



# The Communicator

of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Lake County

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## October Church Service Programs

**5** – Rev. Roger Seidner begins our worship in October with our traditional Free Faith Yom Kippur service. Yom Kippur is October 9. We will observe the service in the midst of the days of awe between Rosh Hashanah on September 30 and Yom Kippur. In Judeo life, these days are given to an intense period of reflection. Our meditation following the service will help us interpret this time in our lives.

**12** – "Ragged Individualism". Rev. Dr. Randolph Becker, minister of the Key West UU Fellowship, writes "While one strand that has formed modern liberal religious thought emphasized the role of the individual – standing alone, free, self-affirming, another strand emphasized the role of the individual in society – standing together, united, in common endeavor.

For those in this latter strand, intense individualism is the ragged edge of a self-centered focus. So, ask yourself this: on some issue about which you feel strongly, would you rather stand alone or stand together?"

**19** – "Sources", a cantata by James Shelton (music) and Kendyl Gibbons (words). Our delegates to the 2008 GA were so excited by this work they brought back a DVD of it which we will enjoy this Sunday. By the way, "Sources of UUism " appears each week on the front of our bulletin. For more information read the article on page 33 in "UU World", summer 2008.

**26** – Rev. Seidner will speak to us on Reformation Sunday, from a liberal point of view. We look forward to a time of growth and influence in our community. As people of liberal faith, we have the role of bringing insight and direction to our world.

On the last Sunday of each month, our service concludes with a pot-luck lunch. A sign-up sheet for food contributions will be found on the piano on the two Sundays before the event. This way, not everyone will bring a dessert!

## October Adult Forum Programs

The first Sunday in October we are going to begin a college lecture series on Science and Religion. This series is both audio and video and each lecture is a half hour long which will give us about 25 minutes to discuss the content.

This material was presented to me by Rev. Seidner last spring for use with our group. While we may disagree with some of it, I believe it is extremely important for each of us to understand the history of science and religion, their relationship and their interactions through time.

The series contains 12 lectures with the first three scheduled for October:

- Oct. 5 – Introduction,
- Oct. 12 – The Warfare Thesis,
- Oct. 19 – Faith & Reason – Scripture & Nature.

The final Sunday in October will be an open forum. Any member wishing to present on an open-forum Sunday need only show up and be prepared to present. I would appreciate a call ahead of time if the presentation is to occupy the full hour but that is not necessary.

...**Bob Young**

The UU Congregation of Lake Co. Meets  
Sundays at the Woman's Club of Eustis  
227 N. Center Street, Eustis, Florida

Adult Forum, with Bob Young at 9:45 a.m.  
Church Service begins at 11 a.m.

**Note:** Roger and Clarice are available to respond to calls for pastoral care in crisis situations. If you or someone you know has a need, feel free to call them at 407-905-5767

## UUCLC Information & Contacts

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In the Welcoming Congregation Manual, (168pp, available for \$30 from UUA) is this explanation: "For centuries, the church has been a leading force against sexual minorities. It is not surprising that gay people are reluctant to reach out to the very institution that oppresses them. Yet, gay, lesbian, [transgender], and bisexual people have no less need for warmth, caring, and affirmation than anyone else who calls the liberal church their religious home. In fact, as a subculture in society gay, lesbian, [transgender], and bisexual people may need our support more than the general population."

**And UUA cites benefits of this decision by a congregation as** "Confronting our prejudices in a non-judgmental, non-threatening group allows us to explore their origins and offers an opportunity to replace those prejudices with knowledge. Understanding our prejudices leads to individual spiritual growth and congregational unity.

### President's Column...

During the discussion group last Sunday I approached the issue that we should work toward being a "Welcoming Congregation" as defined by UUA guidelines. I have no doubt we believe we are, as affirmed about an hour later when we erupted with a spontaneous round of applause for Robyn Kelly at the end of her truly heartfelt presentation.

There are 22 congregations in the Florida District that are officially certified by UUA as Welcoming with the Gainesville Fellowship having been the first in September of 1993. The UUA website offers the following history of this very important facet of church development.

"In 1987 the UUA established the Common Vision Planning Committee. This committee found many negative attitudes, deep prejudices, and profound ignorance about bisexual, gay, and lesbian people, which resulted in the exclusion of bisexual, gay, and lesbian people from their churches. As a result of these findings the delegates of the 1989 General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to initiate the Welcoming Congregation program to educate its members. Each congregation adapts the program to best meet its goals and each unique situation can bring positive changes to individuals and congregations."

**UUA also poses the question;** "Why single out bisexual, gay, lesbian, and/or transgender people?"

"The Welcoming Congregation Program is a completely volunteer program for congregations that see a need to become more inclusive towards bisexual, gay, lesbian, and/or transgender people. It consists of a series of workshops developed by the UUA. The goal of the workshops is to reduce prejudice by increasing understanding and acceptance among people of different sexual orientations. Some of the workshop titles include: How Homophobia Hurts Heterosexuals; Connections to Other Forms of Oppression; Gender Socialization and Homophobia; and Biblical Perspectives on Homosexuality. Many congregations offer the workshop series several consecutive times as an adult religious education curriculum open to all members and friends. In some congregations the workshop series (and later the entire program) is sponsored by a Welcoming Congregation Task Force/Committee created for just this purpose, while other congregations sponsor the workshop series through their *Interweave* chapters. In either case, the workshops are best facilitated by those that have experienced the curriculum.

"Our vision goes beyond the Welcoming Congregation Program. By taking this first step, we hope to explore more issues ...like sexism, racism, ableism, to name just a few. Becoming a Welcoming Congregation will act as a catalyst to learning more about ourselves and to ending

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exclusion. **Only when we are truly open to the wealth of diversity in our world will the inherent worth and dignity of every person be affirmed with a large voice.**"

I have had 100 copies of the pamphlet "10 Things your Congregation Can Do to Become More Welcoming" reprinted at my expense with our address and contacts listed and invite you to read it, pass it on to others and offer your suggestions at a future discussion group.

...**Bill Hermann**

### **October Birthdays:**

Henry Gray, Oct. 1  
Steve Vucic, Oct. 2  
Gladys Becker, Oct. 13  
Melba Seron, Oct. 14  
Barbara Coats, Oct. 17  
Carl Stiner, Oct. 17

### **Interested in UU History?**

There are a number of us who are reading the book *Challenge of a Liberal Faith* by George N. Marshall, Third Edition, published by Skinner Books of the UUA (\$15). This is a book about UU history and what it means to be a UU. At our last meeting, we reviewed chapters 5 & 6. This month, we continue with chapters 7 & 8.

You are invited to join us at Pat Linfield's home, Thursday, October 9, at 3 p.m. The address is 21804 Princess Tania Ct., Leesburg. If you need further instructions, please call Pat (315-0203).

### **A Note from our District Executive...**

Many of our congregations are organizing dedicated services or public witness October 19th with regard to the Florida ballot item, Amendment #2, that seeks to define marriage in an extremely narrow way.

As many have asked, yes, it is appropriate and not a violation of our IRS status to speak out on this question. I do encourage all our leaders to stand up and be heard, join those saying "No on 2," and to witness to our values of respect for persons and justice. [The simple rule: no invocation of, fund-

raising for, nor endorsing of any candidate for public office or political party.]

You'll find good background information on this question at:

<http://www.sayno2.com/>  
<http://www.voteno2.com/>

...**Kenn Hurto**

**Note:** If you would like more information about the Florida District, go to <http://www.floridadistrict.org/>. The above message can be found by clicking on September 5, 2008, on the E-Newsletters page.

### **UUA TRUSTEE TIDBITS**

*Joan Lund*

The fall winds, and the political parties' proclaiming time for change has put me in a frame of mind to write about change, a constant force in our personal and congregational lives. Does change bring conflict, or does conflict bring change? Both scenarios can be accurate. In either case both may be useful and productive, but not always. There is uneasiness involved in any change. People don't always know what to do with their feelings when change occurs. Sometimes this plays out in congregational life when congregants focus misplaced anxiety on specific persons rather than dealing with the real issues. Anxiety leads to non-thinking so it is important to be calm, present, and connected within the area of anxiety. It is important to deal with anxiety and to treat all persons with respect.

Anxiety may lead to conflict which arises when there is a disturbance in one's emotional being. Several factors may contribute to this state such as unresolved present or past family issues, unexamined values and behavioral expectations, different perceptions and understanding of another, or an imbalance of pressures created by the environment. We must remember each one of us has some part of a truth associated with a current problem, but rarely, if ever, does any one of us have the whole or sole truth. Congregants need to speak their truths, as well as listening to the truth of our congregational friends and welcome, not fear our UU diversity.

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Leaders in the congregation must be competent, informed, accountable, and in touch with contemporary reality. They are the ones responsible for the operations and health of the institution. Congregational leaders need to be aware that complaints are a sign of a perceived threat to the stability of relationships and thus the congregation. The leaders need to know how to assess what is going on in the present as well as being able to suggest avenues to explore to address the problems. Direct communication is important and the committee on ministry should not be expected to solve problems with the minister or within the congregation.

What should leaders of the congregation do when unhealthy anxiety and/or conflict threatens? The best thing is to ask for help before it gets to that point. Even the slightest hint that something is not right and your congregation might not be able to resolve the issue by itself, the first person to contact is our very competent District Executive, Rev. Kenn Hurto.

As always I look forward to hearing from you at [jlund@uua.org](mailto:jlund@uua.org) or 813-931-9727. May your congregation enjoy good health and relationships as you work together now and in the future.