

UNI-VERSE

Chair persons Bill Coburn & Ruth Deussen
March 2009

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

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 829, Summerfield, Florida 34492

Email: uufmc@comcast.net Web <http://www.uufmc.org>

7280 SE 135th Street, Summerfield Fl. 34491-2510

Telephone Number 352-245-7944

Forum 9:30 Sunday Services 10:30

March 1st

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Robert Tucker- "Jesus the 1st Unitarian" Historically, "Unitarians" were so-called because they denied the Trinity, held God to be one (not three), declared Jesus human, not divine. ("Universalists" were so-called because they believed in universal salvation [all people saved] with no eternal damnation for anyone.) While Jesus was not a Universalist (since he believed some would fry in Hell forever and ever, Amen!), he was the first Unitarian in that he understood he was human, not divine, and did not know anything about any Trinity--which was a post-Jesus doctrine created by the Catholic Church after the time of the New Testament.

Forum: Bob Zannelli will present "Liberal Theism and Humanism"

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Open: Jacky McCabe, Close: Bob Feser or Wendy Griffith

A/V Operator: Bob Zannelli

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

Coffee & Hospitality: Jacky McCabe & Betsy Pinter

Greeters: Ann Barefield & Jim Mitchell (9:15), Andrea Coburn & Millie Mitchell (10:10)

Service Leader: Doug Worthington

Chalice Lighter: Jim McIntosh

Social Justice Moment: To be Announced

March 8th

Speaker: Castlebay will perform "Cross Quarter Days" These programs explore the lore and symbolism of the four seasonal Celtic holidays of Samhain (November), Imbolc (February), Betaine (May) and Lughnasa (August). Music, poetry and reading illuminate a journey around the wheel of the year.

Forum: George Erickson will present "Things We've Believed"

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Open: Bill Denison, Close: Bill Denison or Ann Barefield

A/V Operator: George Crichton

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

Coffee & Hospitality: P K Kobes & Bill Lowenberg

Greeters: Al & Betsy Pinter (9:15), Bill Coburn & Bob Gore (10:10)

Service Leader: Ann Barefield

Chalice Lighter: Joyce Mills

March 15th

Speaker: Ann Barefield will present: "Valuing Our Diversity" The three major points of the presentation will be: (1) What is diversity? (2) What is the value of being a diverse organization? (3) How can what we have learned from the first two points be applied to this organization?

Forum: No Forum. Annual Reports.

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Open: Wendy Griffith, Close: Cindy Kuckel

A/V Operator: Jim Mitchell

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

Coffee & Hospitality: Wendy Griffith & Hope Deckman

Greeters: Cindy Kuckel & Joe Rada (9:15), Bob & Judy Kemp (10:10)

Service Leader: Joyce Mills

Chalice Lighter: Bill Coburn

Social Justice Moment: To be Announced

March 22nd

Speaker: Jim McIntosh will present "Ella's Care Kit" In December of 2008 a lady named Ella Louise Burke passed away. Among the things she left behind was instructions for a "care kit" that contained all the things she felt would remind us of what was necessary in forming and preserving a loving relationship with other people.

*Forum: George Erickson and helpers will present a skit:
"Garrison Keillor is a Closet Unitarian PART 1"*

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Open: Barbara Schuster or Mary Hord, Close: Bob Kemp

A/V Operator: Roy Love

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

Coffee & Hospitality: Barbara Schuster & Mary Hord

Greeters: John and Lucia Beall (9:15) Ed Hord & Ken Loebel (10:10)

Service Leader: Pat Collins

Chalice Lighter: Pat Wilson

March 29th

Speaker: Ron Vierling will present "Chasing Melville's Whale, Part Two – Ishmael in the Masthead"

*Forum: George Erickson and helpers will present a skit:
"Garrison Keillor is a Closet Unitarian PART 2"*

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Open: Fran Marciano, Close: Bob Gore or Barbara Schuster

A/V Operator: Jim Swickard

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

Coffee & Hospitality: Betsy Gilleland & Fran Marciano

Greeters: Betsy & Gil Gilleland (9:15), Bill & Carolyn Denison (10:10)

Service Leader: Dick Chady

Chalice Lighter: Barbara Schuster

Social Justice Moment: To be Announced

From The Wit & Wisdom of Benjamin Franklin - Celia Friedenthal

What is more valuable than Gold? Diamonds.

More valuable than Diamonds? Virtue

Announcements

President's Message – Ann Barefield

The 2008-2009 year has been a busy one at the UUFMC. We completed our beautiful new building and moved into it in May. It was an exciting time for all of us. Since that time, we have grown to approximately 115 members and have witnessed the addition of many new programs because we have had a place to meet. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the Annual Meeting on March 15, 2009. At 9:30 a.m. the committee chairs will share their accomplishments for this church year. At 11:30 a.m. we will have the business meeting. We will vote for bylaws changes, the annual budget, the Board nominees and the nominating committee for the coming year, and the opportunity to affiliate with the Humanist Association. Information about each of these business items can be found in this edition of the Uni-Verse. After the business meeting, we will have a potluck luncheon. I hope you will plan to attend and bring your favorite dish to share.

*April 1, 2009 will be the beginning of our new Fellowship year. The UUFMC calendar year runs from April 1 to March 31. As we begin this new year, the Board and the Leadership Team (committee co-chairs) are planning many activities to meet the needs of our members and friends. These people work hard throughout the year to try to provide the programs that are meaningful to each member and friend. Because we are such a diverse group it is hard to **meet the needs** of all the members and friends **all the time**. We hope you will enjoy the programs that are most meaningful to you, learn from those programs that do not happen to be your major interest, and be tolerant of those programs with which you disagree. Because we have such different needs, we cannot always agree. However, we can disagree with caring and concern for our members and friends who think differently from us. According to Eleanor Holmes Norton, **the only way to make sure people you agree with can speak is to support the rights of people you don't agree with.***

Perhaps you too will find the following poem by John Godfrey Saxe meaningful.

*So oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean,
And prate about an Elephant
Not one of them has seen!*

1887: referring to the Buddhist fable of the Blind Sages and the Elephant, found in the Udana, chapter 6, section 4

I hope we will all try to understand each other's meaning and be tolerant when we disagree. Ann Barefield

Choir Reorganization: *During the next few weeks, the choir will be reorganizing. Ruth has been doing all the jobs for too long and she needs help. She has assured us that she will not leave us without someone to play but she needs relief. Thus, here are the plans: Al Pinter will continue to serve as the director until he leaves the middle of May and Ann Barefield will direct the choir when he is not available. She has a minor in music and has directed choirs in public schools, colleges and churches. Shirley Loebel and Sylvia Kelch will play for the services and coordinate the music for the Sunday service. Ruth Prentice will play for the special music and the choir. The members of the choir committee are Margaret Dawson, interim chairperson; Ann Barefield, Board liaison; Al Pinter, Director; Shirley Loebel, music co-coordinator for the Sunday service; and Linda Pelletier,*

music librarian. Al Pinter and Ann Barefield are planning a presentation on reading music and congregational singing for a Forum in April.

We have been fortunate to have the leadership provided by Ruth Prentice for so long and are looking forward to her continued leadership as she plays for the special music and the choir. **Thank you Ruth!!**

We Need You: I know there are those of you who have music talent you are hiding under a bushel. Sylvia Kelch has come forward to play for the service and I hope you will take her lead and join the choir. If you can direct, we need you! If you can sing, we need you! If you play an instrument, we need you! Won't you join us and be part of this group that adds so much to our service each Sunday? Please contact Al Pinter or Ann Barefield if you are willing to volunteer to sing in the choir. The choir meets from 1:00 -3:00 p.m. each Thursday from September to May.

March Board Meeting: The March Board meeting will be Wednesday, March 4, 2009. If you have items for the Board meeting agenda, please send them to Ann Barefield as soon as possible.

Annual Meeting: Our Annual Meeting will be March 15, 2009. The committee chairpersons will give their reports at 9:30 a.m. during the Forum time. The business meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m. immediately following the service. The agenda for the business meeting will include the following: election of Board members, vote on Bylaws changes, vote on the budget, election of nominating committee, vote on affiliation with the Humanist Association, and recognition of retiring committee chairs and Board members. There are messages from the Nominating Committee, the Bylaws Committee, the Finance Committee, and Bob Zannelli about these business items in this copy of the Uni-Verse.

Covered Dish Luncheon: There will be a covered dish luncheon immediately after the Annual Meeting on March 15th. Please plan to attend and please bring your dishes that have to be kept warm or cold in a thermal container. We do not have places to keep large numbers of dishes warm or cold. This is a time for members and friends to enjoy a luncheon together before our Snowbirds begin heading roughly north.

From the Nominating Committee

Following are the nominees for officers, Board members and Nominating Committee. These nominees will be voted on by the members at the annual meeting on March 15, 2009.

Position	Name	Term
President	Ann Barefield	2 years
President-Elect	Jim McIntosh	2 years
Treasurer	Dick Chady	1 year
Member at Large	Cecelia Everist	1 year
Member at Large	Allie Gore	2 years
Member at Large	Fran Marciano	2 years
Member at Large	Bob Zannelli	2 years

2010 Nominating Committee: Fran Marciano, Bill Coburn and Millie Mitchell.

<i>Birthday</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>First Name</i>
03/04	Prentice*	Ruth
03/05	Bargar*	Bob
03/07	McCabe*	Jacky
03/08	Ogren*	Helen
03/13	Powell	Courtney
03/13	Allen*	Mary
03/15	Coburn*	Bill
03/17	McIntosh*	Patricia
03/26	Pinter	Betsy
03/26	Refshauge	Chuck

Getting to Know Us



Pat McIntosh

Originally from Aurora, Illinois, I grew up in several different locations due to my father's employment as a railroad employee. I graduated from high school in Centralia, Illinois in 1959. I Graduated from Southern Illinois University with a degree in education in 1965. I have a masters degree in educational administration, from Bradley University and an education specialist degree from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

I have two grown children and I proudly claim another son, Jim Jr., whom I helped raise.

My career included eight years as an elementary teacher and 25 years as administrator. I worked the final sixteen years in Wisconsin. Of course, I am also proud to claim my work inside the home as mother, 4-H leaders, and wife for all those years.

My mother, Hedy, who will be 101 in March, lives in Ocala. As I am the only family member nearby, requires attention and time as well.

During my lifetime, I have been an avid knitter, reader, swimmer (when pools or lakes were available) and have had a lifelong interest in politics.

I love Jim McIntosh, computers and our little dog, Sammy, whom we adopted once we moved to Florida.

2009 -10 Budget Proposal -For Congregation Consideration

Revenues

General Pledges	\$58,000.00
Donations & Gifts	\$17,500.00
Other Revenue (Interest, Misc.)	\$3,200.00
Total Revenues	\$78,700.00

Expenditures

Sunday Service Program Total	\$8,450.00
-------------------------------------	-------------------

Speakers	\$8,000.00
Hospitality	\$0.00
Sunday Service Support	\$450.00

Facility Program Total	\$52,493.20
-------------------------------	--------------------

Debt Service	\$35,893.20
Building Maint.	\$6,500.00
Ground Maint.	\$1,500.00
Utilities	\$4,700.00
Insurance	\$3,900.00
Sound	\$0.00
Decoration & Furnishing	\$0.00

Dues & Fees Total	\$9,510.00
------------------------------	-------------------

Out Reach Programs Total	\$0.00
---------------------------------	---------------

Music Program Total	\$350.00
----------------------------	-----------------

Committee Programs Total	\$0.00
---------------------------------	---------------

General	\$0.00
Gift and Memorial Fund	\$0.00
Membership	\$0.00
Fund Raising	\$0.00
Care Committee	\$0.00
Religious Education & Child Care	\$0.00

Administrative Programs Total	\$384.00
--------------------------------------	-----------------

Board of Trustee	\$0.00
Finance Committee	\$0.00
Data Processing	\$384.00
Finance Committee	\$0.00
Officer Expense	\$0.00
Office Equipment	\$0.00
Staff Training & Travel	\$0.00

Advertizing & Communications Total	\$7,500.00
---	-------------------

Total Budget	\$78,687.20
---------------------	--------------------

This budget represents the status of pledging at this point. It is anticipated that additional pledges will be received with time. The congregation will be asked to give authority to the Board of Trustees to modify the budget as additional revenues become available.

The UU Singles Group – The Singles will meet on the last Sunday of the month (**March 29th**) after the service.

The UU Book Club – The Book Club will meet on the last Friday of the month, every month in our UUFMC. (**March 27th** at 10:00 a.m.) The book to be discussed in March is *Unknown* at this time.

MARCH SEPARATE TABLES will be at **Little Joey's** Italian Restaurant, Baylee Plaza, Summerfield, 16840 U.S. Hwy. 441/27. **March 19th at 11:30 a.m.** Comfortable padded booths for six people, sandwiches starting at \$6; specials range between \$8 and \$10, spectacular conversation, free. Sign up sheet on back table. Questions for Carolyn Denison, please email abcdnison@yahoo.com or call 352/245-0260.

UU & You will meet on Thursday, March 26th, at 6:00 PM in our Fellowship room for a "My Favorite Things" Potluck and Social. If you're willing, be ready to share something about your favorite hobby (such as reading, music, woodcarving, painting, volunteering, etc.). Please Sign Up on the provided form in the Fellowship Room and plan to **bring a dish that would serve 10 people.**

Sunshine Committee – **Wendy Griffith & Yolanda Brod**



We need volunteers for the Committee, particularly if you live in **Ocala or Top of the World area.** Also, if you hear that one of our friends or members is having a difficult time or illness please telephone Yolanda Brod at 352-751-5587 or Wendy Griffith 352-465-3450 or codysm695@aol.com
The entire congregation stands ready to assist and support all our Fellowship.
Cards, calls, or e-mails from us always lift their spirits.

Auction

We are having an Auction on Sunday March 29th. at 12:00 after the Sunday service, preceding the auction we will be offering lunch for a \$6.00 per person donation, consisting of Quiche, salad, iced tea and dessert.

We will have more information in the next few weeks "Order of Service" and weekly update. If you would like to help please see Pat Collins or Judy Lawrence on Sunday.

COFFEE COMMITTEE

It's wonderful to see the numbers of people attending services on Sunday and enjoying the vibrant, enthusiastic coffee hour afterward. To support this very desirable situation, we need to call upon the congregation to give us more volunteers and more food! If we can add more volunteers, those already volunteering won't have to serve so frequently. Perhaps you can volunteer a week at a time, if you can't commit to being in the volunteers' rotation. The Fellowship cannot afford to fund the food for the coffee hour so donations of finger foods are always appreciated. Please sign up on the clip board to help weekly and to bring food. Anyone willing to join the rotation of servers, please contact Wendy Griffith or Fran Marciano, Co-chairs of the Coffee Committee.

CONNECTION GROUPS

*Response to **Connections Groups** has been fantastic! At this point, over forty people have signed up to participate in the program. There is interest in adding a Saturday and a Sunday group if we get enough participants. If you have considered joining a **Connections Group** and either of these times appeals to you, please contact Wendy or Fran. We also remind you that it will be possible to join a **Connections Group** on an ongoing basis. A major intent of the program is to "grow" new groups. As a group reaches its desirable number of ten to twelve people, it will be divided into two groups; each group will then be able to receive more members.*

Within a few days facilitators will be contacting the members of their groups to arrange the first meeting. Any questions or concerns can be directed to Wendy or Fran.

Special Notice

At our March General Membership Meeting a proposal will be put forward for congregation approval which will make the UUFMC an associate member of the Humanist of Florida Association. The purpose of this initiative is to coordinate our social justice actions with religious and Humanist resources that more closely reflect our UU principles whenever this is possible and to put our congregation on record as being a welcoming congregation for Religious Humanists. Of course this will in no way privilege Humanism over any other faith tradition in our congregation. In accordance with our UU principles our congregation will remain a welcoming religious home to our Theists, Pagans, Buddhists and other members and friends of various religious points of view.

Fifth Sunday Collection.

Our Fifth Sunday collection for March will be for the Marion County Public Schools Homeless Children's program. As you may all remember, many of us purchased items of clothing in support of this program a few months ago. The purchased clothing at that time was collected and sent on to this organization. In March all cash and designated Fifth Sunday checks will be used to purchase clothing items based on the currently identified needs per Suzanne McGuire, the Marion School Liaison for this program. Please give as generously as you can.

Humanist Meeting March 17th at 6:00p.m.

New articles Above

Old Articles Below

Getting to know us.....

Guests, members and friends who would like to meet informally with a member(s) to ask questions about Unitarian Universalism, and/or our Fellowship please contact Millie (352-307-4670 or jdmemitch@gmail.com) or Allie 352-861-4564 or indigo8062@earthlink.net. We will be happy to meet and chat! Thank you.

GREETERS, four each Sunday, needed for March. Please sign up on the back table **THIS SUNDAY** or call Carolyn Denison at 245-0260. This is such an important segment of our hospitality and such a great way to get to know more of our folks. Everyone is welcome to participate. Full details emailed to each participant. Thank you.

Lost and Found. Please check the shelves in the back of the sanctuary for lost items. There are several jackets, an umbrella, glasses, etc.

Lost Gravy Ladle After the Thanksgiving Dinner, a gravy ladle belonging to Millie Mitchell could not be located. If you ended up with a mystery ladle, it may be Millie's. Please call her at 307-4670.

Building and Grounds

Many thanks to Ed Hord for coming back as co-chair of the Building and Grounds Committee. He's back, he's fired up and ready to help us out.

We have made some improvements to our irrigation control system thanks to Cindy Kuckel who did all the investigation. The new controller will enable us to manually control the irrigation system and expand it later to accommodate future landscaping.

Bill Denison is getting an estimate to paint the water tank from his favorite painter. If we can find the funds the old water tank will be getting a face lift.

Thanks
Bob B&G Co-Chair

From the AV group
We need some help from a few more people with an Ordinary understanding of computers to join an extraordinary team that operates the AV system at our services.

We plan to be using one person to operate the Microphone controls and another to run the "PowerPoint" program with the service images and songs.

All team members will be cross trained and serve at "The Desk" about once a month, assuming we have 8 to 12 members.

Please join us on **March 9th** at 2 PM at the UU building to find out more.
Rita & I have talked about putting together a slide show [and print out copy] showing the various controls and explaining their operation. We plan to have it ready for the meeting on the 9th.

Join us and see if it will work for you. If we can make the operation clear and un-intimidating to you, then we will have done our job right. That's how it should be.

Yoga exercise

Celia Everist will offer Yoga classes at UUFMC 10:00 to 11:30 Thursdays. No Yoga on March 12th.

Connections Group

The Connections Groups are now forming. The groups are a regular gathering of 6 to 10 people who want to get to know one another better, have fun and explore some of the issues of our life's journey. If you have questions or are interested in joining a group, let Ann Barefield, Fran Marciano or Wendy Griffith know.

For those who have completed a registration form to join a group, you'll be hearing from Fran or Wendy before the end of February to let you know when your group will be starting in March.

From the Coffee Committee

Our supply of social time goodies is dwindling. If you can, please bring some **finger food** to share for the social time. We freeze whatever is not needed and use it during one of the following weeks. **We could also use some help in the kitchen!**



HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM

How quickly time passes! In December our fellowship began a quarterly effort to collect items in support of the Homeless Children and Youth Program in Marion County. In December we collected a huge amount of clothing which was greatly appreciated and has been distributed to children and their families. The needs are different this quarter. We have been asked to provide the items listed below. Please bring your contributions any Sunday in March. Thank you!! Also please keep in mind that all items must be new. We also need of hygiene items that are family-sized (not sample-sized.) Laundry detergent, Shampoo/Conditioner, Deodorant, Ladies socks, Pantry food (canned vegetables, hearty canned soups, cereal, peanut butter & jelly, spaghetti & spaghetti sauce), Soap (bar), Hairbrushes.

Building Use

Is it important that any meeting or event planned in our UUFMC building must be scheduled on the UUFMC calendar. Just notify Andrea Coburn (andreacoburn@thevillages.net) of your requirement.

Internal UUFMC Communications

Communications external to UUFMC

Denominational Connections Committee News:

UUA General Assembly Salt Lake City June 24-28

Registration opens March 2. (Early registration: March 2 – April 30)

<http://uua.org/events/generalassembly/registrationhousing/registration/index.html>

Stacey Dixon 617-742-2100

There will be an election of new UUA President, a vote on the adoption of a statement of conscience on "Peacemaking" and a wealth of great programming.

There are 3 very interesting opportunities to participate in UU events this month. It is worthy to note that all three events have Social Justice themes. We have included contact information for all three events. Please let Andrea Coburn or John Deckman know if you are interested in attending any of them. Perhaps we can arrange car pools. It is highly recommended to make reservations early. There are registration fees. Limited hospitality may be available. Don't wait!

A Special Joint Cluster Meeting of NE and SE Florida

Saturday, March 14

UU Fellowship of Vero Beach SE corner of 16th Street and 27th Avenue

Vero Beach, FL 32960 772-778-5880

"A Spring Study" with Rev. Meg A. Riley (Director, UUA's Advocacy & Witness Program)

8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Banner Parade (YES, our UUFMC banner will be there!)

Morning Address & Workshops - Gender Issues

Afternoon Address & Workshops - Social Justice Issues

Election of Northeast Cluster 2009 Officers **We are proud to announce that our own Allie Gore has been nominated to serve as Vice-President of the NE Cluster.**

<http://www.floridadistrict.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2009/01/ne-se-cluster-mariley-event-03-2009-rfs.pdf>

Sarasota “The Arc of a Moral Universe . . . Bending Toward Justice”

Annual Florida District Meeting March 20-22

Theme Presentation “**Justice Is Flowing**” by Dr. Charlie Clements

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) just celebrated its 60th birthday. It has been translated into more languages and has had more influence in the modern era than any other single document. Charlie will explain how the UDHR, which is the foundation of UUSC's work, is having such an impact every day in virtually every country in the world. He will also explore how the UDHR will fit into Obama administration's foreign and domestic policy.

www.floridadistrict.org

407-894-2119

Tallahassee Legislative Day

March 24-25

The Legislative Ministry's **Voices of the Unheard** program aims to engage and energize Florida's UU congregations, Clusters and social justice activists on this issue, offer education about the ongoing situation of Florida's homeless, and provide tools, skills, and information to support UUs and friends of UUs in addressing relevant issues.

Launching our program for 2009, UULMF will partner with the Florida Coalition for the Homeless in sponsoring Legislative Day at the state capitol in Tallahassee March 24-25. UULMF will mobilize scores of UUs from congregations statewide to converge on Tallahassee at the beginning of the legislative session, where they will team up with volunteers from the Coalition and elsewhere to raise awareness with state legislators and the public of the serious, escalating plight of Florida's homeless. Free lodging in homes of Tallahassee UUs is available, but will go fast.

So, sign up now to participate in Legislative Day. http://www.uulmf.org/Issues_and_Pr.html

For more information about UULMF's work combating homelessness in Florida, contact Coordinator Terry Lanning at Terry_Lanning@uulmf.org. 813-964-7222

Speak Out Against Forced Labor in Florida

We need your help to end modern-day slavery in Florida. Since 1993, our friends in the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) have been organizing to end forced labor on Florida's farms. Now they are on the brink of a major breakthrough, but they need your help.

The CIW repeatedly has asked Florida's past three governors to speak out against forced labor, but the silence has been deafening. Now, thanks to some outrageous comments by a state agricultural spokesman diminishing the significance of farm labor slavery, the CIW thinks that with your help, we can get Gov. Charlie Crist to speak out and take meaningful action to support the CIW's agreements for fair wages and working conditions in the fields.

[Click here to e-mail Gov. Crist and call on him to denounce forced labor in Florida.](#)

Over the past 10 years, there have been seven major prosecutions in Florida for forced labor. But not once has the governor—the chief executive who wields tremendous public and political influence over the state's agricultural industry—said a single word to condemn this most egregious human rights violation. It is time for Crist to step up, speak out against this injustice and commit the full power of the governor's office to address the plague of modern-day slavery in Florida's fields.

[Add your voice to this call today by clicking here and sending an e-mail to the governor.](#)

In Solidarity,

Marc Laitin

AFL-CIO, Online Mobilization Coordinator

UUA Trustee Tidbits

Joan Lund, March 2009

A newly forming UU affinity organization, Equal Access, is the topic for March. The Equal Access mission includes promoting equality and access for UUs with disabilities and comprehensive accessibility throughout our faith community. In addition, Equal Access pledges to advocate for full inclusion in our faith community by identifying, countering, and dismantling ableism and will advocate for people with disabilities throughout our larger world community.

We live in an ableist society that devalues persons based on various physical, sensory, mental health, and intellection disabilities, and vies privilege to those who are not disabled. Equal Access will be an anti-ableist group of folks with a variety of disabilities and their allies. It is known that each disability is affected by ableism in different ways and persons with disabilities have their own unique identities, challenges and solutions, ableism potentially can unite oppressed persons in a group dedicated to resistance. This does not diminish the challenges and solutions of each specific disability identity; instead it is an affirmation of the multiple layers of identity of every individual.

Some of the actions planned include: Creating an atmosphere of openness and acceptance of persons with physical, sensory, mental health, and intellectual disabilities; educating all UUs about the social justice implications and impact of disabilities on our denomination and in our culture; affirming the spiritual needs of congregation members and friends with disabilities; developing and adopting accessibility policies and practices that endorse and ensure the full inclusion of members, friends, and guests with disabilities in a non-discriminatory manner; working with our UUA, the Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee (JTWTC), and districts on disability-related social justice policy issues of non-discrimination and access; and encouraging all persons with disabilities and their allies within the denomination to join in this effort.

All of us are welcome to be part of this new transformative organization. It essential that we work together to take responsibility to create a community of encouragement, compassion, and hospitality and to be sensitive to possible conflicts...willing to work toward solutions, accepting that some of our differences may not be resolvable. Most important, all of our decisions must be democratically.

*I **encourage** you to be a part of our annual District Assembly in Sarasota later this month and LOOK FORWARD to being with many of you. It will be a great meeting, entertaining, and fun! Please introduce yourselves when we are together. Stay in touch: jlund@uua.org or 813-931-9727.*



*Unitarian Universalist of Marion County
UUFMC
Post Office Box 829
Summerfield, Florida, 34492*