



Sunday Itinerary

Adult Discussion Group

10:00 am

Religious Exploration

(School Year Only)

Children / Youth

10:00 am

Sunday Service

11:00 am

Coffee & Conversation

Noon

EarthFamilies Evensong

2:00 pm

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Minister's Muusings

The earth dries up and withers,
 The world languishes and withers,
 The heavens languish together with the earth.
 The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants,
 For they have transgressed laws, violated the statutes,
 Broken the everlasting covenant.

- Isaiah 24:4-5

As many around the country have been going about their daily affairs, most of us who live along or near the Gulf have been holding our breath, hanging on every news and weather report, wondering when 'IT' is going to arrive on our shores. Newscasters tell us that the worst natural oil disaster in our nation's history is not an 'if', but a 'when'. All along, there are still those shouting, "drill, baby, drill!" — what an insult to our intelligence, an even greater insult to our earth.

Throughout the ages, great Wisdom writers and prophets like Isaiah have warned us about our role of responsible stewardship of the earth, yet why do these wise words always seem to fall on deaf ears? Just like the Golden Rule, most every major world religion also has an environmental equivalent of being good stewards of the earth, yet even the religious have fallen short.

If we are to continue worshipping the God of Greed, then our path is a grim one. As parents, grandparents, teachers and mentors, we have been diligent in teaching our children about ecology. We have taught them about the need to recycle, how to compost, how to plant small trees — so many good things for our children to learn. And — now our children are learning more every day and teaching us!

(cont. on p. 2)

Muusings

(cont. from p. 1)

This is the lesson of Ecology. We are learning how to be proactive within our environment. But — when we are forced to sit idly by while BP and the other corporations pillage our land and sea, it is almost numbing. We might be thinking, “this can't be happening; there are supposed to be regulations to prevent this sort of thing.” Then we find out that the regulations don't really exist, and those who have been appointed to regulate such huge and potentially dangerous corporations have been on some of their payrolls all along. It's the proverbial ‘fox watching the hen house’.

It is time for us to strongly affirm that stewardship is not about selfish, rapacious dominion, but rather it is a precious gift and responsibility that all faith traditions need to observe. I noted this weekend that many of our Christian churches are creating Green Summer Camps and learning about God's true meaning of stewardship and greening of our earth. It is great news that other religious traditions are also embracing ecology and can possibly open avenues and common ground where we can all work together for the highest good.

When you come to really love our earth, with your heart and soul, then you can't help but want to save our earth, our waters, our pastures, deserts, rainforests and all who dwell within.

Ecology inspires us to ‘clean up the mess’. Deep Ecology inspires us to stop the forces that create the mess in the first place. In the weeks ahead we may all be called to the coast to wash and save our sea animals, to shovel oil from our beaches, to bury the dead in the sand. That is ecology. But... for every gull, bird, turtle, pelican, manatee we try to save... for every shovel of oil we lift... we could put a stop to this madness once and for all. How? By also demonstrating and petitioning our elected representatives and their corporate pimps. Let them know that if they even think of uttering the words “Drill, baby drill!”, they – and not our earth, will face political extinction. That, my friends is Deep Ecology. Let us all send our deepest prayers and intentions to the precious waters that surround us and prepare ourselves for the righteous work that awaits us.

Love and Blessings, Rev. Bonnie

We are 83% into this fiscal year and we have received 73% of our income and have spent 75% of our expenses. We have now spent more than we have received and are in the red. If we are careful with our spending in May and June, we may be able to able to balance the budget. We received \$800 for selling admissions to the Florida Jets Radio-Controlled event and these funds can go toward the deficit if there is one.

The RE porch repair will be completed by the time the Beacon is printed, and we probably will spend all that is in the RE Porch Fund Reserve. We were able to paint the Social Hall from this fund as well. The carpeting in the Social Hall will be replaced before June 1, to date we have received \$740 in donations to replace the carpet. Several of our community facility users have donated to the carpet fund, but we still need a few more donations to break even.

We now have three more microphones for the sanctuary with cords and stands thanks to a generous donation. This should serve all of our needs for our speakers and musicians in the future.

	April	Year-to-Date	Budget 09-10
Income	\$3,229	\$45,521	\$62,025
Expenses	\$4,187	\$46,427	
Total	(\$958)	(\$906)	

Financial reports are posted on the bulletin board in the kitchen. If you ever want any information on any financial matters, please feel free to contact Joyce Bode.

Splinters from the Board

The Board of Trustees met on May 19. The Coordinating Council reported that they met last week and are discussing how to work out the logistics of streamlining committee meetings and aligning committees based on each group's ministry. The Council will meet next on the 2nd Wednesday of July.

Joyce Bode reported that the cataloguing of the library is progressing. Soon you will have access to a list of all the available material, and eventually the list will be on the website.

The RE committee reported that the class season ended on May 23. Babysitters are needed to watch the children during Sunday services through the summer. Please see Heather Curry or Melissa Marshall if you are able to help with this task.

The Visibility Committee reported another successful booth at "First Friday" in Downtown Lakeland. They would like to have more folks from UUCL come down and help man the booth but also just to be there so visitors can see us and get a feel for who the UUs are.

Also as a member of the Downtown Lakeland Partnership, UUCL will have our logo on goodie bags that are given out at downtown events. We'll be coming up with something to put in the bags, probably something like the magnets that Theresa Lutz has been presenting as gifts within the congregation.

Every year UUCL has a leadership retreat, where we lay out the calendar for the coming year and spend the day learning and planning how we will work together through the following year. This year's retreat will be held on August 28 and all who are interested in participating in UUCL's leadership are encouraged to attend.

As Reverend Bonnie's time with us draws to a close, please plan to attend the Sunday service on June 27, as this will be a retirement service for her as well as an installation of new officers.

Theresa Lutz is kicking off the Unicef Halloween fundraiser preparations early this year. The Board approved having the fundraising event.

And last but not least, the Board is very pleased to announce welcoming our newest members Adam and Ishiuan Hargrove, and Lyle Hedley. We are also very happy to have all the new members who were introduced to us in the New Member Service

In Memoriam

Kenneth Rideout, who attended UUCL until 2006 when he moved to Largo, passed away April 25 in the veterans retirement home in Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada.

A talented musician, Ken played the trumpet & French horn and sometimes sang in the choir. He was active in discussion groups and was on the committee for the building of the sanctuary. His wife Nancy said that Ken enjoyed the fellowship and warmth of the UU here in Lakeland more than in any other place that he had been.

Ken is survived by his wife Nancy (200 Lake Ave.N.E., Largo, Fl. 33771), daughter Valerie Ridsdale and grandsons Daniel and Kevin Ridsdale of Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada.

Caring Committee

If you or someone you know is in need of support from the UUCL community, contact the UUCL Caring Committee. The Caring Committee can be reached by contacting Eileen Scheffel, cat.eileen@verizon.net.

Message From The President

Humble Gratitude for a Community of Doers

It's hard to believe that this is the last President's Message I'll write for The Beacon. On June 30, other church leaders and I will cede our seats to those you have elected to follow us. After two years as your president-elect and one year as your president, I will become your immediate past president, a role that retains me as a voting member of the Board of Trustees and ensures I'll continue to serve you – but also gives me a chance to catch my breath after a very busy few years!

As I look back on what we have achieved here at UUCL, I'm gratified and humbled: gratified that so many of the goals the Congregation set for itself have been realized, and humbled at the tireless and cheerful efforts of so many to bring those goals to fruition.

Here's just a small sampling of what you, the congregation, have achieved this year:

- Physical improvements to the campus, including fresh paint, lighting, signage, carpeting and (yeah!) a new RE porch.
- Renewed and revitalizing music offerings, from Common GroUUunds Coffee House and Friends of Joe to special service music from our pianist, choir, and many talented members and friends.
- Exceptional Religious Exploration and Youth Group offerings for our youngest members and friends.
- Ever-burgeoning Visibility efforts, including tabling at First Fridays and participation in other local events.
- Affinity groups for a variety of interests, from Buddhist Group to Book Club to Game Night to Adult Discussion Group and more.
- Improvements to our website, newsletter and campus library to provide greater access to our congregation and its ideas.
- Inauguration of the UUA's Green Sanctuary Program to improve our stewardship of the Earth.
- Enlightening and inspiring religious services, courtesy of our Worship Committee, Religious Exploration Committee and CUUPs.

And that's not to mention the countless day-to-day tasks that members and friends perform to keep our doors open and lights on – or the money they provide for the same purpose!

We have a lot to be proud of and much to be grateful for. We also have a long road ahead on our quest to achieve the Beloved Community and make it manifest throughout Polk County. As we enter a new church year, may our commitment to this faith and this community gain new life. May we continue to seek, to comfort, to love and to build together.

Thank you, each and everyone, for all you have done – and for all I know you will continue to do – for our beloved congregation.

In faith, Rafi Ellis, *President, Board of Trustees*

Religious Education

From Afghanistan to South America to right here in Florida, our efforts, big and small, have brought more justice, peace and love to other people and creatures with whom we share this Earth. While we will never truly know the results of our outreach, we can be sure that our positive contributions have helped to strengthen the web of life rather than destroy it.

The children put on a great worship service on May 16! If you missed it, remember you can listen to it online at uclakeland.org. Since the service, I have received in the mail official adoption certificates for a Tampa Bay manatee named “Flicker” and a Florida panther named “Wanderer”. The children are very excited to be adoptive parents to these endangered animals. We extend a great deal of gratitude to our members and friends for donating their “pocket change” to make this happen. We will continue to learn about them and their habitats over the summer.

Also on the summer agenda, gardening will continue and the “Plastic Awareness Project” will be given more attention as we talk about what we buy and what we throw away.

Remember, RE will not be meeting at 10 am over the summer, but we will have child care and activities planned for during the 11 am service. We are looking for volunteers to help out. Our RE committee chair, Melissa Marshall, has been in RE for almost every Sunday since the beginning of the school year (at least!). She deserves not only a great big thank you, but also a well-deserved break! Please consider saying “thank you” by volunteering for child-care at least one Sunday over the summer. The children would love to get to know you. And don’t forget how vital they are to the life of this congregation, as well. As Rev. Bonnie said, they’ve got a lot of mojo!

In Faith, Heather Curry, *UUCL Director of Religious Exploration*

Games For Grown-Ups

June 5, 6:30 pm, Social Hall

Games Night will be held on Saturday, June 5. We start at 6:30 pm in the Social Hall. Bring simple snacks and drinks to share if you can, but there is no obligation. We have games available but encourage all to bring a game or cards you’d like to learn or play. Questions? Call Jane Eskenazi at 863.682.8869 or email ajeskenazi@earthlink.net.

Special Small Group Ministry Sunday

June 13, 12:30 pm, Sanctuary

Service and special sermon

by Rev. Bonnie

Small Group Ministry Session:

12:30-1:45

This is a rare opportunity to explore what’s been considered the best thing to happen to our UU congregations in decades! The Small Group Ministry program has many names, but it consists of deep listening and sharing on a variety of life subjects. It is not a discussion group; it is not a therapy or support group; it is, however, a special form of ministry which focuses on intimacy and ultimacy.

A sign-up sheet is available outside the sanctuary (in the hallway) for the June 13 Sampler Session. Due to the nature of Small Group Ministry we can only take up to 12-14 people maximum (the regular size of groups is between 8 and 10). So, if you are interested in sampling this great UU form of sharing, please sign up soon as possible. Thanks!

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is always looking for Greeters. If you are interested in helping out on occasion or to find out more, contact:

Blenda George, blenda@tampabay.rr.com
or Eileen Scheffel, cat.eileen@verizon.net

Sunday Services Schedule

11 am, Sanctuary

6 “Families From Love and Religion That Puts a Squeeze on Them” June is Pride month for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Questioning communities. Join us in celebrating the right to be who you are and love who you will, as the Reverend Dee Graham shares her experience of and research about gay and lesbian families. (*see sidebar*, Rev. Graham)

UU congregations in the Tampa Bay area have joined together to help sponsor St Petersburg Pride 2010. We will be supporting this effort with a special offering collection on Sunday June 6, please come prepared to support this important work.

13 “Small Group Ministry” — **Rev. Bonnie Devlin.** Small Group Ministry has also been referred to as “Saving the world, 10 people at a time”. It’s been the most successful ministry program in UU congregations across the country. Let’s explore why we need this pastoral ministry and how we gather to share intimacy and ultimacy in our lives through deep listening in small groups.

Following our coffee hour today we will be having a special, one-time Small Group Ministry experience. Registration is limited, so sign-up as soon as possible.

20 *Intergenerational Service*

“Father’s Day” Join us for our monthly Intergenerational service! Instead of leaving after a special Children’s Moment, as they do most Sundays, the children will stay throughout the entire service. Members of all ages will share in a service celebrating many different kinds of fathers and how they have influenced our lives and our faith.

27 “A Farewell Blessing” – **Rev. Bonnie Devlin.** I can’t believe it’s been two years since I first came to UUCL to be with all of you. The past two years have been ones of major transitions, challenges and triumphs; a truly shared ministry of incredible lay leadership and determination of which you can be very proud. In this, our final formal service together (notwithstanding a visit or two in the future!), I would like to offer thanks and blessings for all our members and for all the memories.

EarthFamilies Evensong Gatherings

Sundays, 2 pm, Sanctuary

June 6 — Group Study. The Druidry Handbook by John Michael Greer. We will discuss the introduction, plus chapters 1-3.

June 13 — Drum Circle. Join this family-friendly activity and explore the meditative value of rhythm! We have plenty of instruments to share; chanters and dancers always welcome! Come early (noon) and join UUCL’s monthly potluck.

June 20 — Craftwork. Celebrate Father’s Day with us as we honor the male principle and the story of the Oak King/Holly King, as this special day coincides with Midsummer Solstice.

June 27 — Pagan Day Out. Meet up at UUCL for a late lunch out.

Rev. Graham

Rev Graham began her journey into self-discovery of LGBT spirituality when she was outed by the administration of Florida Southern College as an undergraduate there in 1971 while working on the city desk of the Lakeland Ledger. Told by the school to change or leave, she transferred to the University of Florida, where she earned a BS in Journalism.

Now a UU minister with an MDiv from Starr King School for the Ministry, she earned her MA in Mass Communications from the University of South Florida Saint Petersburg in 2008 and currently serves as a campus chaplain in Sarasota.

Fellowship of Freethinkers

June 12, 12:30 pm,
Lake Ashton Country Club

Here's a new group to try out in the Lake Wales Ridge area. The Fellowship of Freethinkers is a group for folks who identify with terms like freethinker, humanist or Unitarian/Universalist, and for ethical culturalists and religious liberals of all stripes. Meetings will be held at 12:30 pm on the second Saturday of each month at Lake Ashton Country Club and will consist of a potluck followed by a discussion. Everyone is encouraged to bring his/her own dinnerware; drinks will be provided.

The discussion topic for June 12 will be "Separation of Church and State". If you are interested in attending, please contact Charlene Bennett at 863.676.9231 or Margaret Swanson at 863.676.5438.

Adult Discussion Group (ADG)

Sundays, 10 am, Social Hall,
Chairman: James Negri

June 6 – How can we tell the difference between a "just" war and an unjust war?

June 13 – Is it ethical, wise, or compassionate to give handouts to the homeless?

June 20 – Are the Seven Principles compatible with both ends of the political spectrum?

June 27 – Have you ever met a "celebrity", or anyone famous? What was that experience like?

The Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council is exploring restructuring ideas offered by Rev Bonnie at our Congregational Retreat.

In May we discussed logistical issues involved with the idea of moving all meetings to Wednesdays. We also sketched an outline for redistributing our existing responsibilities into four shared missions:

Community: Caring, Hospitality, Membership, Beacon, Book Club, Games Night, Youth

Worship & Education: Worship, RE, ADG, EarthFamilies, Buddhist, Green Sanctuary

Social Outreach: Visibility, Social Concerns, UUSC, Common Grounds

Stewardship: Building & Grounds, Finance, Facilities Use, Endowment, Sanctuary, Bylaws, Office & Administration

We discussed the need for these to become unified committees, not just collections of subcommittees to be effective, and had many unanswered questions.

We asked members to think about paths from the existing structure to this new vision for further discussion at our next meeting Wednesday, July 14, 2010, 6 pm. At that time we will continue brainstorming on these and other topics in preparation for our work with Rev Marni in Fall.

Come, join us, and help us tie our tasks to our mission.

Minister Update

When Dr. Tucker retired, Rev Hurto recommended that we have at least two ministers for no more than two years each before considering a search for a permanent minister. In keeping with this recommendation, we will be bidding a loving farewell to Rev Bonnie on Sunday, June 27. Please don't miss your chance to say thank you for her wonderful service to our congregation before she goes!

In August, we will be joined by the Rev Marni Harmony. She will lead her first service with us on August 15, followed by a "Welcome the Minister" social. Then on Saturday, August 28, she will participate in a planning session for the upcoming year and service on Sunday, August 29. After August she will be with us the second and fourth Sundays of the month. We look forward to her ministry!

Rev. Hurto Talks of Words and Their Meanings

The following is excerpted from "Notes from the District Executive," Florida District Connections, 10 May 2010. For the complete article, visit www.floridadistrict.org

Frequently, congregational leaders say to me, "We have many newer members who don't have a good background in Unitarian Universalism. At times, they can be extremely negative when we try to be a 'church.'"

Unitarian Universalism long has been a sanctuary for the religiously abandoned and disillusioned, many of whom are better at rejecting than affirming. We even have a phrase, "come-outers," that captures the sense in which some remain more attached to what they have left than to what they have found. ... We should not wonder that the religiously ignorant either define us in a series of "we don't believe..." or declare "Unitarian Universalists can believe anything you want!" - surely the most nonsensical thing anyone could utter. ...

Integrating changing life convictions is a task of on-going faith development. Regrettably, too many of our good people fail to complete their conversions. They remain stuck in their "don't believe." ... Too often, our halls resound with rude and aggressive disapproval and disdain - mostly of traditional faith expressions, Christianity in particular. We polarize over words. Our atheists cannot abide our theists; our secularists despise the language of spirituality. Our former Jews and Christians squirm if the Bible is mentioned. ...

As I work with our congregations, I hear one painful report after another in which a congregation is at war with itself as some insist the whole congregation conform to the words and practices they condone. For a non-creedal faith, we have our own orthodox fundamentalists. As elsewhere, fundamentalism leads to division and brokenness. As ever, it makes faith expression an idolatry.

What to do? Spiritually, we all need to grow up, or at least keep growing. The Free Church needs ever to guard against a relapse into any of us insisting there is only one path to holiness, or goodness, or justice. Our Universalists are better at this, being less caught up in the right-belief arguing of the Unitarians. The Universalists affirmed we are all children of one divine grace, all are worthy, able to be and to give love. As David Ferenz (16th ct.) put it, "We need not to think alike to love alike!"

General Assembly is June 23-27

General Assembly, the annual meeting of all UUA-affiliated congregations, will take place at the end of June in Minneapolis, Minn. Don and Barbara Wallace, summer residents of Minneapolis and long-time winter members of UU Lakeland, will serve as our congregation's voting delegates. In addition to conducting Association business, GA is a chance for UUs to renew their commitment to our faith and learn more about UUism and themselves. Watch future Beacon newsletters for more information on GA activities and initiatives.

Volunteers Sought for St. Pete Pride

UU Congregations around the Florida District are being asked to show their support for St. Pete Pride on June 26. The parade and celebration highlighting the contributions of the GLBT community start at 10 am at the corner of 3rd Avenue North and 31st Street North in St. Pete.

Volunteers are needed for the event from 11am to 4pm. Booth tenders are needed for the entire event, and face painters from 12 - 2. If you'd like to work with other UU's at this fun event, contact Theresa Lutz, tericay@juno.com for more information.

