



The Communicator

of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Lake County

February Church Service Programs

Feb. 1 – "Understanding the Middle East". Dr. **Thom Wertham** will promote introspection by us on this topic. Dr. Wertham is a public high school teacher and a rabbi who lives in Lake Mary. He is known to several in our congregation.

Feb. 8 – "Intellectuals Are Still Neglected Sheep". Theologian **Shelia T. Harty** will share her ire that increasingly ratchets up in response to conceptually simple minded Christians. The lack of intellectual heft in America's low-church Christianity results from a strategic seduction of the masses in order to mute deep thought in a culture where the lowest common denominator of religious belief will thrive. Yet, most intellectuals, even in rejecting religion's dogma, still pursue answers to life's big questions.

Feb. 15 – We will be visited by "Michael Servetus, the First U.U. Hero" in the person of the Rev. **Lloyd H. Dunham** of Port Orange, a former UCC Minister, and now a member of the Community U.U. Church of Daytona Beach. He is also a licensed massage therapist with Hospice of Volusia and Flagler Counties.

Feb. 22 – "Theism or Non Theism?" with Rev. **Roger Seidner**, our Consulting Minister. In the 21st century an increasing number of people dismiss traditional concepts of the divine presence. Our U.U. community is open and broad enough to embrace many viewpoints. Our challenge is to provide a balance whereby various perceptions can feel welcome. We explore this premise.

Our monthly pot-luck lunch follows this service. All are welcome.

The **UU Congregation of Lake County** meets Sundays at the Woman's Club of Eustis, 227 N. Center Street, Eustis, FL.

Adult Forum, with Bob Young is at 9:45 a.m.

Church Service begins at 11 a.m.

February Adult Forum Programs

Feb. 1 – We will view the last lecture in the Science and Religion series: "Past, Present, and Future". Discussion will focus primarily on an evaluation of this series and its impact on you. Has the "Warfare Thesis" presented in the second lecture altered your concept of this idea?

Our next lecture series is titled "Albert Einstein; Physicist, Philosopher, Humanitarian." I have viewed the whole series and consider it excellent except that the science or physics lectures are somewhat difficult to understand and therefore we will focus, at least in the beginning, on Einstein the person, the philosopher and the humanitarian.

Feb. 8 – The first lecture is titled "The Precocious Young Einstein",

Feb. 15 – Next is "The Development of the Young Physicist". To know the man we need to understand the growing and educational portions of his life.

Feb. 22 – Our regular Open Forum. One of the questions to be discussed this day will be, whether you wish to view one of the physics lectures to evaluate or do we skip them altogether. This series contains 24 lectures and in addition to the above there are, in my judgment, 11 additional non-scientific lectures worthy of our viewing. If we view all 11, the series will take us into June.

...**Bob Young**

"We must accept finite disappointment but we must never lose infinite hope."

...**Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Note: Roger and Clarice Seidner 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

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Presidents Message...

Reprinted from the December 08 issue of Small Talk
by the Rev. Jane Dwinell, small congregation
consultant

Historic Era Dawns

"No matter how you voted in the November presidential election, I'm sure we can all agree that the election of Barack Obama, as a mixed race man, was an historic event. For all the work done over the years by people of all kinds to lessen the sting of racism, we, as a country and a world, still have a long way to go. While I have been heartened by knowing friends and family members who transcended their racism to vote for Mr. Obama, I also know people who could not bring themselves to vote for him simply because of his race. We as Unitarian Universalists are also of a mixed mind when it comes to issues of race. Some congregations — small and large — have deliberately looked at this ever-present topic as a congregational, and personal, issue. Just as with the study and reflection on the lives of bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender (BGLT) people through The Welcoming Congregation curriculum, looking at racism can be done by any congregation, of any size, in any geographic location. Whether or not there are people of color in your area (and there are — even in the whitest of states), we deepen and enrich ourselves by taking the time to look at the lives of people not like us — whoever they are. As a pure White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (with a Mayflower ancestor, no less) and growing up in the second whitest state in the nation (Vermont), I have struggled over the years with my racist thoughts, prejudices, and assumptions. I imagine most of you

have also — no matter your race or cultural background. It can be challenging, embarrassing, painful, and thought-provoking to face these issues — alone or in a group. There can be misunderstandings. There can be faux pas. But, I have found that I have grown spiritually, and personally, by this work — accidental or intentional. And my work is far from being done. Many small congregations feel they don't have the time or energy to work deeply on race, class, ageism, BGLT issues, religious prejudice, or any of the similar topics concerning our differences. But you can — if you can move past some of the real, or assumed, barriers to this kind of challenging work.

Here are a few perceived barriers:

The "social club" nature of some small congregations. If a small congregation does not have a clear mission, they may tend to focus mainly on the church community and the enjoyment of being in company of people with similar interests. There may be huge resistance to change, particularly if it is likely to bring in people congregants feel uncomfortable with. If this sounds like your congregation, it is important to find your mission before you take on anti-racism work (but consider this — you may want this as your mission!).

Dependence on leadership

Anti-racism cannot occur without solid leadership. In a small church this is especially true, and if you don't have a minister, you may be challenged in finding the right leader(s) for this task. Some people may take it on as a "crusade" and inadvertently cause unnecessary conflict. Choose your leaders carefully, and make sure there is a strong core group that will support these leaders and this work.

The few people of color take a lot of the burden

A small congregation that has not actively engaged in anti-racism work (or is in a very white area) will have only a very few people of color. Especially without strong ministerial involvement and white allies, these people of color will end up with all the burden of educating and ministering to white people. It is exhausting. At the very least, don't expect the one or two people of color in your congregation to take the lead alone.

Lack of financial resources

Programs through the Unitarian Universalist Association, like Jubilee Two or JUUST Change Consultancy are not cheap, and congregations struggling with budgets or capital campaigns will be less likely to allocate money for such programs. However, the curriculum *Building the World We Dream About* is currently being field-tested and will be perfect for congregations of any size.

I fear that many people (UUs and non-UUs alike) may feel the election of President Obama means that our work on issues of race is over. Not so, I think it is just begun. With the Obama family front and center we won't be able to turn from it. I hope your small congregation can find the time and energy to work on this issue that's vital to our society as we move forward. It's an exciting time for us all."

As President of UUCLC I certainly concur with these thoughts and hopefully believe we are on the verge of the most rewarding political era of my lifetime.

...**Bill Hermann**

Challenge to Give!

We are challenged to meet a goal to undergird our UUA and Crozer Seminary via a matching gift. Any congregation that gives generously to causes beyond itself will find that others are attracted and will join the effort. Are you one of these others?

Rev. Roger Seidner

Book Group...

A number of us will begin reading the book *Influence – Science and Practice*, by Robert B Cialdini (5th edition), ISBN 0-205-60999-6. In this book, the author explains the ways in which we become persuaded.

Our next meeting will be at the home of John and Marilyn Steingart: 2316 Bonnie View Ct., Leesburg, Thursday, February 19. We will be discussing the first 2 chapters. Their phone number is 343-5536, should you get lost.

...**Ruth Gray**

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January Birthdays:

Eileen Johns, Feb. 16
Parks Landis, Feb. 20
Bill Chadwick, Feb. 25
Neil Wasserman, Feb. 27

UUA TRUSTEE TIDBITS

Joan Lund

In these uncertain economic times it is more important than ever for us to maintain our support for our home congregations, and our District and UUA. There are folks in the congregation and in your community who will need the spiritual and emotional support found by attending UU services and we need to be there for them as they face difficult financial times. If history is an indicator the economic downturn facing the U.S. will have an impact on charitable giving and this will effect congregations. It will be necessary for those of us who can continue to meet our pledges to our congregations and our wider Association to do so...and perhaps then some.

I also know some of our Florida congregations will be conducting annual stewardship drives in the spring so I offer some suggestions paraphrased from Laura Amabile, Director of the Annual Program Fund who recently wrote a piece after reading *Enjoy the Ride: How to Effectively Raise Funds in a Roller-coaster Economy*, by Mary Ellen Collins: 1) be prepared to articulate your congregation's vision and mission statement in compelling ways that elicit a high level of financial support, 2) build solid relationships in and among the congregation, 3) avoid a dramatic shift in the manner in which your congregation conducts the stewardship drive or any fund raising activities, 3) maintain strong communications about the activities going on in the congregation by spreading accurate news enthusiastically, 4) practice openness and accountability about the financial condition of the congregation, and 5) have the board meet regularly with the congregants to answer questions and keep the congregants informed about all that is going on within the congregation.

In addition I offer further thoughts to encourage congregations. Remember generosity is a spiritual issue of the heart. A spiritually mature person cannot move forward until it is understood that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also". The conversation must move beyond boring stewardship to exciting generosity. Tell stories about how the generosity of persons had changed the life of your congregation and lives within the congregation. Keep building relationship trust within the congregation. Cease ineffective programs and activities in the congregation. And finally make it a practice to continually thank people for their time and financial generosity to the congregation,

especially those persons/families who are pledging for the first time.

As you consider making plans for 2009 in the midst of economic uncertainty remember adaptations may be necessary in the overall ministry of your congregation. I know UUs will continue with our faith and good works in the times ahead. Please email (jlund@uua.org) or telephone me (813-931-9727) with thoughts, concerns, or with whatever you might like to communicate.