



# The Communicator

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

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## January Programs

### 11 AM Worship Service

**January 4 – “Social Justice as a Spiritual Practice”** with Christie Cleveland & Russ Littlefield.

**January 11 – “Social Justice: Compassion in Action”** with Reverend Susan Berryman.

**January 18 – “Engaging with Other Religious Communities”** with Reverend Roger Seidner. Our Consulting Minister will survey the background of Martin Luther King & his ministry. His vision enabled many people of various faith persuasions to unite. The result was a landmark change in human relations in our land. That changing process is ongoing and it depends on other voices and hands to continue. We have an inheritance that has an accompanying responsibility. We examine the past and press on in the future.

**January 25 – “Stories of Awakening / A Climate in Crisis”** with Connie Barlow

### 9:45 AM Discussion Group

**January 11 – “Call to action on climate change”**  
by Frank Bishop.

**January 11 – “Climate Change is a HOAX! - perpetrated by greedy scientists bent on world domination”,** by Bob Cleveland.

**January 18, 25 – To be announced.**

### Dear UULC Congregation,

The New Year promises to be interesting, exciting and inspiring. This January will be Social Justice Month. I think that is a perfect way for us to start off the New Year. We will have many opportunities to put our covenant “service is our law” into practice.

I am looking forward to all the ongoing activities, the building project, new classes, meetings and music, as well as the Social Justice events. I especially look forward to having time to spend with you personally.

I want to thank all of you again for your participation and dedication. Whether you are a new member, an old member or a kindred spirit you are welcome and needed. With our combined effort this congregation has the heart, the spirit and the ability to make a difference in our own lives, our community and the world around us.

Each contribution of time, talent and treasure makes a big difference. I’m wishing each and every one of you a very happy and healthy 2015!

With Love, **Rev. Susan Berryman**

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**Social Justice** – to paraphrase from Russ's December President's Message – is central to our faith... We are a faith of “deeds, not creeds.”

Our UUCLC Social Justice (SJ) Committee has a full agenda for January, 2015. There will be many opportunities for the congregation to get involved, from participating in Discussion Group topics and pondering the Social Justice messages of our Sunday Services to marching in the Martin Luther King Parade and being inspired to help preserve our environment by national speaker, Reverend Michael Dowd.

Please read further and mark your calendars. More information will be provided on our website ([www.lakecountyuu.org](http://www.lakecountyuu.org)) and in announcements in Sunday bulletins.

Martin Luther King Parade, Saturday morning, January 17. Our theme is “Standing on the Side of Love” (SOS). SOS, an interfaith public advocacy campaign that seeks to harness love’s power to stop oppression, is particularly appropriate as we celebrate Dr. King's work. We will have a truck and trailer, and therefore welcome both marchers and riders. Sign up at church if you wish to participate. The parade is in Leesburg at 11 am, but marchers should be there at 10 am. You can also help with decorations that morning at 8 am at the Historical Museum in Leesburg. If you have questions, call Christie Cleveland at 989-627-1234.

Reverend Michael Dowd, Wednesday, January 28 at 6:30 pm in the Woman's Club. Michael Dowd and his wife Connie Barlow have traveled North America, presenting their case for “the marriage of religion and science”. We are looking forward to sponsoring Reverend Dowd and sharing his message with local environmental groups. Together with the Trout Lake Nature Center, Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society and the Beautyberry Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, UUCLC hopes to forge an ongoing plan for social action.

by **Chris Higgins**, UUCLC Social Justice and Environment Committee

### **Treasurer's Report**

The November 2013 income was \$3,420, including \$2,665 in pledges. This brought the income total to date to \$19,412, and the total pledges received to \$16,109. The November budgeted expenses were \$4,597, and \$551 were transferred to the Minister's fund, the Memorial Fund, and the Children's Fund. The expenses for the Ruth Gray Bequest Fund were \$788, including \$186 to the Lake County Tax Collector for property tax on the lot. The Board is preparing a Tax Abatement Request that will shield us from taxes in the future. This was not available to us for the first year of ownership of the lot, according to State Law.

... **Carl Hommel**

### **President's Message...**

I was privileged to hear the Rev. James Ishmael Ford speak at a session of General Assembly in June. Rev. Ford is the first UU minister to be acknowledged as a Zen master - the highest honor in Zen Buddhism. He talked about the Seventh principle. What he said spoke to my heart. He later adapted this talk into an article published in the Fall 2014 UU World Magazine.

He recounted how the Seven Principles of 1984 emerged from the General Assembly of that year as an update of the original Principles written when the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America merged in 1961. The Seventh Principle was added during this update. When the first six principles were reworked, they were, as Ford says, “mostly mom and apple pie.” They seemed like “the perfect work of a committee.” When the wording of the seventh was under consideration, the proposed wording was “We affirm and promote respect for the earth and the interdependence of its living systems.” From the floor, a UU minister named Paul L'Herrou suggested changing the proposed wording to a respect for “the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.” Ford, who remembers that moment as something akin to mystical, writes: “I suggest that in that hour our future was articulated with as much authority as if it were from the tongue of an ancient prophet.”

As we enter the new year, I invite you to think about what Ford meant when he said "our future was articulated" by the adoption of this principle. What is so special about its wording? Certainly, one thing this statement did was to extend the moral responsibility of UUs beyond our relationship to other human beings (although it certainly deepened our perception of that) toward the non-human world. Many have realized the importance of our connection to nature, or course, including our Pagan brothers and sisters, but the first person to actually apply Western ethics to it was Aldo Leopold. Leopold was a Professor of game management at the University of Wisconsin where he wrote his seminal book, *A Sand County Almanac*, published in 1949. Perhaps the most famous section is called, "Thinking Like a Mountain."

In this section, Leopold recalls being a young man working for the US Forest Service between 1909 and 1911. He tells us that he and his companions never passed up a chance to kill a wolf thinking that it meant more deer to hunt. He recalls seeing a mother wolf and her half-grown pups come over the crest of a hill. He and his companions had their rifles ready. They opened fire shooting both the mother and the pups. Leopold reached the mother wolf and watched as, he says, the "green fire" left her eyes.



That moment for Leopold was a sacred one. As he explains it, he had glimpsed a mystery that only the wolf and the mountain understood. It is foretastes of mystery like these that Annie Dillard, the theological thinker and nature writer of *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, calls "glimpsing the back of God." For Leopold, it was a life-changing moment. He had been a forester and land manager. In those days, wildlife management consisted largely of managing to protect cattle and to assure there were game animals for hunters. His vision was no longer that narrow. That green fire he had seen in the wolf's eyes led him to a vision of the inherent value and interconnectedness of all things and the need to protect them. That was part of what he meant by "thinking like a mountain." He invented a word for non-managed lands, which was really a kind of economic term -- he called it wilderness. The upshot of this thinking was an ethic that placed man not outside of nature, but in it. As he put it,

"...a land ethic changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it." It implies respect for fellow members (all other forms of life), and also respect for the community itself (the water systems, soils, wild plants -- the ecological system). "A thing is right," he writes, "when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." How I wish Leopold had been a UU.

Two people who subscribe to Leopold's ethic are Michael Dowd and his wife, Connie Barlow. They believe that the interdependent web of our existence is being threatened by climate change. They also believe it is our moral responsibility to do something about it. On January 25th, Connie will be speaking at our service, and on January 28th, at 7:00, Michael will be speaking here at The Woman's Club. As you probably know, the event is sponsored by our UU Social Justice and Environment Committee, along with The Trout Lake Nature Center, The Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society and The Beautyberry Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. I hope you will come.

...Russ

Here is a link to James Ishmael Ford's article, "Embracing a new Universalism," in the Fall 2014 issue of UU World.

<http://www.uuworld.org/spirit/articles/297037.shtml>

Here is a link to some information from the Huffington Post about Michael Dowd.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rev-michael-dowd/preaching-on-climate-change\\_b\\_2745317.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rev-michael-dowd/preaching-on-climate-change_b_2745317.html)

(Continued)

Finally, PBS is broadcasting a six- part program called "Sacred Journeys." I have seen the one on Lourdes and the one on Shikokku (which is a Japanese island where some Buddhists do pilgrimage). Very good. Here is a link:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/sacredjourneys/content/home/>

### **Finances for the New UUCLC Building**

Through the summer and autumn the Building Committee led by Carl Skiles and Betty Emery has been working on plans for the new building and the costs associated with it. There is good news – the generous bequest which UUCLC received from Ruth Gray will be enough to cover a building, necessary site improvements, and basic furnishings, with a modest reserve for future expenses. The Building Committee has done a great job and a financially prudent job in achieving this.

It hasn't been easy. The design process by the committee in consultation with the congregation came up with a desired floor plan. However when professional estimators did cost estimates for construction of that floor plan, the cost was too high for the budget. The Committee worked with the architect and others to make changes to the floor plan – decreasing the size of some rooms, removing a portico, and eliminating the outdoor social area and patio, plus identifying some smaller changes. The end result is a building which fits the budget and still has the essential features: a spacious sanctuary, a separate social hall, a functional kitchen, and several meeting rooms and offices for use until we can afford a separate RE building. There are sufficient funds to create parking and driveways around the building and to equip it with a good sound system and some other amenities.

However the budget doesn't allow for the beautiful details which we all hope to see in the building. There are lots of opportunities for special touches to be added to the building, perhaps as a memorial gift or other tribute donation from UUCLC members/friends. These sponsorship opportunities include things like:

- Colored glass feature window for sanctuary
- Grand piano for sanctuary
- Decorative wood ceiling for the sanctuary
- Upgraded entrance doors to foyer
- Furniture such as a lectern for the sanctuary
- Furnishings and window treatments for other rooms
- Art and statues for the building and grounds
- Special landscaping for sections of the grounds
- Restoring the outdoor social area and patio which had to be removed
- Green features to be added to the building
- Lots of other possibilities

The architect is now working on more detailed cost estimates for each room in the new building and we will soon be able to attach a specific dollar value to each of these possible sponsorship items. In the meantime, people who wish to make a memorial gift or other donation for the new building should be thinking about what they might like to sponsor. We have already had a couple of people come forward for discussions about specific sponsorship items.

If you wish to make a multiyear donation starting in tax year 2014, please just go ahead and submit your check before yearend, marking it as a donation for the building fund. We will make sure it is put toward whatever building gift you eventually decide upon.

The members of the Finance Subcommittee are happy to meet with you to chat about ideas for donations and the way in which you might like a donation to be recognized. There is no commitment associated with a discussion, and the discussion itself is completely confidential. The members of the Finance Subcommittee are Karen Woolhouse, Frank Bishop, and Bernie Greenberg. Please feel free to call or email or speak to any of us about your ideas.

The Building Committee hopes to break ground for the new building within a few months, subject to getting plans approved and permits from the city. There has been a lot of hard work by the committee members, and it is wonderful to think that UUCLC is getting closer to the exciting time when we will see the construction begin.

...Karen Woolhouse

### **Highlights from the December 11, Board of Trustees Meeting**

After the minutes of the November 13 meeting had been approved, Carl Hommel made the Treasurer's report. He noted we have \$78,039.45 remaining in the Ruth Gray Bequest Fund of the original \$100,000 dispersed by the UUA.

The Stewardship Committee does not have a chairperson at this time.

The Share-the-Plate rules were revised. A motion was made and approved that we would discontinue sharing the undesignated monies collected on Sunday mornings effective on December 14, 2014. The funds currently being held will go to charities and some to the efforts of the Social Justice Committee's programs.

The Building Committee activities were reported by Betty Emery who offered a resolution to have the Architect, Joe Rispoli, proceed with the next phase of the building design. The motion was approved. This will be based on the floor plan labeled #5F5.

The Social Justice Committee will take part in the MLK Parade in Leesburg, on January 17 and sponsor a presentation by Rev. Michael Dowd on January 28, 2015.

...Kit Tatum, Secretary

### **Any Interest in a Discussion Group on Money, Spirit, and Life?**

Thank you to everyone who made nice comments after our recent discussion group on "Generosity as a Spiritual Practice". As I mentioned that day, I got a lot of material from the Tapestry of Faith program, "The Wi\$dom Path: Money, Spirit, and Life". This program contains a series of twelve workshops with handouts and study questions.

I am interested in working through this program. Is anyone else interested in it? If yes, we could arrange to meet once each week or every other week to go through the group discussion topics. If interested, please send an email to me at woolhouse@earthlink.net. A brief description of the program is below.

*The Wi\$dom Path: Money, Spirit, and Life (Online). By Patricia Hall Infante and David H. Messner; Developmental Editor: Gail Forsyth-Vail.*

*How do our financial lives intersect with our religious, spiritual, and community lives? How can we have a relationship with earning, spending, giving, and investing that is spiritually healthy and grounded in our deepest values? While money is a pervasive part of our day-to-day existence, it often receives little attention in our religious lives. As religious people, we have much to gain by making money a part of an intentional, covenanted and faithful conversation together.*

...Karen Woolhouse

### **Thanks for Support of Greeting Card Sales**

Thank you all for your support of greeting card and holiday card sales to benefit the UUCLC Children's Program Fund. There is now over \$425. in the Children's Program Fund, coming from the greeting card sales. Thank you to Hinda Ramsay, who generously donated the greeting and holiday cards to make this possible.

...Karen Woolhouse

Some of **Susan Mulholland's Photo Cards** are still available. They will be found on Sunday on one of the side tables. They are 2\$ each, 4 for 7\$ or 8 for 14\$. They are good to:

- Send
- Frame
- Give as a hostess gift with a bow tied around
- Enjoy!

The proceeds will go the UU Youth program.

### **January Birthdays**

Royalene Millard, January 8

Bill Hermann, January 27