

# **UNI-VERSE**

Chair persons Bill Coburn & Ruth Deussen  
**September 2009**



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

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

*Email: [uufmc@comcast.net](mailto:uufmc@comcast.net) Web: <http://www.uufmc.org>*

*7280 SE 135<sup>th</sup> Street, Summerfield Fl. 34491-2510*

*Telephone Number 352-245-7944*

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

### **The Wit and Wisdom of Benjamin Franklin – Celia Friedenthal**

***Our Smith of late most wonderfully swore that whilst he breathed he would drink no more but since, I know his meaning, for I think he meant he would not breathe while he did drink.***

### **September 6th**

**Speaker:** Rev Tucker - "How Hell Died in America" – Since September 3rd was the 194<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of John Murray, Dr. Tucker will review the life of the man who has been called the Father of American Universalism and will recount the only "miracle" that UU tradition likes to acknowledge.

**Forum:** Dr. Gene Serra will present "Experience with American Medicine for 43 Years"

**Building and Grounds Duty Person:** Open: Chady , Close: Zannelli

**A/V Operator:** Bob Zannelli

**Coffee & Hospitality:** Thomas / Lowenberg

**Greeters:** (Both Services) Pat Wilson & Lucia Beall

**Service Leader:** Ann Barefield

**Chalice Lighter:** Jacky McCabe

## September 13th

**Speaker:** Meredith Garmon "Revelation is Continuous" Explorations in Understanding Liberal Religion, Part I. We'll look at the first of "Five Smooth Stones of Liberal Religion" delineated by Unitarian Theologian James Luther Adams. As Adams says, "Meaning has not been finally captured. Nothing is complete, and thus nothing is exempt from criticism."

**Forum:** Rev. Meredith Garmon will be the presenter. Topic TBA.

**Building and Grounds Duty Person:** Open: Hord, Close: Bassette

**A/V Operator:** Dick Bassette

**Coffee & Hospitality:** Clarke / Hord

**Greeters:** (Both Services) Barbara Thomas & Bill Coburn

**Service Leader:** Doug Worthington

**Chalice Lighter:** Ruth Deussen

## September 20th

**Speaker:** Jim McIntosh - "Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar". A potential fault of the socially conscious is that they are always on red alert for evil, abuse, and some little guy meddling with the system. Although this is not in itself bad, we must at the same time be careful that what we don't jump to unwarranted conclusions that make things worse. Sometimes life is to be lived and not manipulated to the way our personal view of it should be.

**Forum:** Cecelia Everist will present "Caught in the Middle" Understanding and Communicating with those teenage grandchildren.

**Building and Grounds Duty Person:** Open: Marciano, Close: Kemp

**A/V Operator:** Robert Ridgard

**Coffee & Hospitality:** Marciano / Deckman

**Greeters:** (Both Services) Lucia Beall & Collen Ridenour

**Service Leader:** Bill Lowenberg

**Chalice Lighter:** Ann Lueders

## September 27th

**Speaker:** Mindy Simmons – "We Are The Ones To Bring Peace" The concept of "think globally, act locally" applied with our UU principles to the idea of keeping a peaceful heart and mind in all circumstances knowing that this approach creates that ripple effect, like a pebble in a pond, spreading Peace beyond our small "self" out to the whole world.

**Forum:** Larry Winkler will present "Religion of Wicca: Truths and Myths"

**Building and Grounds Duty Person:** Open: Griffith, Close: Coburn

**A/V Operator:** Al Reeves

**Coffee & Hospitality:** Ashley / Griffith

**Greeters:** (Both Services) Barbara Thomas & Bill Coburn

**Service Leader:** Joyce Mills

**Chalice Lighter:** John Deckman

## Happy Birthday

09/01 Allie Gore\*  
09/06 Fran Widick\*  
09/07 Bob Leadbetter  
09/08 Barbara Schuster\*  
09/13 Doug Worthington\*  
09/14 Pat O'Connell  
09/15 Robert Zannelli\*  
09/22 Richard Paschke  
09/28 Pat Wilson\*  
09/29 Mary Peski\*

If you do not see your name here and you want us all to celebrate your Birthday then email / call Bill or Andrea Coburn, Millie Mitchell or other membership folks.

## Announcements

### President's Message

We continue to move roughly west! (This statement is based on a talk I gave at UUFMC several years ago.) As most of you could see from his presentation on Sunday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>; Dr. Meredith Garmon is a dynamic speaker and I believe he will also be a dynamic leader as he serves as our consulting minister for the next nine months. He will be meeting with the Board and Finance Committee monthly to give input and support. He will also be meeting with other committees to offer advice and support. He will write a monthly article for the newsletter to advise us about his schedule and share information that is pertinent to our Fellowship. I look forward to learning from him how to better serve this congregation and meet the needs of our members and friends during the remainder of this church year.

Meredith will be here on the following dates: Sunday and Monday -Sep 13-14, Oct 11-12, Nov 15-16, Dec 13-14, Jan 10-11, Feb 14-15, Mar 14-15, Apr 11-12, and May 9-10. The Board will meet with him at 1:30 pm each Monday that he is here. Please note the change in the meeting time of the Board. We will spend 1:30 to 3:30 pm on business and 3:30 to 4:30 on the study and discussion of two books. The books are: *The Almost Church* and *The Almost Church Revisited* by Michael Durall. If you are interested in reading the books, you can order a

copy from UUA. Meredith suggested the books and will be leading us in the discussion.

Meredith will share his schedule for the time he is here in this edition of the UniVerse. He met with the Board after the service on August 23<sup>rd</sup> and we discussed many possibilities for the use of his time. He has been most generous with the time he is willing to spend with us and the activities he is willing to facilitate. For that, we are very grateful. About the westward movement... "Runaway horses, stampeded cattle, prairie fire, blizzards, heat, sunstroke, Indians, lice, snakes and the pure loneliness of the open plains - all of these and more faced the western pioneers of the 1800s. Certainly there were those who gave up, moving back to the security of the East, but many more stayed and helped build and shape the West one sod shack at a time, one small farm at a time and eventually one town at a time. They traveled forth on horseback, in Conestoga wagons...some even walked. For them it wasn't a question of how long it would take, only that it had to be done. And they did it."

I hope in 2009 we too are willing to do what it takes as we move roughly west to make this an outstanding Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. I hope all of us will hang in there when the going gets rough and when we disagree. I hope for us it will not be a question of how long it will take but only that it has to be done for this community. Together, we can implement our mission, vision and values and deal with the focus of our strategic plan...education for, growth of, and ministry to our congregation.

Ann

### Peggy Wolfson will begin poetry discussion

classes on Wednesday afternoons 2-4 pm, beginning on September 16th. The semester will last through November. We ask a \$20 donation to the fellowship for participation. The first class is free so you can make up your mind if you would like continue. Limited to 12 participants, with a minimum of 5. I will put a signup sheet in the back. Thanks, Peggy

### **CLUSTER NEWS**

Check out the new website for the NE Cluster: [www.necluster.uufg.org](http://www.necluster.uufg.org). In the near future the site will offer opportunities for sharing ideas and comments as you interact with posted forums.

**Sept 14<sup>th</sup>, Monday evening. 5:00 PM**

### **A Fellowship Evening Potluck**

**Please join us in this informal evening of food and fun, to meet and greet Meredith Garmon, PhD, our new Consulting Minister. The question for the evening will be "What would you like to see more of from UUFMC?"**

**Sign up list is on the back table of the Fellowship Hall**

(or call Celia Everist at 352-438-0283)

**Sure hope you will join us!**

*This event will be sponsored by UUFMC board.*

### **CHALICE LIGHTING**

*It has been the procedure for the Sunday Service Program Committee to invite members and friends to participate in the Sunday service by lighting the chalice at the beginning of the service and extinguishing the chalice at the conclusion of the service. This responsibility involves selecting a brief reading preferably influenced by the sermon topic. If you would like to participate in this way please sign up on the "Chalice Lighter" sign up sheet found on one of the information tables at the back of the gathering room. Questions can be directed to the SSP Committee co chairs Doug Worthington and Allie Gore. Thank you.*

**The UU Travel Club** has decided on a day trip: Dinner Theater (Fiddler on the Roof) **October 14<sup>th</sup>**, Wednesday, Cost 69. Leaving from 466 and Rolling Acres at 9:30 A.M. For more information please see Rona or Robert Ridgard.

**Tuesday is Science Day at UUFMC.** Every Tuesday morning at 10:00, we will be meeting to learn from various concepts of science and philosophy. Bob Z will be out of town on September 1st so we will be treated to the viewing of a lecture by Neil de Grasse Tyson covering Science, religion and more titled "Life, the Universe and Everything". This is a lecture that was given at the Salk institute.

Rob't 'Luigi' Ridgard

### **Northeast Cluster Gathering**

**"One Generation from Extinction"** - Applying those words to Unitarian Universalism, do they strike horror or uneasiness or curiosity or excitement or determination in your heart and mind? The Northeast Cluster will be tackling that subject at its September gathering, which will feature Florida District executive director Rev. Kenneth Hurto with a highly interactive program. The date is Saturday, **September 26**, at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of St. Augustine .

The registration fee of \$15.00 per person (\$20.00 at the door).

Registration and light breakfast from 9 to 10 a.m. Worship and Rev. Kenn's address. Late morning will find us in small groups considering:

- What is worship for Unitarian Universalists?
- Moving Beyond the Theist/Humanist Divide
- Ministry to the Millennial Generation
- Ministry to Youth
- Becoming an Intentionally Anti-Racist, Anti-Oppressive, & Multi-Cultural Congregation
- The Florida Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry with Dr. Steven P. Segner; new chair of the Steering Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Florida

After lunch, the topic will be Tools for Congregational Leadership:

- technical vs. adaptive leadership, and
- performing a congregational "welcoming our guests" audit.

There will be a closing worship with the meeting ending at 3 p.m.

Checks should be made payable to Northeast Cluster and mailed to Cluster treasurer Bob Mohr at 247 Brookline Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL 32118-3327.

**Separate Tables will be held Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 am**

**Bogies Restaurant**

In Spruce Creek South Golf Community  
(Hwy 27/441, 1 mile north of The Villages)

*Please sign up on the sheet on the table at the back of the sanctuary. If you find you cannot come, please remove your name or call Susan Ashley at 307-5626.*



**From Rev. Meredith Garmon**

*In my earlier visits in 2006 and 2007 I saw what a lovely congregation of UUs Marion County is blessed to have. You were then over in the Elk Lodge -- and while the experience of preaching the Good UU News from beneath the enormous head of the Elk-god is not one that I shall soon forget, I was very impressed to experience on Sunday August 23 the beauty and functionality of your new building. I'm so proud of you all for making such a wonderful liberal religious home for yourself in your part of the world!*

*Before us, as ever, in Marion County as at every UU congregation, is the task of finding ever more inviting ways to offer "our" liberal religious home to others -- for in the end, it belongs not to us, but to our Unitarian Universalist mission in the world. I recently read an essay by Doug Muder in which he explores the question of whether Unitarian Universalism is fundamentally a culture or a message. Are we bringing a message to the world, or are we preserving a culture? To some extent, this tension is false and to some extent it is real. It is a false tension insofar as we can embrace both: for it just happens to be a feature of the culture that we seek to preserve that we are interested in purveying a particular message to the entire world. Ours happens to be a message-based culture. It is a message of healing and wholeness, of acceptance and diversity, of shared faith embracing many beliefs, of commitment to to cultivate in ourselves equanimity, lovingkindness, present-moment mindfulness, and inner joy and peace, of following various paths toward that cultivation, and of those paths being informed and augmented rather than threatened by reason and the findings of science. This is the message that is Unitarian Universalism -- and the understanding that we must spread this message to a world that sorely needs it is integral to the culture that is Unitarian Universalism.*

*Yet there are also ways that preserving our culture sometimes gets into tension with bringing our message to the world. If we are to get that message to the people who need it and need us, we will have more people present on Sunday. Their presence will "threaten" our culture.*

*They won't know -- and won't appreciate -- the comfort that we derive from "the way things are done around here." If our culture can't shift, they won't stay around long. Newcomers may find that Unitarian Universalism changes their lives. At the same time, newcomers change us, if we will let them. And if we won't let them, then, friends, our liberal religious movement is doomed.*

*It's certainly a big challenge. I'm looking forward to being with you all over the next nine months as you work through some of the implications of Unitarian Universalist identity and mission -- what it means to be the UU Fellowship of Marion County, what is yours to do, how shall we realize this fellowship and fully become what it is?*

*I will be out of the state on silent retreats from Sep 1-7 and again from Sep 16-25. Other than that, all UUFMC members are invited to call me at home any time throughout the month to discuss whatever is on your mind. My home number: 352-375-8531. Email is sometimes a better way to reach me, though: [mgarmon@uuma.org](mailto:mgarmon@uuma.org).*

*I'll be coming down for a two-day, Sunday-Monday period once each month. It's the Sunday-Monday that immediately follows the 2nd Saturday of each month. In other words:*

*Sep 13-14*

*Oct 11-12*

*Nov 15-16*

*Dec 13-14*

*Jan 10-11*

*Feb 14-15*

*Mar 14-15*

*Apr 11-12*

*May 9-10*

*Right now, my tentative schedule when I'm in town looks like this:*

*Sunday*

*8:00am - Finance Committee*

*9:30am - Forum: Adult Class: Who Are We? Unitarian Universalist History and Theology 10:30am - Worship Service 1:00-2:30pm - Committee Meeting (The committee I'll meet with will rotate from month to month. For September 13, it's the Sunday Services Committee) 2:30-6:00pm - Office Hours (You can try dropping in; it might be wiser to schedule an appointment) 7:00pm - Lay ministry (pastoral care) training. Open to all interested UUFMC members.*

*Monday*

*10:00am - noon - Meditation (stay tuned for developments on instituting this as a WEEKLY time for a meditation group to meet, which others leading it when I'm not there) 1:30pm - 2:30pm: Thinking Big about Doing Church (with the board and any interested members) 2:30 - 4:30pm: Board Meeting 5:00pm - Potluck dinner and Conversation With Meredith. September topic: What would like to see more of at UUFMC? (And the closely-related, you-know-it's-coming, follow-up question: What would you like to do more of at UUFMC?)*

*Whew! Come driving-home time on Monday night, I know I'll be tired.*

*But in a good way. In the best of all possible ways.*

*Faithfully,  
-Meredith*

## Getting to Know us



### **Ann Barefield**

Ann Barefield has been involved in the field of education since she graduated from college in 1959. She received her undergraduate degree from Salem College, a Moravian Girls College in Winston-Salem, North Carolina; in Religious Education with minors in history and music. Her masters in Curriculum and Instruction and doctorate in Educational Administration with a specialty in Special Education are from the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri. She was a teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Assistant Superintendent of Schools during the thirty years she lived in Missouri.

When she returned to North Carolina in 1993 to take care of her ill mother she was Coordinator of Middle Grades Education and eventually Chair of the Department of Education at Winston-Salem State University, a historically Black university and the first Black Teachers College in the US. She is currently an adjunct professor at Nova Southeastern University where she is either a committee chair or committee member for 20 doctoral students working on their dissertations in the area of Educational Administration.

Ann has three children and two grandchildren who live in Arizona, New York and North Carolina. Great places to visit! She enjoys music, theater, hiking in the mountains, and plays golf rather badly. She has lived in The Villages for four years and has found it exciting to watch the UUFMC grow from around 40 members and friends to 110+ members and about 70 friends. When she finally grows up and decides to retire, she plans to write children's books about cats.

## New articles above

x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x

## Reprint articles below

### **Connections Groups**

Plans are underway to begin forming the Connections Groups (CG) for the upcoming year (November, 2009 to October 2010). A celebration and evaluation meeting is being planned for September 16. If you have feedback for the CG Steering Team or any questions, let Ann Barefield, Wendy Griffith or Fran Marciano know.

### **Connections Groups**

Everyone is invited to attend a celebration meeting on September 16 at 1:30 pm at the Fellowship. Refreshments will be served. What are we celebrating? Our Connections Groups! Four groups were formed last March and are still growing strong. This is our annual kick-off for reforming the Groups. We also want to learn what went well and what we could do better. Even if you're currently not in a Group, you are welcome to attend to celebrate and learn more about the Groups. So, please mark your calendar for 9/16.

## **UUA TRUSTEE TIDBITS**

Joan Lund, September 2009

*In Tampa we have the good fortune of having Ron Hammerle as a friend. He has done much research on mega-churches, including attending Sunday services at several of them. He has come to a number of conclusions about what is universal with all of them and may be useful to us as we work to welcome guests and grow. This month I share some of Ron's findings. Thank you, Ron.*

*The single most effective step in growing a congregation is to bring a friend to church for either a topical interest group or a planned service. Mega churches are comprised and sustained by small, special interest groups. These small groups serve as leadership training places as well as provide fellowship. Most guests who become members do so because of their participation in small groups, rather than attendance at the regular service. Hymnals are not used; the words are projected on a screen and state of the art sound and video is present. The choirs of these churches consist of talented, well-prepared, semi-professional singers who are dressed casually. These churches feature contemporary, upbeat, melodic music and they use contemporary musical instruments, specifically not an organ. Although there is emphasis on making guests feel welcome it is not overdone...no proselytizing.*

*From Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Church, which perhaps many of you have read, Ron has gleaned pearls of wisdom. It is important in leadership to be able to distinguish what is essential and what is not. In Warren's church each first-time guest receives a welcoming letter and an enclosed pre-paid postcard which contains three questions: 1) What did you notice first? 2) What did you like best? 3) What did you like least? Nearly 90% of the thousands responses to the first question received say the guest noticed the warmth and friendliness of the people. In addition Warren believes the church can drain the life out of people by committee work. There are no committees in his church, just different lay ministries. He says the difference is committees discuss it, ministries do it; committees talk and consider, ministries serve and care; committees discuss needs, ministries meet needs.*

*I visited one "mega-church" in August, Without Walls International in Tampa, totally devoted to the love and gospel of Jesus, led by a dynamic, charismatic woman. But the atmosphere was more like what I know of early evangelical revivals so perhaps attendance at another "more representative" church is in order. According to Ron, who also attended that Sunday, WWI is not a good representative mega-church. To be sure I learned little; it was loud, the congregants wandered in and out as the "spirit" moved them, and I observed no encouragement from the pulpit for congregants to think or question.*

*I wish all of you in our Florida congregations a good and meaningful year as you pursue excellence and your work in social justice. You can reach me at [jlund@uua.org](mailto:jlund@uua.org) or 813-931-9727. I look forward to hearing from you.*



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Post Office Box 829  
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