



# The Communicator

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

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## December Programs

### 11 AM Worship Service

#### December 7 – “God Restored Christ’s Church through Joseph Smith”

Dr. Adam Barr is Bishop of the Apopka ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Dr. Barr’s duties are similar to those of a pastor, priest, or rabbi. In the Mormon Church the position of Bishop is unpaid. Dr. Barr is a dentist here in Eustis,

He will share with us some of the rich history of the Mormon Church which was established pursuant to Divine instructions and heaven-tutoring given to Joseph Smith over a period of 10 years following a Vision in 1820 in which God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ appeared. Although many good people at that time believed in Christ and tried to understand his gospel, Mormons believe they did not have the fullness of truth or the authority to baptize and perform other saving ordinances.

Those who have come to know Mormons personally often speak of the ideal manner, in which they live their lives, raise their families; accept seriously their responsibilities as citizens, and the warmth of their relationships with others. We look forward to gaining a better understanding of this religion that is so meaningful in the lives of so many.

#### December 14 – “Revisiting Ruth’s Lightning Rod Bequest” – Jack Champion

Ruth Gray was a life-long Republican both in New Jersey and here in Lake County. I wish she were still with us to share her comments on such questions as these, from the viewpoints of Unitarian-Universalists:



- Is the Pilgrim Thanksgiving story a lie?
- Where is the proper dividing line between church and state?
- What is the proper role of government in alleviating hunger, sickness, unemployment, comfortable housing, other legislative issues? Do we comprehend more than one outlook on these divisive issues?
- Should UU programs promote economic literacy?
- Should we be involved in meaningful social issues to such an extent that we pursue understanding and training on how to dynamically influence public opinion in the communities where we live and beyond?
- Should UUCLC become officially involved in a social justice issue when the members have substantially different opinions on desired outcomes?

The program promises to be challenging. Come with an open-mind.

#### December 21 – “How UU’s Saved Christmas” with Reverend Susan Berryman

Come share our history and learn how Unitarian Universalists shaped American Christmas custom and tradition. Stay to sing, eat and be merry!!!!

## December 28 – Reverend Roger Seidner



### “Year End Accountability and Response”

While the church year seems to end in June and begin again in September, our secular year ends in December. This is a time to reckon, account, and look ahead. We will look back at the present and where we are headed in our UUCLC life In the future.

### 9:45 AM Discussion Group

December 7 – "Generosity As A Spiritual Practice" by Karen Woolhouse.

December 14 – “Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers" -- Understanding how stress impacts disease and how attitude can make a difference, by Janean Regan, PhD.

December 21 – "Current Biology" -- Your Microbiome and Gut Health, by Franklin Pennington, PhD.

December 28 – "Relating Religion and Science" -- Conflict, Independence, Dialogue, and Integration, by Herb Gruning.

### UUCLC Information & Contacts

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The Communicator is published each month, from September through June  
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Dear Congregation,

It is that time of year when we wish each other, “Season’s Greetings, Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas or Happy Chanukah”. It is the time for lights and sounds, commercials and carols. It is the time for the Christmas spirit to jog our memories of the magic of reindeers, elves and dancing sugar plums.

This time of year can be filled with joy and laughter, music and gifts, but also sadness, loneliness and loss.

Let us take the time this season to be mindful of the needs others by giving the gift of our attention, listening, connection and presence. No gift is more lasting or memorable than a meaningful conversation.

I wish each of you the joy and pleasure of good company during this holiday season.

May your hearts be filled with love, peace and joy.

Rev. Susan Berryman

### Treasurer's Report...

The October Income was \$2,580. Expenses were \$3,773, 23% of Budget. \$228 has been spent on the picnic to date. Ruth Gray Bequest Fund expenses were \$2,721, including \$1,782 for lot clearing, and \$327 for liability insurance on the cleared section of the lot.

.... Carl Hommel

## President's Message...



This month I am reprinting a slightly edited message I wrote in 2013 about our central symbol, the flaming chalice. I am doing this for three reasons.

First, because we have many newcomers attending our Sunday Services and they need to know the background and deep importance of the ritualistic act we perform every Sunday called "lighting the chalice."

Second, because, as Jim Key, Moderator of the UUA, has reminded us many times, we need to know our history in order to talk about our faith. Even long-time UUer's need to refresh their memories from time to time about our heritage. After World War II, we became, as I say in this article, a Faith of the Chalice.

And third, because this article reminds us of the centrality of social justice to our faith. It shows once again that, when we are at our best, we are a faith of "deeds, not creeds."

By the way, if you are wondering, the image here is of a UU Christmas ornament that speaks to this.

*One very old woman told how the flaming chalice of her homeland, Czechoslovakia, helped her while she was in a Nazi prison camp. Printed under the picture of the Czech flaming chalice was the motto "pravda vitezi," which means, in English, "truth overcomes," or "truth prevails." Every single morning in that terrible camp, the old woman said, she traced a picture of a flaming chalice in the sand with her finger. Then she wrote the motto underneath it. "It gave me the strength to live each day," she said. Whenever she drew the chalice in the dirt she was reminded that someday the world would remember the important truth that every single person is important and should be free to think and believe as he or she chooses. (from the story The Healing Cup: The Story of the Flaming Chalice," by Noreen Kimball)*

When I tell people outside of the UU community what we are building, I say we are building a church. I would like to find a different word, but I can't without getting into explanation and semantics that I don't want to get into. I'm uncomfortable with the word, though. The problem I have with it is that it inadequately represents what UU congregations are about. A church is by definition usually identified with Christian worship. While some of us may be comfortable with both "church" and "worship," I know that many in this congregation and in the broader UU community are not. Nor should they be. We need to build a structure that works for Buddhists, Pagans, Atheists, Humanists, Jews, Muslims, as well as an assortment of spiritual seekers that consider themselves "none of the above."

So what are we building after all and what are we going to do there? In an effort to answer this question, the building committees have adopted and the Board has approved a Vision for our structure modeled on the Vision Statement of the Unitarian Universalists of Central Oregon. The statement is titled a "Vision for our New Spiritual Home." Our rewrite of this statement is titled "Vision and Goals for Our New Spiritual Home" and begins this way: "Our new Home will embody the values, purpose and place of the UUCLC in the greater community. It will invite and welcome all who work for a just community and who are searching for personal spiritual fulfillment." You may recognize that the Mission Statement of our UU Congregation is embedded in this statement. It calls to our attention the two main foci of the UU Movement, Social Justice and Spiritual Questing. The UU Movement is powered by both of them and they are inseparable. I would argue that without Spiritual Questing, social justice work is impoverished; without a vibrant sense of social justice, our quest for a richer spiritual life is made poorer as well.

This view is illuminated (I am not trying to make a bad pun) by the most pervasive of all UU images, the flaming chalice. The chalice is lit near the beginning of almost every UU service and with good reason -- it is linked inexorably to who we are. The symbol originated during World War II when the American Unitarian Association (AUA) became involved in the effort to help the Czech Unitarian Church and others threatened by Hitler's annexation of Western Czechoslovakia known as the Sudetenland. The symbol was drawn by an Austrian artist/cartoonist, Hans Deutsch, who fled Paris when Hitler's troops invaded and arrived in Lisbon where he began working for the Unitarian Service Committee (USC). In Paris, Deutsch had drawn political cartoons critical of Hitler since the 1930s. When he arrived in Lisbon, he stumbled on the Lisbon office of the USC headed by the Rev Charles Joy and went to work for him. In 1941, the USC was trying to establish itself as a recognized presence aiding refugees. Joy knew what they needed. He asked Deutsch to create a symbol for their documents, something "to make them look official, to give dignity and importance to them and, at the same time to symbolize the spirit of our work.... When a document may keep a man out of jail, give him standing with governments and police, it is important that it look important." With pen and ink, Deutsch drew a simple line drawing of a chalice with a flame which Joy described this way to his Boston office:

It represents, as you see, a chalice with a flame, the kind of chalice which the Greeks and Romans put on their altars. The holy oil burning in it is a symbol of helpfulness and sacrifice. In ancient and medieval art this chalice is frequently found, and the design itself, modernized and stylized, though it is, reminds one of the signs seen on the old monastic manuscripts. This was in the mind of the artist. The fact, however, that it remotely suggests a cross was not in his mind, but to me this also has its merit. We do not limit our work to Christians. Indeed, at the present moment, our work is nine-tenths for the Jews, yet we do stem from the Christian tradition, and the cross does symbolize Christianity and its central theme of sacrificial love."

Joy might have noted that the chalice cup itself is a crucial symbol of Christianity. In any case, Deutsch's drawing became the official logo of the USC for papers as well as badges that those fleeing could recognize and trust.

Deutsch was impressed with Joy and the work of the USC. He wrote:

I am not what you may actually call a believer. But if your kind of life is the profession of your faith—as it is, I feel sure—then religion, ceasing to be magic and mysticism, becomes confession to practical philosophy and—what is more—to active, really useful social work. And this religion—with or without a heading—is one to which even a 'godless' fellow like myself can say wholeheartedly, Yes!

Since Deutsch and Joy wrote their words about the chalice, there have been thousands of words written and spoken about the significance of the flaming chalice as a religious symbol as well as a symbol of our social justice commitment, but these two statements, coming out of the matrix of World War II, set up the paradigm of our faith as well as anything I know. We are a Faith of the Chalice. We are rooted in both our concern for social justice and the earth as well as in our respect for our religious past and for other traditions that have informed and enriched us.

In 1949, the USC separated from the AUA and began operating synergistically with its parent founder. It has retained the flaming chalice as its symbol. And in 1961, the AUA and the Universalist Church of America merged into the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Eventually, the chalice became a symbol of the UUA as well as of the Unitarian Service Committee, now the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). What better symbol to remind us that our spiritual side is indissolubly connected to social justice and our social justice efforts are rooted in the spiritual. Our aim is to have our new Spiritual Home reflect this in its siting, architecture and interior design so that when we finally move in and light our new flaming chalice for the first time (with real flame, by the way), we may all utter, with Charles Joy and Hans Deutsch and with Ruth Gray, our benefactor, and with all who have worked so hard to create what we are, a resounding "Yes!"

...Russ Littlefield

## Highlights of the Board Meeting on November 13, 2014

Seven members of the Board of Trustees were present. Susan Berryman and Marge Hommel also attended the meeting.

Procurement of Wi-Fi and phone in the office was outlined by Marge Hommel. She reported on the various options and an assessment of the cost of each option. The motion to go forward to have internet and phone service installed in the part of the building we occupy as an office/meeting space carried. Carl Hommel will negotiate to have the Wi-Fi and phone provided for this space.

The Board Covenant was reviewed and the minutes from the October 9 meeting were approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** 1. Carl Hommel reported the pledge income will have to be increased. 2. A leader is needed to organize and carry out this campaign. 3. Share the Plate Funds from September through November has not been distributed.

**Renewal of Rental Contract for the Woman's Club Building:** At the time of this meeting we did not have a positive assurance we would be able to rent the building until we move to our building.

### Committees:

Building Committee report from Carl Skiles stated a meeting of four committee members with Joe Rispoli, the architect, to try to finalize the floor plan for the new building. A proposed plan is ready to be presented at a meeting of the committee on December 2. The size of the building on this plan has been reduced from previous plans to conform to budget requirements.

A topographic and tree survey on the 4.5 acres we will use for the building will have to be made.

The Sunday Service Committee will meet on December 4.

Membership Committee will have a New Member Orientation on November 15.

Revitalizing the Committees with an effort to provide training and support, identify expectations, and facilitate groups.

The Discussion Group leader, Carl Skiles, outlined the programs for this month.

The Celebration of Life service leader, Jack Champion, announced the speakers for this month through December 28.

The next meeting of the BOT will be on December 11, at 4 p.m. in the building at 127 N. Grove in Eustis, FL.

**Kit Tatum, Secretary**

### December Birthdays

Kit Tatum, December 4  
Carl Skiles, December 26

## **Holiday Greeting Cards for Sale, to Benefit UUCLC Children's Program Fund**

As the holiday season approaches, we are selling colorful and cheery holiday cards to benefit the UUCLC Children's Program Fund. This is a continuation of the greeting card sales which have raised over \$200. for the Children's Program. A flyer which shows the various card styles and includes ordering information is at the end of this newsletter.

The holiday cards are donated by Hinda Ramsay, and the entire proceeds from their sale goes to the UUCLC Children's Program Fund. The holiday cards are high quality, in bright colors, with tasteful messages, and each comes with a high quality envelope.

This is an excellent way to help raise money for UUCLC. The cards are very reasonably priced, at \$10.00 for a bundle of ten.

We would like to take orders for bundles of cards, and deliver them to people on Sunday mornings, in plenty of time for the holiday card season. If you need holiday cards before November 23, please arrange an earlier pickup with Hinda. The flyer has the instructions on how to place an order for bundles of cards by emailing Hinda.

Please do look at the flyer (at the end of this issue) to see how nice the cards are. We hope that you will support the UUCLC Children's Program Fund by ordering your holiday cards to benefit UUCLC. Many thanks for your support.

## **End of Year Donation Planning for New Building**

This is an important time in the life of UUCLC as we plan for our new building, made possible by the generosity of Ruth Gray. Many of us will wish to contribute along with Ruth, to make our shared building more beautiful and functional.

The article below by Bill Clontz, UUA Stewardship Consultant, has some suggestions for tax advantaged giving which may be useful at this time of year as you look ahead to tax time.

Please remember that all gifts to the new building, of any size, are important. It is a shared undertaking and we all want to participate. The members of the Finance subcommittee are Karen Woolhouse, Jack Champion, and Frank Bishop. Any of us would be pleased to talk with you about possible gifts for the new building or to answer questions. All such discussions will be completely confidential and without any commitment.

The Tax Man Cometh: Thinking About End of Year Giving  
Bill Clontz, UUA Stewardship Consultant

*We're not fond of thinking about it, of course, but right after the holiday season, comes tax season. But take heart! There is good news here. We all have the opportunity to do some good while preparing for tax season. I'm not a financial advisor (You will likely want to consult with one before making any tax or investment related decisions. And remember, with November elections and the prospect of a lame duck congressional session, late changes and opportunities could appear – watch the news!), but experience tells me many of us can do some good as we do our personal planning. Here are some ideas you may wish to consider:*

- *Charitable IRA Rollover: This tax extender encourages older Americans to give out of their Individual Retirement Accounts, a giving strategy that allows IRA owners age 70-1/2 or older to exclude up to \$100,000 a year from income if the IRA funds are paid directly to certain public charities. (Otherwise, the IRA owner would have to pay tax on the IRA funds before claiming the deduction).*

*Congress allowed this option to expire, but it could be brought back at some point. Be prepared to take advantage of this opportunity if it is reauthorized. Many retirees do not need the money that they must take out of their IRAs in the form of a Minimum Required Distribution (MRD). Being able to donate these proceeds to their congregation can be a win-win.*

- *Donate Appreciated Stock: With the stock market at all-time highs, making a gift of appreciated stock could provide an important financial boost for your congregation or the UUA, and provide you with a significant tax break at the same time.*

*Talk to your broker about your specific situation, but know that in general you could take an immediate tax deduction for the full market value of the stock and also avoid the capital-gains tax that would be owed if cashing in the securities.*

- *Get a Jump Start on Your Annual Pledge: No matter when your church calendar year starts or when/how your budget drive is conducted, you know that sometime after the first of the year, you will be asked to consider your pledge for the coming church year.*

*Why not give that some personal reflection now, at year's end, and make an initial judgment about an increase. Start setting aside that increase now. When the new pledge year begins, you are already at about the level you wish to be, and the increase set aside for some months can be contributed as a one-time gift – all potentially earning a tax deduction as well.*

## Coming Events

**Our Concern & Love is Extended.** Eric W. Johnson, husband of our Paulette Stewart Johnson, died on October 6, in North Carolina. He endured a long illness at home with Paulette's loving care, and assistance from Hospice. Eric had carried on a successful business career. His concern for others and legacies he left will sustain his presence. A memorial service was conducted in North Carolina with internment in New York, but we will remember and support Paulette here as she remembers the years they shared. She will be here in December. Plans are underway to include a portion of the service in North Carolina in our December 28 service.

There will be a **memorial service for Wilma Vogt** at the **Garden of Life Chapel, Waterman Village, Saturday, December 6, at 2:00 pm.**

**Social Justice Committee** will meet at **5:00 P.M.** at the church office on **Monday December 1.** Anyone interested in social action is welcome to attend. Questions? Call Frank Bishop at 483-3173.

The **Meditation for All** group meets **Mondays at 7 pm** in the Grove Street Office.

The next **building committee** meeting will be held at the Office on **December 2, at 4 PM.** We will discuss the latest floor plan, with hopes of approving it so that the architect can proceed with the construction drawings. We will also discuss the attached conceptual site plans.

The **Book Club** will meet **Tuesday, December 9, at 3pm,** at the office. We are reading "The Naked Ape" for the meeting this month.

**Holiday Cards to raise money for the UUCLC  
Religious Exploration / Children's Program.**

**This is a continuation of the program of greeting cards we sold previously.  
100% of the proceeds from these card sales  
goes directly to the Children's Program Fund.**

**Cards are \$10 for 10**

**For Ordering Contact: *Hinda Ramsay* at [hindaramsay@gmail.com](mailto:hindaramsay@gmail.com) or  
*Karen Woolhouse* at [woolhouse@earthlink.net](mailto:woolhouse@earthlink.net)**



*Season's  
Greetings*



*Merry  
Christmas*



*Santa has  
Christmas FEVER*  
*Happy Holidays!*