

UNI-VERSE

Chair persons Bill Coburn & Ruth Deussen
December 2008

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Marion County., Florida, Inc.

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7280 SE 135th Street, Summerfield Fl. 34491-2510
Telephone Number 352-245-7944

Forum 9:30 **Sunday Services 10:30**

December 7th

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Andrea
Coburn

Children's RE Program: Carole Clarke, Mary
Hord, Fran Marciano or Joyce Mills

Coffee & Hospitality: Carole Clarke

Forum: George Erickson will discuss
"Laughing at Dying"

Greeters: P. K. Kobes, Bill Lowenberg (9:15),
Betsy & Gil Gilleland (10:10)

Service Leader: Robert Ridgard

Chalice Lighter: Eleanor Olson

Social Justice Moment: Allie Gore

Speaker: Robert P. Tucker, PhD - "What UUs
Don't Believe" This presentation is a reply to
the often heard falsehood that UUs can believe
anything they want. There are several things
we definitely do not believe.

December 14th

Building and Grounds Duty Person: George
Crichton

Children's RE Program: Carole Clarke, Mary
Hord, Fran Marciano or Joyce Mills

Coffee & Hospitality: Fran Marciano

Forum: Don Hill will discuss "What the Gospel
Really Teaches about Jesus"

Greeters: Karen Henkel-Reeves & Al Reeves
(9:15), Jacky & John McCabe (10:10)

Service Leader: Joyce Mills

Chalice Lighter: Dick Chady

Social Justice Moment: Ann Barefield

Speaker: James Priesmyer will present
"Thomas Jefferson: Reflections on John
Adams" Speaking as Thomas Jefferson
Randolph, grandson of Thomas Jefferson, the
speaker will give us insight into the
personalities of both Thomas Jefferson and
John Adams.

December 21st

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Cindy
Kuckel

Children's RE Program: NA

Coffee & Hospitality: Mary Hord

Forum: No Forum – set up for Holiday
Extravaganza

Greeters: Rod Sheffer, Joe Rada (9:15), Millie
& Jim Mitchell (10:10)**

**Greeter times may be adjusted due to holiday
extravaganza

Service Leader: N/A

Chalice Lighter: N/A

Social Justice Moment: N/A

Speaker: No speaker today. Join members
and friends for a holiday music sing-a-long,
entertainment including holiday videos by Rita
Ridgard, followed by a potluck and gift
exchange.

December 28th

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Bob
Zannelli

Children's RE Program: Carole Clarke, Mary
Hord, Fran Marciano or Joyce Mills

Coffee & Hospitality: Barbara Schuster

Forum: Allison Evans will discuss "Sheriff's
Youth Ranch Program"

Greeters: Joyce Mills, Diane Abbott (9:15),
Louise & Mark Colussi (10:10)

Service Leader: Doug Worthington

Chalice Lighter: Fran Marciano

Social Justice Moment: Bob Zannelli

Speaker: Jim McIntosh will present "Losing
Your Baggage" At the end of a year and the
beginning of the next we always make
promises to ourselves about the future. Maybe
instead we should consider pardoning
ourselves of past harmful experiences and go

into the new year without dragging all that old baggage with us.

Quotes - From Celia Friedenthal

There is no such source and cause of strife, quarrel, fight, malignant opposition, persecution, and war and all evil in the state as religion. Let it once enter our civil affairs, our government would soon be destroyed. Wisconsin State Justice H. S. Orton; Ruling against Bible Devotionals in Public Schools. March 18, 1890

Announcements

From the President – Ann Barefield President's Message for December

I have recently read a very interesting reading by Tom Owen-Towle who was co-minister of the First Unitarian Church of San Diego for 24 years. He is author of many books and one of them is titled Growing the Beloved Community. I could not help thinking of Dick Gilbert's message last week and about what could happen at UUFMC if we would all commit to find our gift and explore and exhibit them at the Fellowship.

Here is the devotional he wrote:

JUST A GUITAR PLAYER by Tom Owen-Towle

"I would like to do something worthwhile like perhaps plant a tree on the ocean, but I'm just a guitar player." Bob Dylan

Never minimize yourself. Don't underrate who you are and what you do. There should be tree planters and guitar players, but few of us will likely be versatile enough to excel at both.

Therefore, find your gift, explore it and exhibit it.

An incredible amount of humanity is wasted when we fantasize about being someone other than who we are.

In order for the UUFMC to thrive and continue to be the very exciting place it was on Sunday, November 23, 2008, we need the gifts that each person in this Fellowship has to offer. There are openings for your gifts on every committee and on the Board. Please consider exploring and exhibiting your gifts. Many of you are already doing so but we need all of you. What is your gift? Is it finance, music, teaching, speaking, landscaping, fundraising, social justice, or something else? Join those who are already exhibiting their gifts and help us make the UUFMC all it can be.

Board of Trustees Meeting: *The December meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held in the Conference room at the Fellowship at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3, 2008. Members and friends are welcome to attend.*

Congregational Meeting: *A brief congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, December 7th immediately following the service. The purpose of the meeting is to approve the revisions to the bylaws. The bylaws have already been sent to you by e-mail and we ask that you review them carefully. The changes are in bold ink. If you have questions or concerns, please contact one of the Board members.*

Board Resignations: *Pat Collins has resigned from the Board because she has to be away often and cannot attend Board meetings. Ed Hord has been forced to resign due to health reasons and a desire to spend more time with his family. Both Pat and Ed will be recognized for their service to the UUFMC at the annual meeting in March. According to the bylaws, Fran Marciano has been appointed by Board to serve for the remainder of term for Pat Collins. The Board will appoint a member to complete Ed's term at the December Board meeting.*

Annual Meeting: *The Annual Meeting of the congregation has been scheduled for Sunday, March 15, 2009. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us on that date to hear the committee reports, recognize those who have served on the Board and chaired committees, and conduct the business of the congregation.*

Welcome Back to Snowbirds: It is wonderful to have the snowbirds back!! You are a vital part of our congregations and we are pleased to have you back.

Moving Roughly West: If you were here on November 23, 2008, you were in for a pleasant surprise. We had 150+ people in attendance and were honored to have Rev. Richard Gilbert, his wife, Joyce, and a friend deliver a very inspiring message. We continue to move roughly west more quickly than we ever dreamed and it is very exciting!!

The UUFMC Library is Open!
All UUFMC member's and Friends are reminded that we have a large selection of library books available to check-out. I have taken the time to type up a list of all the titles and author's that are in our library. This list of books, by Title, is in the White Binder located on the large desk in the library / office room (middle room between the Meeting Room and RE Room). A Check-Out register is also in this binder for anyone desiring to check-out a book. The books are listed by location of bookshelf **Number** and then shelf **Letter** on that bookshelf. I will gladly email a copy of the list of books to anyone that desires it, in either rich-text format or pdf format. Email me at: rmccricket@hotmail.com. Thank you. George Crichton

Report on the North East Cluster meeting - Joyce Levi
At a very upbeat Northeast Cluster meeting in Marion County recently, plans were begun for the joint Northeast and Southeast Clusters meeting on Saturday, **March 14, 2009**. The meeting will be held at the midway point – the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Vero Beach.

The featured speaker will be Meg Riley, director of UUA's worldwide Advocacy and Witness Program. Tentatively she's set to share with us recent developments regarding Discrimination and Acceptance of Gays, Lesbians and Transvestites in the United States and elsewhere, followed after lunch by discussions on the greening of our sanctuaries. Workshops will be a part of the day. Some home hospitality will be available. Mark your calendars now for an important and exciting day in the Florida District! I will have more information in January.

Julie Drexel (and "Ella")
I am Julie Drexel and I volunteer for a group (Heroes Assistnace Dogs) that trains and places service dogs with disabled people. The current pup I'm training is "Ella" she is a 5 month old black lab. Part of her training involves taking her out in public and getting her used to different surroundings. In the beginning of her training she is not to be noticed when we go someplace- meaning no petting, talking to, or anything that will distract her from her training. She is still young and looking for a playmate everywhere we go. I enjoy bringing her to service and hope we can all work together in her training. It is my hope that one day she'll be a perfect service dog- until that point we train and practice. If she is disruptive I promise to remove her and try again the following week- I do not want to ruin anybody's time at worship. Thank you- Julie Drexel (and "Ella")

FREE PUBLIC FORUM

“HOLIDAY TRADITIONS
ACROSS AMERICA”

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2008, 7:00 P.M.

TEMPLE SHALOM
COUNTY ROAD 101

PRESENTATIONS IN MUSIC, SONG, DANCE
AND RITUALS

BY THE VILLAGES AFRICAN AMERICAN CLUB
NATIVE AMERICAN FAMILY TRIBE
ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF OCALA
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST AT THE
VILLAGES
TEMPLE SHALOM

Sponsored by Temple Shalom and The United Church of Christ at The Villages. For more information, call 352-750-5446

Finance – Jim McIntosh
To all Chairpersons and Group Leaders:
Please get Budget items for the 2009 - 2010 Fiscal Year to me by December 1st. Thanks Jim - plmcinto@comcast.net

- Travel and stay in homes of people who share your ideals
- Host travelers in your home to meet new friends and earn extra money

The UU bed and breakfast directory *UU're Home* (formerly *Homecomings*) offers a network of hosts in the United States (and a few abroad) who enjoy meeting new friends and are happy to open their home to like-minded people. Travel to different cities and stay in reasonably priced accommodations or become a host and enjoy meeting new friends.

For more information, visit www.UUreHome.com or write to info@uurehome.com



Calling Talented Members and Friends

The Program Committee is looking for members and friends who would like to participate in the Holiday Party by sharing their talent. Do you sing, play an instrument, write poetry or an essay? We are looking for you!

Contact any member of the Program Committee: Mary Ann Donato, Rona Gold, Phil Lindsley, Fran Marciano, Bob annelli, Doug Worthington, Ruth Deussan or Allie Gore. Thank you !

DECEMBER - LET'S CELEBRATE - DECEMBER

Join members and friends **December 21st** for our annual Holliday Party ! We will sing-along with holiday songs, be entertained, exchange gifts and view Rita's inspiring and fun videos. Following this fun service we will share a potluck

meal together. The Sunday Service Program Committee needs your help to make this annual event a success. A gift exchange will be part of our holiday extravaganza on 12/21. Please bring a wrapped gift (no more than \$5.00) and marked for a male, female, or neutral. Rona

NEW - above
OLD - below

From the Building & Grounds Committee:

With the tightness of UUFMC's budget in mind the Building & Grounds Committee is trying to do its part in cutting costs where ever possible. One such area is the upkeep and cleaning of our building. We are currently spending over \$3,500.00 annually on the cleaning of the interior of our building. This money could be saved to be used elsewhere within the budget where there are more needy expenditures if we were able to clean the building ourselves - **a volunteer workforce made up of our members and friends**. Ideally, if we had 5-6 people volunteer once-a-day each week, the cleaning could be accomplished in an hour or two. If we had enough volunteers to do this we could have rotating "teams" of people who would be assigned their week and then that team would not be assigned again until the other teams have done their week (possibly months in-between).

The Building & Grounds Committee is, therefore, soliciting inputs from members and friends as to the feasibility of this idea, and requesting that all members and friends who would be willing to volunteer a couple of hours a week (or month, if enough volunteer) to put a little elbow-grease into cleaning our building, AND at the same time saving our Fellowship some much-needed monies, contact either Bob Gore (BobGore@earthlink.net) or George Crichton (rmccricket@hotmail.com). Thank you.

RUMMAGE SALE! RUMMAGE SALE!

Such a Deal!

Dec 7th-10th are set aside for our UUFMC Rummage Sale extravaganza. Here's how you can be a part of this wonderful event. Donations: Everything EXCEPT computers and computer related items, and large furniture. All

items must be small enough to carry and fit into vehicles.

Dec 6th (Saturday) Time: 10-4 All donations will be accepted at the fellowship. If you don't drive, contact Rona Gold at 352-750-3913 or gold339@comcast.net to see about having someone pick up your items.

Dec 7th : Time 12-4 after services & Dec 8th Time: 10-4 Sale for members/friends only

Dec 9th & 10th Time: 10-4 Sale will be open to the community at large
Unsold items will be donated to charities supported by the UUFMC
In the interest of conservation and cost, please bring bags to hold your purchases. If you have extra bags you'd like to donate during November, please bring them to services and they'll be collected in the back of the room.

Would YOU like to help?

Members and Friends are invited to participate in the Sunday services in a variety of ways. Join in! We need YOU!:

Chalice Lighters - selects a brief reading which pertains to the service topic and read when lighting

chalice and close the service with a second brief reading. (Sign up sheets on the tables in the rear of the

room. Questions: Rona 750-3913 or gold339@comcast.net)

Joys and Concerns Leaders- read from the script provided and also from the book where members and

friends are invited to write their joys and concerns (Sign up sheets on the tables in the rear of the room.

Questions: Mary Ann 751-7543 or mimadonato@yahoo.com)

- **Greeters** stand at the double doors in front and welcome members, friends and visitors as they enter for Sunday service . Assist visitors as needed, collect offering, take microphones to participants during discussion and reflection period after the presentation (Sign up sheets on the tables in the rear of the room. Questions: Carolyn: 307-4682 or abcdenison@yahoo.com)
- **Hospitality** assistants - help set up, serve and clean up kitchen area for morning coffee before the Forum and for coffee and

snacks after the service for coffee hour (Wendy 465-3450 or codysm695@aol.com)

- **Hospitality** assistants - bring baked or bought goodies for coffee hour following the service. You can bring them when convenient and we will freeze them until needed. (Wendy 465-3450 or codysm695@aol.com .

An invitation to help beautify our gathering space.....

We would enjoy flowers or greenery or seasonal decorations for the table on the stage and/or in the vestibule (or both). Something to reflect the beauty of the seasons. Contact members of the Program Committee. Mary Ann Donato Judy Kemp, or Allie Gore.

Dinners for Eight

It's that time again! Sign up to participate in this fun activity. Participants will attend four potlucks with 6 or 7 other folks. The potlucks will take place January through May. Diners and hosts are randomly assigned for each dinner. Once you know who is in your group you contact them and arrange your gathering. Participants share in creating the meal. By the way the meal could be brunch, lunch, dinner, a picnic, a pizza party, hor d'ourves or whatever you and your guests would like. That is up to the host. The goal is to provide an opportunity for members and friends to get to know one another better by sharing a meal and conversation. Sound like something you would like to do? Rush to the information table in the back of the sanctuary and sign on the dotted line. You will be contacted with the assignment in December. Thank you.

CONNECTIONS

is the name we are giving our new small group program. Essentially, we will be creating "smaller fellowships within the Fellowship." These groups of eight to ten people will meet on a regular basis with their main goal being to get to know each other better. Guided by trained facilitators, group members will learn, talk, play and work together. In that process members will build friendships, learn to care for one another and grow in understanding. Other Unitarian Universalist communities have experienced a great deal of success with these programs. Participants say that they feel better connected and happier with their lives after taking part in one of these groups; however, these

meetings are not intended to be therapy. They also are not a religion course or a replacement for Sunday services.

The Connections steering committee, Wendy Griffith, Ann Barefield, Allie Gore and Fran Marciano, has been hard at work developing this program. We expect to begin facilitator training in November, introduce the program to the Fellowship and sign up participants in February and have groups ready to roll in March. Updates on our progress will be appearing in the Universe. Please consider getting CONNECTED!

Budget Process Need Helpers

The Finance Committee is beginning the process of developing the Operations Budget for fiscal 2009 - 2010 which will begin on **April 1, 2009**. In addition to those on the finance committee I would like to invite any member or friend to participate in the process as well. We would like to coordinate the budget process with the drafting of pledge calendar. With this in mind December 31st is the goal for completion of the draft budget.

The fiscal 09-10 budget will be highly dependent on the success of the pledge drive. The draft that we will produce by December 31 will be revisited over the following two months of January and February as the pledge drive materializes. Budget adjustments will be made during that time period if and as they are needed.

Constructing a budget is a serious process. A budget sets forth the Fellowship's desired programs for the coming year. By helping in its construction you will be bringing those desires closer to realizations.

If you would like to help, contact me, Jim McIntosh. Thank you.

Writers Group

Due to the holidays, The Writers' Group is scheduled for **Dec 4 from 10-noon, the 11th and 18th**, and then skip to **Jan 8th**..

Fund Raising Committee:

The Fund Raising Committee has been contacted by Rona Gold who would like to organize a **Rummage Sale**. Rona's planned dates are **December 7-10**

(Sunday 12-4 & Monday 10-4 Members & Friends ONLY. Wednesday 10-4 Community Welcomed).

Sunday and Monday would be reserved for the members and friends of the fellowship to shop.

Tuesday and Wednesday would be advertised for the local community.

Items not sold will be donated to charities we support, Habitat for Humanity and Goodwill.

If you are willing to donate items and/or volunteer to help at the sale, please contact **Rona at 352-750-3913** or gold339@comcast.net .

Fund Raiser: Wine tasting

Fund Raiser: Wine tasting at the Klein's on **December 5th**, Friday evening at **4:00**. **White wines** will be featured. Details will follow. **Limit is 15**. Mark your calendar and plan to sign up in the near future. Sign-up sheet is on the back table. Barbara Schuster

Request for Biographies

Each month we like to feature one or two folks in the Uni-Verse by printing a 3-4 paragraph autobiography that you email to me. I then forward it to Bill Coburn to be printed. We would like your "story" if you wish to tell it. It helps people to get to know you. Or...Just drop me a one line saying that you prefer not to do this. That way I will stop emailing you for it. Thanks. Carolyn Denison

A request for other teachers--

We have an untapped well of brilliance among us. Art, Music, informal discussions of Unitarianism, American history or Great members of American history (Ben Franklyn, Thomas Jefferson...) Mayan culture, Great Short stories.... If you love to teach, think something up. If you are in love with a subject and have read a book on it, come teach in our series.

What do you love to talk about? What do you want to hear about? We can be cheaper than Lifelong Learning College. Contact Barbara Schuster.

UUSC holiday cards

The Social Justice Committee will have UUSC holiday cards **on sale during the month of November**. The special price is \$5 for a pack of ten cards.

Happy Birthday to the following UUFMC members & Friends

12/12	Hope Deckman
12/08	Mary Ann Donato
12/29	Mike Donato
12/20	Celia Friedenthal
12/19	Oakley Kelch
12/14	Bob Kelley
12/16	Cory Pearson

Getting to Know Us

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We would like your "story" if you wish to tell it. It helps people to get to know you. Or...Just drop me a one line saying that you prefer not to do this. That way I will stop emailing you for it. Thanks. Carolyn Denison

An example follows

Barbara Schuster (No picture available)

I was born in New York and lived there until 2006 when I moved to Florida. I have lived in mid-state New York for a brief time, but my "roots" are on Long Island. I graduated from Adelphi University / South with a BA in Education and taught elementary school for 34 years. My masters was done at Stony Brook University which I did part time while working. While in New York I became aware of the UU Fellowship in Stony Brook, but did not join.

My training and hobbies include educational research while chairperson for my building research team; mentor teacher in the NYS Mentee Program; reading; creative writing; decorative art as student, teacher and for retail sales; watercolor and oil painting for personal enjoyment; and a lover of theater, music, art, opera and ballet. I did not begin singing until I joined the UUFMC choir and now take voice lessons as well.

I am delighted that I have found the UUFMC. I consider it the best place for me to continue to grow because our fellowship strives to enrich and encourage the best in all of our members.

UUA Trustee Tidbits

Joan Lund, December 2008

At the UUA Board of Trustees meeting in October we had the opportunity to learn from representatives of the Congregation-Based Community Organizing (CBCO) organization. I was impressed by their purpose, scope, work, and dedication to social justice organizing in congregational communities. In the report to the District following the BOT I indicated I would devote one or two columns to this excellent organization. This is the first of two efforts to let you know the importance of this organization, and how your congregation might benefit from their expertise.

Part of our UU mission is to work beyond the walls of our congregations and be involved in building bridges across the barriers that separate people from each other. CBCO offers a way to be part of the work we are called to do. The heart of being in right relationship is the concept of covenant. CBCO deepens and expands the possibility for us to be in right relationship through covenant with those who are not in our congregations. Covenant is a step in the direction of healing the "us-against-them" polarization of people.

Our UU history is rich in the tradition of pursuing social justice through the work of our UUA programs, affiliate organizations, the UU Women's Federation, and social justice initiatives of all types. We have worked for civil and human rights in many ways; however we continue to face challenges within our congregations related to reaching our potential to engage in efforts for social justice, and these problems need addressing. Those things that get in the way of more effective justice work include the lack of relationship in necessary venues, falsely assuming the problems of poverty and systemic racism do not affect us, lacking the avenues to pursue social justice, and focusing on short-term solutions instead of long-term change.

Our UUA affirms as one of our principles a faith and belief in democracy. It has become obvious, especially after the mandate of our recent national

election, a force for democracy is becoming stronger in our nation. There are many social justice efforts that operate largely outside the media spotlight and these efforts represent a significant force for change and renewal of democratic participation. This force is CBCO. Also referred to as "broad-based, faith-based, or institution-based community organizing" this model of local and statewide activism brings people across race and class, mainly through congregations from diverse religious traditions. Although community organizing has been a part of our society for over 100 years, congregation-based efforts are the focus of CBCO. In the U.S. there are close to 200 local CBCO groups, and currently 100 of these groups are UU congregations.

*I will continue this column in January. Stay tuned but if you cannot wait to learn more about CBCO, a telephone call would be welcomed, 813-931-9727 or I can be reached at jlund@uua.org. May each one of you experience a **blessed and warm holiday season**. Despite the many problems we, as a society or individually, may have there is much for which to be thankful. Think on these things.*