



The Communicator

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

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August Programs

Discussion Group at 9:30 am

September 3 – Open Forum.

September 10 – A **special event** is planned for this discussion time. Bernie Greenberg and Janeane Reagan will unveil their beautification gift to the new church in the form of an artist quilt that will hang in the foyer. During the unveiling and dedication, Peg Green, the nationally known and award-winning quilt artist will talk about the inspiration and techniques involved in the making of the quilt. After the dedication, everyone is invited to the social hall for bagels and champagne or sparkling grape juice or coffee. Please plan to join us.

September 17 – To Be Announced.

September 24 – To Be Announced.

Woerscippen at 11:00 am

September 3 – **“Peace Within; Peace Without”**. Meditations, Readings and Encouragements for finding Inner Peace and Healing. Sending Peace Messages out into the World.

September 10 – **“Peace Inside and Out.”** There is a famous quote from the Dalai Lama -- “We can never obtain peace in the outer world until we make peace with ourselves.” In this dharma talk, Sensei Morris Sekiyo Sullivan will discuss the relationship between inner peace and outer harmony, and how we can seek inner calm without withdrawing our intention toward a just and peaceful society.

September 17 – **“Who Are We?”** Unitarian Universalists are diverse and come from many different faith traditions (as well as being raised UU). What does it mean when we “move in” together here in this space? Rev. Tracie explores and helps us unpack who we are as Unitarian Universalists.

September 24 – **“Who We Are.”** We are facing a time in this country where our voice is needed now more than ever. So, what does it mean to be a Unitarian Universalist in this time? Rev. Tracie preaches on knowing who we are in this world so we can be the force for change in the world.

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September Birthdays

Phyllis Gillette, September 9

Hurricane Harvey Recovery Fund

On Friday night, August 25, Hurricane Harvey made landfall as a Category 4 Storm and brought with it deadly winds and rain to an area of the United States millions call home. Much of the Texas Gulf Coast has been impacted and communities in Louisiana and across the state of Texas are still coping with more days of rain. We're holding all of those affected in our hearts and prayers and we are in touch with local Unitarian Universalists so we can meet the needs as they arise. To do this, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) has joined with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) on a recovery and relief fund.

Please give as generously as you are able. Half of all funds raised will go to at-risk populations served by UUSC partners and the other half of the funds will support Unitarian Universalist congregations and members of those congregations most affected by the storm. Those funds will be administered by a group of leaders in the UUA's Southern Region, which includes the states across the southeast from Texas to South Carolina, and from most of Virginia to Florida.

Using their eye-to-eye partnership model, UUSC will work with and support local grassroots community partners on the ground in Texas serving at-risk populations who may not be able to access relief services and who are traditionally left out of mainstream response efforts. UUSC and their partners will work to bolster locally led relief efforts that are serving immigrant families, in particular young mothers and their children.

As the storm passes and recovery begins, UUSC will continue to get updates and work with partners to ensure their needs are met. We have a basket in the foyer for your gifts supporting this effort. All money collected there will be sent as our Congregational donation. Please make your checks out to the UUCLC with a notation "Harvey Relief." Thank you.

If you wish to donate as an individual, please go to the UUA's website <https://giving.uua.org/harvey-floods> Or mail your contribution to the Unitarian Universalist Assn., Attn: Gift Processing, 24 Farnsworth St., Boston, MA 02210-1409. Checks sent to this address should be made out to the UUA with "Harvey Recovery Fund" on the memo line, and mailed to UUA Gift Processing, 24 Farnsworth St, Boston, MA 02210. You may also donate by phone at (888 792-5885).

Minister's Message...

We finally are ready to embark on our journey together this month. While I have met with many of you throughout the summer for planning purposes, this month marks the official start of my time as your minister.



These are challenging moments in our country. The continuing rise of racism and hatred spurs us to reiterate our values as Unitarian Universalists. Hurricane Harvey in Houston calls for us to continue to make strides in the realm of climate change and environmental justice as well as find ways to assist, in practical ways, our fellow humans who are devastated by this event. The attacks and legislation against our transgender siblings demand us to continue to fight for LGBTQ rights.

We have a lot of work ahead of us. I come in to this congregation and this ministry with a heavy mantle upon my shoulders. Of course, I am here for you and your spiritual needs as individuals and as a faith family. But my other role as your minister is to help us find our collective voice and use it in our community and in our world.

The work will not be easy. Our hearts will break. However, I have faith that we will be able to make a difference together.

In one of our UUA Tapestry of Faith programs, the lessons end with the participants in a circle. Each person turns to the person on their right and says: "I put my hand in yours so that we might do together what we cannot do alone." My friends, I am placing my hand in yours. Let us now do together what we cannot do alone.

...Rev. Tracie

From our President...

Everywhere I look, I see transitions. On Sunday, September 3, we will return to our 'regular' (as opposed to the 'summer') schedule. That means we will resume Discussion Group at 9:30 am, followed by our Worship (or Woerscappen, per the ancient English root, meaning: considering things of worth) Service at 11 am. (Announcements at 10:50 am.) Autumn begins on September 22, 2017. A month later, day light savings time will end again on November 5th.

And of course, UUCLC is still in transition. Let me tell you what I am seeing as we begin this 'church year'. This is a "State of the Congregation Report", if you will, including a financial update, as well as some highlights about the coming year.



UUCLC runs its finances on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year. The good news is that we had a bit of a cushion as we started the new fiscal year on July 1, 2017. The year that ended June 30, 2017 (Fiscal Year 2016-17), closed with an operating account balance of \$20,404, primarily because we budgeted for a part time minister, and the recruitment, interview and selection process took longer than we hoped, so we did not have a minister with us for any portion of the year. As a result, our Worship Planning and Research (WRAP) Committee continued to work diligently and brought us excellent Sunday Services – and we thank the Committee for their good work!

Without getting too much into the weeds, let me recap our FY 2016-17 operating accounts. We began the year with carry forward of \$31,638 from all prior year Operating Budgets. (Carry forward funds reside in a UUCLC Operating Checking Account along with current year income and special funds – more about those later.) We took in Pledge and Plate Income of \$67,837, just slightly more than the \$67,200 that we budgeted in our FY 2016-17 Budget, and we spent \$ 47,433, resulting in an unspent balance of \$20,404. The aggregate carry forward from FY 2016-17 is \$52,042 (\$31,638 + \$20,404.)

Our Treasurer, Stuart Anderson, records income and expenditures at least weekly and meets with the Finance Committee every month to review approximately ten spreadsheets in detail. The summary financial report is shared monthly with the Board of Trustees. The details behind the summary I have shared are available in the Treasurer's reports. As you know, both meetings (Finance and Board) are open to Congregation Members, so anyone who would like to learn more about UUCLC finances is welcome to attend either or both meetings.

This brings us back to the beginning of FY 2017-18, i.e., July 1, 2017. As I said, a financial cushion is a good thing, because we will be facing multiple new challenges this year in our new building. We still have very little in terms of solid expenditure data related to maintaining our new building. Until late July we had construction workers on site, and we are still 'shaking out the bugs' regarding the thermostats and the timers for the lights and irrigation, etc. In other words, the bills that we've received are not truly representative of standard operations.

In addition, for the first time ever, UUCLC has incurred debt: nine congregation members have generously come forward to loan in aggregate \$50,000 at 0% interest to ensure that we have sufficient funds to satisfy the building construction bills. But, the FY 2018 Budget provides no funds for re-payment in year one of the three-year debt period.

Soon, we will be seeing our final bills from Keator, the construction company, and then we will have the final accounting of the building costs. As you all know, the building project was intense and took place over multiple years. The report to the congregation will be issued after the last bills are paid.

But, even after we settle with Keator Construction, we will still have our 'wish list' for the building. We have been fortunate that in addition to our primary benefactress, Ruth Gray, we have had at least seventeen different members or friends, who have made donations for the beautification or completion of the building. These funds will or have been used to purchase the piano, the chalice, a decorative quilt wall hanging, stained glass windows for the Sanctuary, plus other things to be determined. We are grateful for the generosity of our donors. Thank you. ►

► Here is a summary of FY 2016-17 Special Fund activity. Special Funds are tracked separately from the Operating Funds and are not funded from the operating budget. They are primarily funded from individual donations. The single largest 'Special Fund' is the 'Beautification' Fund which had accumulated \$19,660 prior to FY 17. During the year, an additional \$28,550 was donated, but \$13,210 was spent, so that there was a carry forward in the 'Beautification' Fund of \$35,000 at the beginning of FY 2017-18. The smaller Special Funds include a \$2k memorial fund, and individual Education, Music, Pantry, Social Justice, and Seidner Challenge Funds. In aggregate, these smaller Special funds totaled approximately \$8k at FY 2017 year end.

At the Annual Meeting in April, the Board proposed a budget for Fiscal Year 2017-18 to the Congregation. At that time, we were about to move into our new building; we had no expenditure history. Therefore, we had to estimate how much it would cost to maintain the new building. At the June meeting the Board approved a FY 2017-18 Budget of \$86,064, projecting pledge income of \$80,064 and plate collections of \$6,000. This is a significant increase over our FY 2016-17 Budget, but we are offering our congregation more – in programs, in ministry, and our congregation is growing. However, so far, we are still short on pledges. If you have not pledged or find that you can increase your pledge, it's not too late. Won't you please do your part to help support this Congregation? Please see Stuart Anderson for Pledge cards or pick one up at the table in the lobby and drop it off in the Pledge Box or in the Collection Basket.

So, it's the beginning of the traditional church year – September. Where is UUCLC going? We continue to build momentum and draw strength from our friends and members. We continue to see many new faces and attendance is on average twenty people greater than the same time last year. Our Sunday Services are interesting and will soon be supplemented with Discussion Group and Educational programs during the week. We've had folks from the YMCA conduct a Health Awareness program, the National Organization for Women and the Boy Scouts are planning/interested in having meetings in our building. Word is spreading. We are becoming an asset to the community!

On August 27, we hosted an Interfaith Celebration that was inspirational to many. It reminded us what it means to be UU and to work in harmony with others in the community. We heard stories of oppression and vowed to uphold our UU values. I'm looking forward to doing that on Monday, September 18 at 6:30 pm at **The Peace Pole Dedication** at the Shepherd of the Hills Church in Clermont. Our own minister, Reverend Tracie Barrett-Welser, will participate in the procession of clergy, reading prayers for peace from many faiths and in many languages. There will be music and a dedication ceremony. Fellowship will follow the program, including snacks. (Look for information about a Carpool leaving from our building.)

Because Rev. Tracie will be residing with us part-time, she will be able to really get to know us and represent us in our community. Although we've seen her a few times in the summer, these visits were only for planning purposes. Rev. Tracie starts with us officially on September 17, 2017. The Letter of Agreement between the UUCLC and Rev. Tracie specifies that she will be with us for the 9 months of the church year (mid-September to mid-June) for two periods each month. The first period is a consecutive 3-day period – Tuesday to Thursday of the first week of the month. The second period is a consecutive 8-day period book-ended by the 3rd and 4th Sunday. The calendar in the classroom shows the minister's presence in highlights. We plan to have Rev Tracie deliver two sermons a month...(did you hear the WRAP Committee heave a sigh of relief?)

Elsewhere in this Newsletter, you may be able to read about our active Leadership Council, which has undertaken a variety of new responsibilities, supported by our very capable Committee Chairs. Because our building is being noticed by folks in the community, Leadership Council and the Board are playing catch up and are drafting Rental and Event Procedures and Agreements.

Our Committees are active and are developing programs and services. Yes, momentum continues to build. This is an exciting time for UUCLC.

But, we don't have to accomplish everything all at once. We must remember to: Nurture our spirits...and as we do that...we can help heal our world ... Heaven knows, it needs it.

... Chris Higgins