



The Communicator

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

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March Programs

11 AM Worship Service

March 1 – “In It for the Long Haul” with **Rev. Dr. Randolph Becker**. If our congregations are to be places of memory and hope, values and vision, they require a special nurture. We can't expect to find solace in the hard times if we haven't been there in the needful times. We can't expect to feel included if we haven't been there to welcome others. We can't treat our spiritual homes as if they were movie theaters which we only visit when the films suit us. Maybe that's because, in the end, it is not about us but about something larger than ourselves.

March 8 – “Generosity: A Spiritual Practice” with **Rev. Susan Berryman**. Generosity as a spiritual practice is honored in all world religions, including how to give in a way that is mindful and congruent with our values. Generosity is a powerful act. We've all been taught that it's better to give than to receive, but in reality it means that giving is essential in order to receive. We will discuss this natural law, this law of karma and how generosity is central to our spiritual community.

March 15 – “Money Can't Buy You Love?” with **Chris Higgins and Russ Littlefield**. March is our stewardship month. It's always difficult to ask people for money. We are not a hat-in-hand kind of congregation, but we can't keep our hats on our heads either if we want to be a truly dynamic congregation.

March 22 – “Flower Communion” with **Rev. Susan Berryman**. The flower communion reflects the universal beauty of every human in our vast variety of culture, size, shape and color. Like flowers no two of us are alike, but each is beautiful in our uniqueness. This service symbolizes that uniqueness and our coming together. The flower communion is a celebration of hope, because the exchange of flowers, symbolizes a willingness to walk together in a search of truth and compassion despite our differences. It is in community that it's possible for our humanity to grow, flower, and bear fruit. We never come to fruition alone in a vacuum, but only by touching and serving each other, and living in creative tension together.

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|-----------------------------|-------------|
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9:45 Discussion Group

March 1 – “Revisiting our Vision of Activities in our New Building” with **Karen Woolhouse**,

March 8 – “Open Forum” Please bring your topics,

March 15 – Tentative Program – “Natural Law and Human Nature” by **The Great Courses**,

March 22 – “Water, Water Everywhere, But None To Drink” by Linda Bystrak and Russ Melling,

March 29 – To Be Determined.

Dear Congregation,

In January we focused on compassion in action through social justice. I want to express my gratitude and appreciation for our Social Justice Committee and all the members and volunteers who helped by participating in the Martin Luther King parade and Michael Dowd / Sustainability event. I'd like to single out Frank Bishop for his vision and determination and Christie Cleveland for her leadership and creativity. Through these activities and ongoing commitments we are able to put “service as our law” into action. If you have an idea, a dream, a vision or suggestion please join the Social Justice Committee. Everyone is needed!

In February we focused on compassion in action through caring. Our We Care Committee is reformed and energized thanks to the leadership Pam Ward, Joanne Reilly, Debbie Miller and Marion Strahle and so many other volunteers to meet the needs of our congregation. We have had many needs of late for example, Frank and Carl's sudden major heart surgeries, Royalene's shoulder surgery, Gladys's hospitalization and long recovery, Eloise's house fire, Ozell's mother's death.

Through sharing and caring we participate in community as family. We widen our circle, open our hearts and deepen our spiritual awareness. We will all need special care and attention in our turn, so please take the opportunity to volunteer to participate while you are well and happy. Everyone is needed!

As we enter into the month of March we will be celebrating our unity and our caring in the format of compassion in action through generosity. May this month bring us ever closer together in our shared values and responsibilities as we continue to build a spiritual home where we all can grow and flourish.

May each of you know that you are needed, loved and cherished.

Rev. Susan Berryman

Highlights of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees February 12, 2015

The Treasurer's report was given by Chris Higgins. Our Treasurer, Carl Hommel, was ill at the time of this meeting. Chris was not able to present any account balances due the short time she has been filling in for Carl.

The Social Justice and Environment committee will guide us in joining in the George Fest parade in Eustis on February 28. The committee will also conduct the Discussion Group on March 22 about World Water Day.

The Worship, Research and Planning Committee (WRAP) have held two meetings. They are working toward Sunday services which will be transformative and have inclusiveness for all of the people who attend. This will include the arrangement of the elements of the services and make recommendations to the Sunday Services Committee when they advance beyond the formative phase.

Pam Ward reported the activities of the We Care Committee. She noted her co-chair Joanne Reilly, Chris Higgins and Susan Berryman were present at their first meeting on February 10. Pam noted the need for a member of the Congregation to carry on the work of this committee when the co-chairpersons leave for the summer months.

The Membership Committee was reported by Eleanor Fessler, the Chairman. We have six new members. Susan Berryman will be present on the second Sunday of each month after the COL Services to talk with people who are new to UU and those who are former members of other UU congregations.

Carl Skiles, the chairman of the Building Committee, reported, during the Discussion Group on February 5, on the building progress by and displaying the architectural drawings thus far created by the architect. Carl Skiles noted the Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing drawings will be fifty percent complete by February 11.

We have the Conceptual Site Plan from Griffey Engineering of Eustis, Florida. This drawing is identified as #13010 5, revision dated 02-05-15 Project #130105SPN. A copy of this site plan is being held in the files of Katherine Tatum, Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

Chris Higgins made a motion, which was seconded by Betty Emery: The Board of Trustees has reviewed this concept of the site plan and now can authorize the architect and civil engineer to proceed with the preparation of the final plans for the UUCLC church building based on this concept. The motion passed.

We have ordered ten new copies each of the two hymnals.

During the discussion of Continuing Concerns it was noted the Nominating Committee is required to present a slate of officers by March 15, which will be voted on at the annual meeting of the congregation on April 15, 2015.

The next meeting of the Board will be on March 16, at 127 N. Grove Street, at 1:00 p.m.

...Kit Tatum, Secretary

President's Message ...

Money Can't Buy You Love – Or Can It?

Every year, the UUA gives a \$1000 prize to the stewardship sermon judged the best among those submitted. This year the winner was Rev Greg Ward. He was interim minister at the Bull Run Unitarian Universalists in Manassas, VA. He starts his talk with a skillful retelling of a joke that is found in various iterations on the internet.

Let me start with the story of Matilda and Bert who lived sometime around the great depression in a quaint, small, Midwestern town. They'd been married forever and loved each other, but they'd become a little settled in their ways. For instance, it was spring – and every spring they visited the Blue Hill County Fair.

They'd been walking around most of the day when they came across a young man sitting next to one of those open cockpit airplanes with a sign that said: Ride for 2 – \$5 dollars. And Matilda said to Bert, "You know I sure would like to take one of those fancy aeroplane rides." To which Bert grumbled, "I don't think so. Five dollars is Five dollars." "But Bert," Matilda said, "I'm 72 years old. I might never get another chance to fly in one of those fancy aeroplanes." To which Bert again grumbled, "I don't think so. Five dollars is Five dollars."

It was at that point that the young man – who was the pilot – having overheard their conversation, interrupted. "Tell you what folks. I'll take the two of you up for an airplane ride for nothing -- free -- but here's the catch: ya can't say nothin. If I hear even one peep from either of you while you're in the air, you owe me five dollars. That means you can't scream, or yell or even gasp... if you do, you pay full price."

Well that sounded like a bargain that even Bert couldn't pass up and so Matilda and Bert climbed into the plane. Well, the pilot was pretty good at getting people to scream and he tried every trick he knew to make that happen. He did steep ascents and dives... he let the plane stall and wove around telephone poles... He did barrel rolls, loop de loops, and spins... But Bert and Matilda didn't say one single word.

After twenty minutes, the pilot finally gave up and brought the plane in for a landing. And while they were taxiing down the runway, he turned around to Matilda and said, "Well, I guess you got that plane ride for free. I did everything I could think of to get you to scream, but I didn't hear even one peep." To which Matilda replied, "Well, I was going to say something when Bert fell out of the plane... But then again, five dollars is five dollars."

I am calling attention to Rev Ward's sermon because March is our stewardship month. It's always difficult to ask people for money. Just ask the folks at NPR who do it on a regular basis. I once asked someone who worked for our public radio station in Binghamton, NY why they ran these annoying fund raising

campaigns and the answer went something like this: ‘You hate it, I hate it, but it works.’ NPR stations know if they don’t ask, they won’t get. The same is true for us.

Evidence is provided by Karen Woolhouse and the Building and Finance committee’s campaign soliciting large donations from our members to pay for furnishings and accoutrements for our new meeting house. We need to be doing that, of course, but we also need to keep in mind that we need money just to pay the rent for our meeting places, the Woman’s Club and the Grove Street Office. These rents are not cheap, at least not for us, and at the Grove Street office, we also pay utilities.

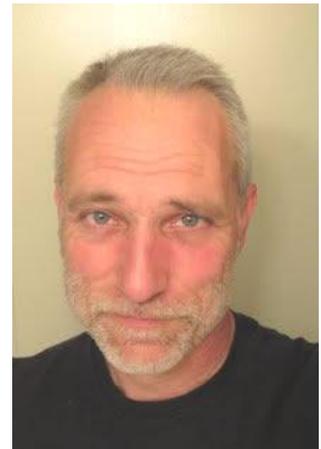
It’s kind of a beauty and beast type thing. We all like to give for a new piano or a beautiful hand-crafted chalice, but to give for rent and utilities is definitely unglamorous.

For something a bit more appealing, you might think about our programs – discussion group, social justice, and Sunday Service. We have existed for years with the generosity of Roger Seidner who not only has not charged us, but has given us substantial financial contributions as well. Now we are moving forward with our developmental minister, Susan Berryman who receives a small salary for an enormous amount of work. We bring in speakers on the Sundays that Susan or Roger is not speaking. We have had some excellent ones in the past and we will continue to have them, but they don’t work for free. With more funds we might be able to bring in a special speaker once or twice a year like the UU author and Maine Forest Service Chaplain, Kate Braestrup or the Zen Buddhist, UU minister, James Ishmael Ford. What if we were able to bring in guest musicians such as the UU folk singer, Peter Mayer? You get the idea. To borrow the language of public radio, if things like this are important to you, please consider increasing your contribution pledge from last year.

In the end, Bert’s tight-fisted approach to life cost him everything. At least Matilda got her airplane ride and, who knows, maybe a happier life.

Here is Rev Ward’s gloss on the Bert and Matilda story.

Now, some may defer to the wisdom of saints Lennon and McCartney who famously proclaimed: ‘money can’t buy you love.’ And we may argue that although money is certainly necessary and useful, love and relationship clearly deserves the greater ranking in our value system. So, why even bother talking about it? Let me, for a moment, play devil’s advocate and ask us to consider these challenging questions: Have you ever had to fly across the country to be with someone who needed you desperately? Send flowers to keep a relationship from melting down? Needed to take your son to the ballgame to see his hero? Have to take your daughter to the emergency room to treat her for a broken leg? Offer one of your children treatment for addiction after they tried to use drugs to mend a broken heart? Ever buy your spouse a coat or a more reliable car because your heart demanded reassurance that they are safe or warm? Are those not decisions of love? And is money not a central issue in each one of those decisions?



Sure, it’s possible to show love, and find love, and offer love, and even make love without it costing a dime. But try to sustain that love over the long haul... in the tough moments and tender spaces of this real world without spending any money... Try to keep love from growing anemic without any budget and you will find it very difficult to keep what connects you to this lovely person or place alive and vital. And if you ever have the misfortune of coming across a moment where something you do is construed by a loved one as a preference to love and protect your money over and above loving and protecting your relationship, you will quickly find yourself in the territory of broken hearts and regret.

I do not for one second believe that this congregation will enter the “territory of broken hearts and regrets.” We have proven that we are a generous congregation. We are building a new home through the generosity of Ruth Gray. We will have a home filled with beautiful as well as useful objects through the largesse of a few folks who love this congregation. And we will make that home just what it should be, a place for

transformation of individual lives and of our community through the love of many others whose consistent pledges come in from month to month. We do side with love and we know that it is not always free.

You can find Rev Greg Ward's complete sermon at:

https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/5_dollars_is_5_dollars_final.pdf

...Russ Littlefield

Donations for Beautification of New UUCLC Building

Significant monetary donations are starting to come in, for use by the Building and Design Committees to add beauty to the new UUCLC building. The generous bequest from Ruth Gray is enough to build a functional and serviceable building, but it will be up to the rest of us to provide the extra touches to make it beautiful – things like stained glass windows, or more attractive entrance doors, or furnishings and equipment for the rooms, or art, or statuary for the grounds.

To keep you informed, we will announce significant monetary donations first on Sunday mornings, and then here in The Communicator. Some donors will be named (with their permission), and others are choosing to remain anonymous at this time.

It was very appropriate that the first significant donation toward beautification of the new building came from a staunch supporter of Unitarianism and of UUCLC: Gladys Becker. Gladys is donating funds to purchase a panel of stained glass for the windows at the front of the new sanctuary, in memory of her husband, Bill Becker. Their four sons are contributing a second panel of stained glass, also in memory of Bill. Finally, Gladys is donating funds to purchase a lectern for the front of the sanctuary, in memory of her long time friend, Wilma Vogt. These memorials to Bill and Wilma will mean a lot to all who knew and respected them. Small brass plates on the lectern and by the window panels will identify the person being remembered, and the names of the donors. Thank you, Gladys, for your generosity in giving UUCLC these wonderful gifts for our new building.

It is thrilling to be able to announce that we will have a grand piano, suitable for the size of the sanctuary, in the new building. A donor who wishes to be anonymous at present has offered a donation of cash to purchase a suitable instrument for the church. This is an extremely generous donation, and will be much appreciated by the congregation every Sunday as we listen to the grand piano.

Also, another anonymous donor has committed \$5000 to be used as the Building and Design committees see fit. An undesignated gift, like this one, is very valuable to the committees as they can consider what will have the greatest impact on the beauty of the building.

The donations committee has additional significant donations in hand and will announce them on Sunday mornings. Thank you to all of our generous donors. You are creating a legacy for generations of Unitarians to enjoy.

If you might want to contribute \$1000 or more to the beautification of the new building, please speak to a member of the donations committee. We can talk with you about ideas for items to sponsor, and recognition for a gift, and the process. Any such discussions will be confidential and without any commitment. And of course donations to the new building are tax deductible.

The members of the donations committee are Karen Woolhouse, Bernie Greenberg, and Frank Bishop. We look forward to working with you.

...Karen Woolhouse

A History of our Building Project

We have been joined by many new members and friends over the past year. We also have had several winter residents return from their summer hiatus. It is a very good time to share with our congregation, a history of how we got to where we are now in regards to the building project of a new sanctuary.

In February 2012, one of our founding members, Ruth Gray, left this congregation a very generous bequest. The express purpose was for the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lake County to have a permanent building. Ruth's will stipulated that the project must begin within 5 years of her passing. The Board of Trustees immediately began planning for committees to bring Ruth's vision into fruition and utilize her gift to our congregation. There were many announcements over a period of several months to find members who were interested in serving on a new building committee. In late 2012 and early 2013, the Board came up with an initial slate of committee members for the building, to be headed by Carl Skiles. The committee was charged with finding a suitable building or building site for UUCLC's new spiritual home. The design sub-committee was also created by the Board for the purpose of determining the aesthetics of the structure. I was asked to head that committee along with my husband, Egor.

In the spring of 2013, the building committee began meeting to discuss our ideas for the project. Initially, the committee consisted of about 15 active Lake County UU members. However, committee membership has always been open to everyone in the congregation and over time has grown to include a majority of our members. In fact, at one meeting we counted over 40 members in attendance. All the meetings are announced and open to everyone so in reality, every person in the congregation is a member of the building committee thus making this a truly a collaborative effort!

We began the project by looking at potential sites for our new building. We started by looking at existing buildings that we could purchase and remodel to meet our needs. The area of our search was determined by a demographic study that identified areas of population with potential like-minded households. We also took into consideration the location of our existing meeting site, and where our current members live and how far they would have to travel to a new location. We were also looking for a site with good visibility and ease of access. Multiple sites were brought forward to the committee. Several were existing churches for sale and other sites were retail or office buildings. In all, to the best of my recollection, we considered nearly 20 potential buildings. During this process, we took multiple surveys of the congregation to determine what we were wanting in a new building for ourselves and also how we wanted to be able reach out to the community. Being able to accommodate a potentially growing congregation and having a flexible floor plan was a recurring response to our surveys. The building committee used the survey responses to determine the suitability of the sites we looked at. None of the existing buildings in our search area met the criteria the congregation was looking for.

We then expanded our search to include vacant land to build on. Our criteria remained the same - geographic area, visibility and ease of access but we also included the criteria of having existing utility services and being a wooded / attractive site to enjoy nature. We looked at over 30 potential sites, ranging in size from 1 acre to 30 acres. We narrowed down our choices by location, price and ease of development. We presented several potential sites to the congregation for input. There were about 5 total sites that met our criteria. With Board approval, we made an offer on a 5 acre site near Waterman Hospital. However, the owner of the site did not accept our offer and so we continued our search. Then we found our future site at the intersection of David Walker Drive and Mt. Homer Road. It also met all of our criteria and so we presented the new site to the congregation for input. The building committee scrutinized the property thoroughly before taking it to the Board for approval. In keeping with our UU principles, we had a detailed study done to determine if there were any endangered species that would be impacted by the construction of a new building. We also petitioned the City of Eustis to have the property incorporated into the city limits so we could hook up to the existing utility services on site. After that, in March 2014, the Board of Trustees agreed to make an offer to purchase the land and the property owner accepted.

The building committee in the late spring of 2014 began a search for an architect to help bring our ideas into reality. We interviewed 3 architects and, with Board approval, selected Joe Rispoli to design our building.

Joe has since taken all of our ideas and developed multiple renditions of a floor plan which the design committee presented to the congregation for input. After many months and quite a lot of excellent feedback, we have selected a floor plan that is the best of all of our ideas. When Joe has the construction drawings completed we will be putting the project out for bids for construction. Our current estimate is that we will be in our new building in the late spring of 2016.

There has been some comment made that it is not being environmentally responsible to build on vacant, undeveloped land. However, the property that UUCLC has purchased had already been developed as a former orange grove. The grove had become a victim of neglect and the freezes of the 1980's. The property is not a pristine piece of virgin land but we are planning to beautify the site and make it even more desirable for humans and other living species. The 5 acre area of the property which we are building on has a few beautiful trees which our site plan has taken into consideration and they will be left standing. The majority of the trees impacted by construction of our building will be sour orange tree root stock as well as some invasive tree species. The rest of the property will be left as-is for potential future use.

Additionally, there are several advantages to building our new spiritual home as opposed to purchasing an existing structure. The first is that with new construction, we can design the structure the way we want it – with the flexibility to grow with our needs. Secondly, it can be much more cost effective and efficient to incorporate energy efficient ideas into a new building as opposed to retrofitting an older existing structure. In keeping with our UU principles, we are going to consider using as many green building practices as possible. With this property, we have enough land to have a community garden, a memorial garden, nature paths, play areas, etc. We also have enough land to allow for future growth of our congregation. We are only limited by our imagination.

I wish to extend many thanks to everyone on the building committee and the design sub-committee who have spent hundreds of hours on this project. I also wish to thank everyone in the congregation who shared their ideas, participated in our many discussion groups and taken our multiple surveys. You have made this new home possible.

Betty Emery

March Birthdays

Julie Champion, March 11
Eleanor Fessler, March 12
Ted Fessler, March 22
Patti Stiner, March 27
Joyce Gray, March 30

Emerging programs of spiritual education for children and youth:

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lake County is in the midst of creating our own building on recently purchased land in this area of Central Florida. The desire for a curriculum and supplies to offer educational time for the children in this community is strong. Please consider participating in our continuing fundraising for this future program.

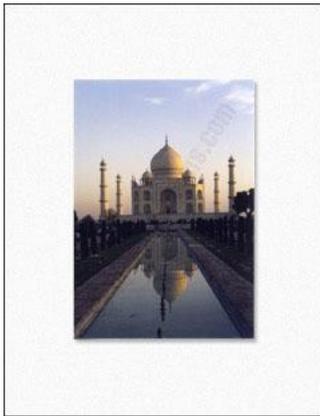
Angelight Gallery is open by appointment only. We have many unique cards and gifts and are located in Tavares just off of route 441. I have closed my arts company that I started in Boston in 1995. I am contributing all monies after artist payments to this endeavor. After the artist is paid, 100% of the balance of the sale goes directly to UUCLC, specified strictly for this purpose.

The original art and high end craft work are from American artists. Please feel free to contact Hinda at hindaramsay@gmail.com. Gallery appointments are set up 10 am to 10 pm, with the exception of Friday after sundown to Saturday sundown.

Angelight Gallery

to benefit the
UUCLC Children's Religious Exploration Program
funds = 100% of price following artist payments
by appointment only
contact Hinda at
hindaramsay@gmail.com
1208 Lakeshore Blvd.
Tavares, FL 32778

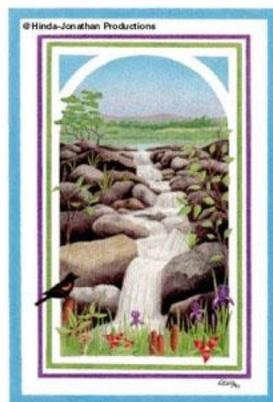
Cards • Pottery • Jewelry • Novelty Gifts
Original Art and Prints • One-of-a-kind Wreaths
Hand Painted Silk Scarves & Ties



Global Fine Art Photography by
Martina Marek of Cambridge



One-of-a-kind Hand
Made Wreaths



Original drawings from New England Artist Lexie Donahue, limited edition reproductions
Three greeting cards with either: "Thinking of You" or spiritual text all in hand calligraphy script.