiday, in which case the meeting shall be held on the second Sunday in April." Because this year Easter was on April 5, the Annual meeting was held on the second Sunday in April. During the Annual meeting, "a budget for the ensuing year shall be presented" and the voting Members of the Congregation elect officers for the upcoming term.

Fiscal Year: July 1 to June 30. The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lake County (UUCLC) is one of over 1000 member congregations supported by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Both the UUA and the UUCLC run their church and financial business on a fiscal year from July 1 to June 30.

Budgets and Pledges are framed on a fiscal year. That means that if you fill out your FY 2016 (July 1 to June 30, 2016) pledge card on April 15, 2015, showing an annual pledge of \$1000, you have until June 30, 2016 to fulfill that pledge to UUCLC. When you submit your payment, write "2016 pledge" on your check or envelope to ensure that your payment is properly credited. If you have questions, the UUCLC Treasurer or President can help you. Of course, UUCLC is grateful for your contributions whenever you are able to provide them and will put them to good use.

Term of Office: two years for Board Officers; three for Trustees; May through April. Per the UUCLC bylaws, "Officers shall serve for a term of two (2) years, or until their successors are elected and qualified. Terms of Officers shall start on the first Sunday in May, and end every second year when their successors are installed....Trustees shall be elected to serve for staggered three (3) year terms." So...all of this means that at our Annual meeting on April 12, 2015, the UUCLC elected the following Board members, who will begin their term of office on May 3, 2015. The terms of the three new Board officers expire at the end of April 2017. The term of the Trustee expires at the end of April 2018. The new officers join 3 current Board members: Kit Tatum (Secretary); Carl Skiles and Betty Emery (Trustees). They are:

President—Christina Higgins

Vice President—Russell Littlefield

Treasurer—Stuart Anderson

Trustee—Suzanne Hanscom

Summer Session: middle of June through middle of September, 2015—During the fall, winter and spring, UUCLC has been conducting 9:45 am Discussion Group, followed by an 11 am Service, sometimes called a Worship or Celebration of Life Service. In past years, we have conducted less formal summer services during July and August.

The summer 2015 service schedule will run from June 21 through September 13. During this time the Sunday discussion group and celebration-of-life services will be combined and begin at 11 am. We will be looking for people to lead these summer services. If you have an interesting topic and want to lead a service, please sign up before one of the open dates on the information table on Sundays.

Chris Higgins

May Birthdays

Lynette Auberjeunois, May 5
Marge Hommel, May 10
Paulette Stewart-Johnson, May 13
Stuart Anderson, May 14
Esther Smith, May 14
Hinda Ramsay, May 15
Joanne Reilly, May 16
Jean Burda, May 20
Susan Mulholland, May 20
Jerry Tatum, May 30

Notes from the Region Meeting – Orlando, April, 2015

One of the exciting things about attending a large meeting of UU's is the opportunity to hear leaders in the UUA talk about the "big picture" and the challenges facing the denomination.

We were fortunate to hear Rev. Peter Morales, President of the UUA, in an informal session in Orlando on Friday night, and again Saturday morning when he addressed all the meetings in the Region via a TV hookup.

In both sessions he commented that the rate of change today in religious affiliation is unprecedented. The number of unaffiliated people has exploded in the US in the past ten years, in a huge cultural shift. For example, the Presbyterian Church in 8 years has lost a quarter of its membership. The UUA has fared better than some denominations but has lost one percent of its membership in each of the last three years, and membership is now about what it was a decade ago.

To counter this attrition he said the denomination needs to work on two things:

- We have to become good at doing congregational life
- We have to create new ways of engaging people, as we can no longer expect to grow just by welcoming refugees from orthodoxy.

He then talked about some of the actions UUA leadership is taking, like new training programs for ministers, and new programs to keep our youth involved as they pass into young adulthood, and new cooperation with denominations who share our values. He also wants to improve communication between congregations and the UUA leadership, and establish more linkages to congregations across the country.

On social justice, he commented that it is important to find experiential as opposed to simply cognitive ways for people to probe issues. If people through experience get a personal connection to an issue, it makes them an activist for life.

He believes that the real triggers to growth in a congregation are spirituality and openness and community. We must pay attention to the people around us, and reach out to those who want something deeper than consumerism.

The keynote speaker at the Region meeting was Rev. Jeanne Pupke of First UU in Richmond, VA. She has been involved in planning the changes in governance from the beginning, and had comments on that (see Russ Littlefield's report). She also shared some of her thoughts on being a UU, and the future of the denomination.

I liked her comment that there is a freedom in being a UU. We believe something now, and we may believe something different in ten years, but we will still belong. We need not believe alike to serve alike.

She believes that there are four important things to be done to achieve growth in UUA:

- "seek out our lost children". More needs to be done to keep them involved as they become young adults.
- We have to get serious about sharing programs and ministry across clusters, and working together. In the past, congregations have been too self-contained.
- In the South we must realize that we cannot go forward unless we become a diverse group. "We must welcome people who don't have a master's degree and drive a Prius".
- We must become places of "radical inclusion" – places of help and healing where all are welcome.

It was also exciting to attend the second annual meeting of UU Justice Florida. This group of committed individuals and congregations has as its major current issues climate change, immigration, and democracy at risk. A big part of the meeting was devoted to gathering from attendees a list of issues which the group should address in the next year, and then voting on them.

All in all, it was a very worthwhile meeting.

Karen Woolhouse

Update – Campaign for Funds for Beautification of the New Building

The campaign for significant donations toward the beauty of the new UUCLC building has now raised just under \$55,000 !!! Of this, about \$35,000 has been designated for specific items, and about \$20,000 is to be allocated by the committees. The building and design committees are very appreciative of the support from so many generous donors.

The final construction costs for the new building are not yet known. However it is clear that it will be a real stretch to fit the building which has been designed into the budget from the Ruth Gray bequest. There may well be tough tradeoffs to be made to fit the building into the available budget.

Whatever the building we end up with, it is wonderful to know that we will have beautiful and special items in it; for example a grand piano, stained glass windows, a new chalice and lectern, beautiful art on the walls, statues in the garden, etc. Several of these items will be special to us because they are memorials to past members of the congregation.

The fundraising committee (Karen Woolhouse, Frank Bishop, Bernie Greenberg) is very grateful to the generous donors to our significant donations campaign. If there is anyone who still wishes to contribute, please get in touch with us. We would be glad to talk with you about possibilities, and any discussion would be completely confidential and without obligation.

As reported in past issues of The Communicator, the fundraising committee is planning several more fundraising campaigns, to make sure that everyone will be able to have their name somewhere in the new building. For example, Bernie Greenberg has a great idea for a signature quilt fund raiser. We are planning

a chair sponsorship campaign – provide funds for a chair for the sanctuary and have your name on a plaque on the back. Also, we will have an engraved brick campaign, so that people can have their names somewhere in the garden.

The committee's plan is to do the signature quilt campaign in the autumn of this year. This campaign will be fun, and we can enjoy seeing the quilt on Sundays even before we are in the new building. Then we will do the chair sponsorship campaign four or five months before the congregation moves into the new building. And finally, we will do the engraved brick campaign when the building is close to occupancy and the landscaping is being done. By then it will be known what the engraved bricks will be used for, perhaps a wall in the garden, or a walkway, or a labyrinth.

We would love to have more members on our fundraising committee. If any of these projects sounds like something you would enjoy working on, please let Karen know.

Karen Woolhouse

Summer Sunday Services

The summer 2015 service schedule will run from June 21 through September 13. During this time the Sunday discussion group and celebration-of-life services will be combined and begin at 11 am. We will be looking for people to lead these summer services. If you have an interesting topic and want to lead a service, please sign up by one of the open dates on the information table on Sundays.

*Friday
Opening
Presentation*

The Reverend
Andrea Greenwood

*Saturday
Keynote
speaker*

*Sunday
Worship*

The Reverend
Mark Harris

*Saturday
Worship*

The Reverend
Jack Ford

Universalist Convocation 2015

Shining
Our
LIGHT
on Universalism

MAY 29-31, 2015 • JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

Held at  **Buckman Bridge
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Phone: (904) 276-3739 • www.BBUUC.org

Come to sunny Jacksonville for great worship, inspiring sermons, and workshops on Universalist history, the changing image of Jesus in art, starting a UU Christian Fellowship in your congregation, creating a welcoming environment for all ages (presented by youth leaders). In addition, there will be music, entertainment, delicious meals and a Black history tour of St. Augustine. Child care is available throughout the event.

For registration & additional information, visit <http://bbuuc.org/uc2015>