



The UU Update

December 2017

Volume 61 • Issue 12

Unitarian Universalist Congregation Santa Rosa

HOPE

TWO SUNDAY SERVICES 9:15 am &
11:00 am ~ Except as Noted ~

December 3

ON HOPE AND HEALING

We enter Advent carrying so much that needs to be healed. In the Christian tradition, this is the season of preparation for Christmas. The Christmas story proclaims that hope may be found in the unlikely places. We consider stories from a Bible study gathering in the streets of San Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood. Rev. Mary Ganz is the Assistant Minister at the First UU Society of San Francisco.

Service Leaders: Rev. Mary Ganz, Sharon McCarty, Deb Mason *Music by: Natalie Brundred & The UUsual Suspects, Roger Corman* *Share the Basket: Redwood Credit Union Fire Fund*

December 10

THE HOPE IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Today we celebrate Deborah Mason's 10 years of service as the Director of Religious Education at UUCSR, and prepare to bid her farewell upon her retirement. We also look enthusiastically to the future of our Religious Education programs. The children sing at the early service.

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Cathy Read, Deb Mason *Music by: Sadie Sonntag & The Choir, UUsual Suspects, Roger Corman* *Share the Basket: YWCA-Safe House*

December 17

HOPE AND HEALTH

The power of hope in facing medical challenges is well-established, but not without limits. After all, every life comes to an end, no matter how much care we receive. We must always have hope, though that hope must be realistic. Veronica Jordan, our worship associate, shares experiences as a doctor.

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Veronica Jordan, Deb Mason *Music by: Robert Howseman & the UUsual Suspects, Roger Corman* *Share the Basket: The Living Room*

December 22

WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

Potluck dinner at 5:30 pm Service at 6:00 pm

Now darkness triumphs, and yet soon gives way and changes into light. Our UU Solstice celebration

draws from a variety of sacred traditions. Family-friendly! Please bring drums! The Solstice service will be preceded by a big potluck supper.

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Aphrodite Bellocchio, CUUPS *Music by: The UUsual Suspects*

December 24

Christmas Eve Morning Service

ON WAITING

One Service at 10:00 am

As the year winds down and winter sets in, we find ourselves waiting and hoping – for the return of light, for birth or rebirth, for peace, healing and rebuilding. Today we gather for contemplation, prayer, and song. We acknowledge the necessity of waiting. We dream of what is yet to come.

Service Leaders: Susan Panttaja, Rev. Chris Bell, Deb Mason *Music by: The UUsual Suspects, Roger Corman* *Share the Basket: Minister's Discretionary Fund*

December 24

Christmas Eve Evening Service

JOY TO THE WORLD

Service at 6:00 pm

A joyful celebration of the great healer and teacher, Jesus, and the true spirit of the Holiday season, replete with carols and candles. In the midst of the madness, come savor a moment of true stillness, and fill your soul with hope. All are warmly welcome – invite a friend!

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Joe Gabaeff, Deb Mason *Music by: Sadie Sonntag & The Choir, Roger Corman* *Share the Basket: Minister's Discretionary Fund*

December 31

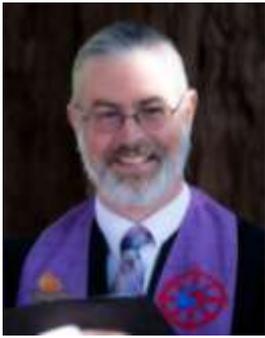
MILESTONES

One Service at 10:00 am

We consider the big events of 2017, and take time for private reflection on our own personal milestones. We also look ahead to the year 2018. What milestones do we hope to celebrate one year from now? How will our faith lead us there?

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Sharon McCarty, Deb Mason *Music by: Susan Panttaja & the UUsual Suspects, Roger Corman* *Share the Basket: Breakfast for our Neighbors*

JANUARY THEME: JUSTICE



HOPE

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," we read in Hebrews 11: 1, a letter of unknown origin in the New Testament. It comes to mind as we transition from considering faith to considering hope. Clearly these two experiences

are related.

According to my computer, which knows and sees all, faith is **"complete trust or confidence in someone or something,"** whereas hope is **"a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen,"** or **"the grounds for believing that something good will happen."** I've got both. I think the whole purpose of my ministry, and of this congregation, is to grow faith and hope in me and in you.

For me, faith is a basic loving orientation toward life in its totality. I accept that I am completely in **the Universe's hands, and affirm that whatever is unfolding is worthy and true.** Such faith allows me to even embrace the fact of my own death, the likelihood of my suffering, even the acts of evil that humans impose upon one another. All things that actually exist are an indisputable part of myself and **my experience, and of the "outer" world that shapes that experience, which I find so precious, so beautiful, so awe-inspiring.** How then, can I not trust the Universe? What else could one have confidence in? This confidence has endured in me, **even when "bad" things have happened, whether the deaths of my parents, the ending of my marriage, massive wildfires, or another season of Cleveland football.** I live with a sense that every experience can be, must be, embraced and **integrated into my being.** **"I trust you even to kill me,"** Hafiz wrote of God, **admiring It's capacity to grow our souls through our sorrows.**

I know She will kill me, of that there is no doubt, and yet I give thanks every day for the gift of life.

Of course, I'm not just going to lay down on the ground and wait to die.

Not when a few more people showing up at a City Council meeting might cause them to vote **"Yes" on the Southeast Greenway, preserving natural resources for my great-grandchildren.** Not when a songbook and a guitar will keep us all deliciously happy and sad for hours. Not as long as little Rosie, my granddaughter, breathes will I cease to cherish life, and not even if she stops breathing before me.

Seeing the Universe as it really is also requires

acknowledging that it is continually rebirthing and evolving. And thus faith brings forth hope. The story of life on Earth (and probably everywhere) is one of ever increasing complexity and morality. Earth was born of mere dust, yet – thanks to gravity, one of **the Goddess's primary tools** – became rock and flame, brought forth new chemistry, atmospheres, biospheres, bacteria, fish, dinosaurs, shrews, monkeys, and then humans. What a wonder! Over the course of time, humanity itself has also evolved and, as Stephen Pinker has ably demonstrated, **become ever more moral. We've hardly completed the morality project, I'll grant, what with an estimated 40 million slaves world-wide and an Earth -killing economic system, but at least we aren't all gathering at the public square to burn witches.**

I think this moral improvement is built-in to the hardware and software of the Universe. I disagree with the Humanists in our tradition who argued that morality is an entirely human creation, and side with Channing and Emerson who saw that anything of human creation was dependent upon the Cosmic Whole upon which we depend for our very lives. **We didn't invent love, or the mathematical harmony of matter and energy, or consciousness; we found them within us.** It would appear that the Universe is geared from the beginning to bring forth beings that are made happy by music, creativity, the Sun, and **each other. I'm with the Beatles, man. The Universe is getting better all the time.**

If the Universe, as it really and actually is, is continually evolving, and I dare say *improving*, than so can I, and so can humanity, no matter how bad things might appear at times. **"While there's life, there is hope,"** says Stephen Hawking, who knows a thing or two about both science and suffering.

In the end, I just have to ask, how else are you going to live? **"If you assume that there is no hope, you guarantee that there will be no hope,"** says Noam Chomsky. I agree. We must hope.

Erich Fromm, also no stranger to suffering, observed, **"To hope means to be ready at every moment for that which is not yet born, and yet not become desperate if there is no birth in our lifetime. Those whose hope is weak settle for comfort or for violence, those whose hope is strong see and cherish signs of new life and are ready every moment to help the birth of that which is ready to be born."**

In this holiday season, which celebrates the birth of a new year and of new life, the birth of Jesus, the return of the sleeping Goddess, the **miracle of the Temple lights, and the Buddha's enlightenment,** may we feel such hope stir within us. May we all be ready every moment to help the birth of that which is ready to be born.

Reverend Chris Bell

And What a Year It's Been **The President's Column**

To confess...I'm looking forward to end-of-year holidays even less this year. I never like the holidays. As an adult, even in a family, they were incredibly stress-filled lonely times. I felt my job was to make sure everyone around me felt **wonderful ...and somehow I got left out of the wonderfulness.**

What a pity party! Generally I'm not one for pitying myself or anyone else, so I thank myself for **sharing, pull up my "big girl underpants," and reach out to friends.** Then the holidays come alive! **The holidays aren't about decorations, lights, eggnog or presents.** They are not about the parties, the **cookies or all the great food.** I've learned holidays are about connection, love and caring for one another, and the deep peace and joy that comes from that.

As I've gotten older, my life has gotten simpler. Instead of my holidays being stress-filled and emptily-busy, I connect. Some years, I decide to **be with my family.** Some years, I've decided to journey around Santa Rosa to see the lights. I live alone and one year discovered that spending all day alone on Christmas day was a big no-no! So now I carefully consider who I want to spend Christmas Day with.

This year, my connections feel more important **than ever.** The "after the fires" reality is really sinking in. For some of us, creating a great Christmas for our children or for ourselves might be hard, on top of the our everyday stresses and worries. Life has become different for each of us **and it won't be going back to the way it was before...**

First responders are gone. National news has

moved on. Contributions from all over the country are slowing down. Others are moving on to the next crisis while we remain here rebuilding from this one. Shortly after the fire, someone coined the **term "Sonoma Strong".** Now is when we *really* show our strength. Our grit. And we will. I have no doubt whatsoever. But we will **ONLY** do it together.

So reach out to each other. Look deeply to see what you need, and what the person across from **you needs.** **Maybe it's a dinner at your house. Maybe it's a compassionate ear. Maybe it's a small, silly gift. Maybe it's an invitation to do something fun. Maybe it's a hug. Don't discount hugs – our members give GREAT ones!**

Make sure you care for your needs this season. **If you need support, Rev. Chris is available, I'm available, and our Compassionate Listeners that we've had since the fires (Susan Bartholome, Jeanie Bates, Claire Beery, Bill Haigwood and Lucia Milburn) will be happy to be available.** The holidays can be *hard.* But the more you reach out, connect and care for one another, and connect again, the more magical they can be.

Our UUCSR community is the place I go when **I'm in need.** **As a choir member, at our Christmas Eve service I get the privilege of looking at all of you when we light the candles and sing Silent Night.** **Every year, I'm so moved I can't get through it without crying.**

Let's celebrate together! We are here! We are strong, we are alive, we are together. It takes a village to raise a human being. This holiday season, **let's do some powerful raising!**



Natalie

What Was Your Board Up To In November?

We had a lot to talk about this month!

We unanimously approved a policy and procedure for **disbursement of the approximately \$46,000 we've raised (!)** for our Fire Fund.

We also unanimously approved hiring someone to set up coffee hour every Sunday. Not only will this allow all our coffee hour volunteers to attend services, it will provide plentiful, hot coffee every week! This person will be hired soon.

We got an update on how the search for an interim Director of Religious Education is going, and discussed the optimal time to begin recruitment for an Assistant Minister.

We also got an update on our Welcoming Friends

project, which pairs a long-time member with each new member when they join. Feedback from the first group is very positive.

We discussed possible changes to the timing of the budgeting process now that we no longer have an annual pledge drive. This would require changes to our Bylaws, so would not be happening immediately.

Minutes of our meetings are always posted in the Work Room, the Social Hall, and on our website. And you are always welcome to attend Board meetings the third Thursday of each month at 6:30, or talk with a board member at coffee hour each Sunday. Each of us welcomes your thoughts and suggestions about how to make our church a welcoming, engaging and enriching place to be.

Natalie Brundred,
President UUCSR Board of Trustees

Religious Education for Children & Youth

Director of Religious Education, Deborah Mason

December marks 10 years that I've served as your DRE! Wow! It has been a remarkable ten years! I carry with me so many memories of so many wonderful children.

Teaching our children, witnessing their growth and development over the years has truly been a joy and an inspiration. I think back to the first Sunday I walked into the RE wing and see how my work has created a transformation in the program.

My goal always has been to create a community of children and youth where love and acceptance abounds and the principles and values of Unitarian Universalism become a guiding light. Over the years I have seen kids grow through the program from preschool to high school graduation.

Deep and abiding friendships have been born in our RE classrooms. Drawn together each Sunday by the light

of the chalice, our kids have learned the way of love, justice and forgiveness. What a gift and honor to serve the congregation this way!

And.....my work is not quite done. Circumstance has led me to decide to continue serving as your DRE in a part time capacity from mid January through June of 2018. This serves the program and it will allow me to ease into my retirement. A win-win all around, I'd say!

A transition team, chaired by Susan Miller, has been formed to help the congregation prepare for a new full-time professional DRE. There will be more details to come about the transition team and it's mission and goals.

I will have a lot more to share about my journey as DRE and my hopes for the future of the program in the December 10th worship service entitled *The Hope In Religious Education*.
In faith, Deborah

RE Classes this Month:

9:15 every Sunday: Children grades K-7 begin in the sanctuary for a story for all ages, then go to RE classes. Childcare for babies, toddlers and preschoolers will be provided by Sophie Johnson and Emily Payne. The Youth Group (grades 8 to 12) is held every Thursday from 4 to 6pm. Deborah Mason, Danny Millspaugh and Rev. Chris serve as Youth Advisors. Contact Deborah at her church email more information.

UUCSR Youth Group Graduates' Reunion and Retreat
Saturday, December 30—Sunday December 31
At UUCSR, Time and details TBA.

*Did you attend the UUCSR Youth Group during high school?
Know someone who did?*

We're looking for some former Youth Group Members.
Please help us get in touch!

Have contact info for a UUCSR youth group graduate?
Reach out to Deborah, Izzy Fisher or Dylan Graham.
It will be good to be together!

DECEMBER	K-1: WISDOM STORIES	2-4: SIGNS OF OUR FAITH	5-7: SING TO THE POWER
12/3	Children's Chapel - All Ages Together Theme: Have Faith		
12/10	<i>Amazing Grace</i> by Mary Hoffman	Session 7: Memorial Rituals	The Power of Presence
12/17	<i>The Name Jar</i> by Yangsok Choi	Thanksgiving Celebration	Thanksgiving Celebration
12/24	<i>What If Everybody Did That</i> by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell	Session 8: We Share	The Power of Silence
12/31	Children's Chapel - All Ages Together		

*WE WANT YOUR MILESTONES 2017
AND HOPES 2018*

Starting next Sunday in the social hall you will see lovely poster boards entitled "Milestones 2017" and "Hopes 2018", which will be used in our New Year's Eve Milestones service.

We invite you to write down something personal under one or both of these headings. Please be very brief so lots of people can contribute.

You need not put down your name...or you can. These boards will remain up until the New Year's Eve service. Thanks for contributing!

SPIRIT MOVES BODY MOVES
Is On Vacation for December

See You in January!

*Let's move our energy in this
"new normal" time!*

Evening Book Group

Thursday, December 7, 7 –9 pm, RE Wing

The Evening Book Group meets December 7 from 7 to 9 p.m. at 547 Mendocino. We meet in the RE wing.

The December Selection is:
News of the World by Paulette Jiles.

In January we are reading:
Bartleby the Scrivener by Herman Melville

Visitors and newcomers are welcome!
Questions? Contact Linda Lampson

TIE GROUPS

*"I LOVE THE DIVERSITY OF VIEWS
PEOPLE EXPRESS IN TIE GROUPS."*
J.K.

TIE Group: a small (8-10 person) facilitated discussion group, which meets 2 x per month, October thru May. TIE groups provide an opportunity to enhance your feeling of belonging within our UUSCR community. Conversations spring from rich topics with potential for deep sharing.

DRAWING GROUP

Wednesday 1-3

Join us every Wednesday from 1 to 3 in the Board Room for meaningful fun. Learn that you can draw, even if you thought you couldn't. Bring a sketch pad, pencil and eraser.

Open to all !

Adult Religious Education

Guided by UU Principles, Rooted in Sources of Unitarian Universalism, and the Vision and Mission of Our Congregation, the Adult RE Team strengthens community and facilitates spiritual growth by offering classes, activities, programs, training of facilitators and coordination of other UUCSR activities. Members of the ARE Committee: Rev. Chris Bell, Nadene Carroll, Phil Harriman, Sarita Hazen, Helga Lemke (Chair), and John Speck.

Human DNA: Past, Present & Future

Wednesdays 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm

UUCSR Board Room

January 17, 2018: Past and Present: Studies of DNA from current populations and from fossils show how *Homo sapiens* left Africa and populated the world, mating with distant cousins like *Homo neanderthalensis* along the way. Hear about the latest discoveries in this rapidly advancing area of research.

January 24th : Present and Future: New techniques for efficiently modifying DNA of all organisms have been developed. Experiments genetically modifying human embryos are underway and the ethics of this work is being hotly debated. How close are we to GMO humans?

UUCSR member Phil Harriman has a PhD in Biophysics from UC Berkeley and was Program Director for Genetics at the National Science Foundation before retiring to Sonoma County. He's taught genetics courses for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes at Sonoma State and Dominican University in San Rafael.

~ ~ ~

Coming This Spring:

Death and Dying Reading and Discussion Group on *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande

This deeply moving book will be our resource to consider attitudes towards aging and dying in our country. Doctors are trained to keep patients alive as long as possible- but not how to help them prepare them for death.

Join us for a 4 part discussion of this book which compares attitudes toward death and dying in the West and India and asks hard questions about how we as a culture and the medical profession in particular treat the old and the terminally ill.

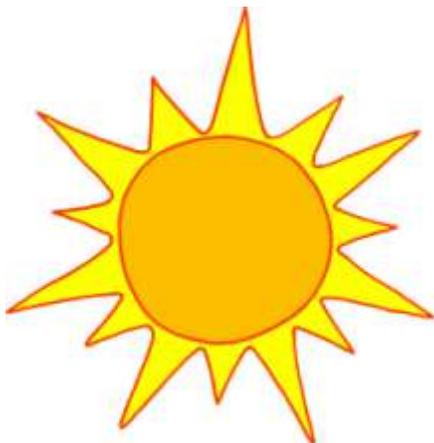
Moderated by UU members Linda Lampson, UU book club coordinator who was trained by hospital chaplaincy and specialized in estate planning as a CPA, and Helga Lemke, UU book club member. Both are avid readers.

2017 Winter Solstice Celebration

December 22, 2017

5:30 pm Potluck / 6:00 pm Ceremony at UUCSR

We thank the Winter Darkness for a much needed rest and welcome back the Sun with its ever lengthening days with a Winter Solstice Celebration on Friday, Dec 22, 2017.



Earth is on its Perihelion; the point on its orbit closest to the Sun a few weeks just after Winter Solstice. Yet the daytime is shorter and we think of this season as colder. This is a result of the axial tilt of our Earth Mother. The Latin word solstitium, meaning 'the Sun stands still' is the basis for the word Solstice. Can't you just envision the Sun sitting still on an apex teetering and waiting for that moment when it starts its slow slide towards longer, warmer days?

In ancient Poland the Winter Solstice involved showing forgiveness and sharing food. Today that celebration is known as Gody. We can celebrate Gody at our Solstice with a potluck and letting go of feelings that weigh us down.

Bask in the joy of Mother Earth warming us again starting at 5:30 with the potluck. Ceremony and drumming after that. This is a family-friendly all congregation event and we encourage you to bring your drum and other musical instrument to add to the night's energy. For more information contact cuups email at church.

We will have the potluck FIRST this year then the celebration.

SUPPORTIVE DROP-IN GROUP

FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY THE FIRES

Monday, December 4 (ongoing)

6:30-8:30 pm in the UUCSR Board Room

Would you like a place to talk about your experiences and feelings related to the fires?

There will be a drop-in group beginning on Monday, December 4 and continuing as long as the need exists. We will meet Monday nights from 6:30 to 8:30 in the Board Room. All affected by the fires are welcome, no matter the particular loss.

The group will be facilitated by Jeanie Bates and Lucia Milburn. Call if you would like more information or just show up.



Occidental Community Choir

WINTER CONCERTS, 2017

Sarah Sausbury, Guest Conductor

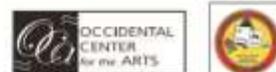
Occidental Center for the Arts
3850 Doris Murphy Ct, Occidental

Saturday, Dec 2 - 7:30 pm
COMMUNITY FIRST NIGHT - TICKETS \$10
Sunday, Dec 3 - 3 pm
Friday, Dec 8 - 8 pm
Saturday, Dec 9 - 8 pm

Glaser Center
547 Mendocino Av, Santa Rosa
Sunday, Dec 10 - 3 pm

TICKETS AT
OccidentalChoir.org
or at the door

Adults \$15
Kids 12 and under free
Advance tickets recommended



A UUA "Common Read 2017-2018" Reading Group Convenes

January 30, February 6, and February 13 (in UUCSR Board Room)
 Three Tuesdays, 6 pm - 8 pm

Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry

Edited by Rev. Mitra Rahnema

"May this be a new beginning, a new paradigm for creating sustainable, multiculturally competent communities of faith. May we build strength for and among all religious professionals of color and all people who know in their bones what it means to live on the margins and be centered."

Rev. Mitra Rahnema, April 2017

This three-session reading group, sponsored by the UUCSR Diversity Project and the UUCSR Adult Religious Education Committee, will offer participants the opportunity to practice centering the experiences of Unitarian Universalist religious professionals who are also people of color.

The book Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry was chosen by the **Unitarian Universalist Association as a "Common Read" for 2017-18**. A Common Read is a book believed to offer opportunities for deep, meaningful conversations and clarification of our shared values as a community. This book is a collection of essays and responses that offer many insights on how perceptions of race and power function in our congregations.

The three sessions are meant for ongoing attendance. Those who attend the first session will decide if they want to make the subsequent sessions open or closed to drop-in attendance. The sessions are structured to encourage participants to experience a sense of the sacred as they hear and hold the stories from the book and from one another.

Here are summaries of each session:

Session One: Visibility and Invisibility

Creating a Covenant gives the group a shared understanding of the practices expected.

Longings will center one essay "Othering and Belonging" by Rev. Darrick Jackson and the response by Rev. Lilia Cuervo

Discussion will focus on what these two tell us about navigating cultural differences and being agents for change

Session Two: Leadership and Ministry

"Call and Response", by Rev. Lauren Smith, with response by Rev. Susan Newman Moore gives the group an opportunity to hear and consider how these writers have experienced Unitarian Universalist habits of worship and ministry. How do we show our respect as well as our love for one another?

"Representing," by Rev. Manish Mishra-Marzetti, response by Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt will challenge the group to hear the pressures that fall on religious professionals who are expected to behave as white people while also being expected to educate their mostly white congregations about the lives of communities of color. We will also hear of the deep commitment of these professionals to the ideals of Unitarian Universalism.

Session Three : Ministering to People of Color

"The Religious Educator of Color" by Rev. Natalie Maxwell Fenimore and Aisha Hauser, MSW with a response from Rev. Sofia Betancourt offers the group a deeper understanding of the ministry that religious professionals of color can offer particularly to their congregants who are people of color as well as encouraging white congregants to develop a consideration that is deeper and more useful than a superficial "welcoming."

Reflecting and Acting will close our sessions together. The group will take a look at our journey together and consider what might serve us going forward as individuals and as members of communities.

A4SJ For Social Justice Presents:

A Talk and Film Clip on the Making of
"An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power"

By Robyn Kopp, Associate Producer
Dec 3 after 11:00 am Service

Robyn Kopp, Associate Producer of "An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power," the Al Gore sequel to the original "Inconvenient Truth" will speak on December 3 after the 11:00 service.

She will present "Truth in 10," a ten-minute overview of the feature film and describe the making of this timely environmental film, including the decisions and challenges encountered during its filming.

Thanks, Linda Lambert

A4SJ Diversity Project Presents:

TRANS 101

January 21, 12:30pm-2pm
Room 545 at UUCSR

The Diversity Project of the Advocates of Social Justice invites all to a thought provoking and fun dialogue on the topics of gender fluidity and transgender/queer identity.

Our dialogue is led by Elis Herman—Health Educator Planned Parenthood of Northern California.

Elis earned Bachelor's degrees in Sociology and Gender Studies, with a minor in music from Salem College in North Carolina. In the South, Elis did organizing and education around queer, feminist and other intersecting justice issues. Currently, Elis is teaching health and sex education for Planned Parenthood in Sonoma County, is a Certified Family Planning Health Specialist, and is endorsed thru San Francisco Sex Education (SFSI).

Light refreshments provided. Please bring a bag lunch if desired.

A MLK Celebration Invitation

We welcome you and hope you respond!

On the behalf of Pastor H. Lee Turner, please accept the attached invitation, save the date, and share with the community.

It is our hope that we include everyone for this event.

We ask that you provide us with any information regarding events and/or service projects that your organization will host in honor of this day.

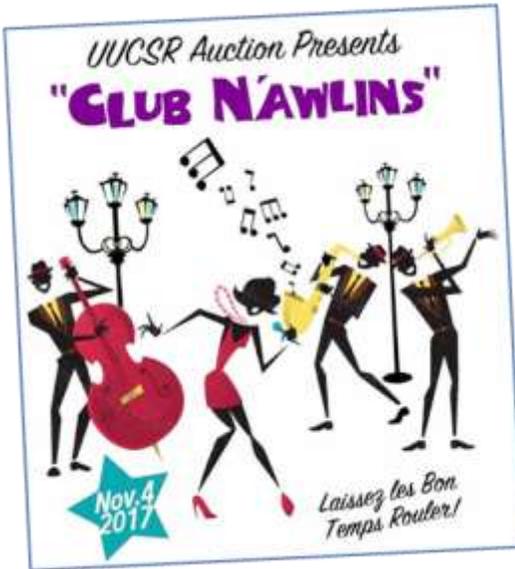
We'd like to share the details and celebrate with you.

Make it a great day!

Reflection:

It's better when we Live together in unity.

God Bless, Mrs. Nikigiovonie Rogers



Our AUCTION PARTY is ON !

February 17, 2018

4:30 Onward at the Glaser Center

What kind of party? Our own UUCSR version of the Mardi Gras happening in New Orleans this month!

We'll have a four-course dinner featuring Marilyn Holmes' jambalaya. A club atmosphere with décor and live music setting you in The Big Easy.

Don't forget the camaraderie—it's special!

Who's invited?

All UUCSR members and friends. You don't need to have a large disposable income, a good-lookin' date or a fancy outfit. This event is designed to include everybody, with sliding scale door fee from \$10 to \$40 and a selection of low-cost parties to bid on.

Why attend?

Good food, good company, good fun. Our Annual Auction is the best opportunity we have all year to enjoy each other's company in a party atmosphere. Obviously, it's also about helping to fund our mission at UUCSR. Making this a successful fundraiser involves you!

What's my part?

We need donations. Everyone has something to offer: a talent, a treasure, or a to-do of some sort.

Here are some ideas to inspire you:

- Serve a chili supper or wine and cheese to enjoy with a game or movie.
- Host a sing-along with pizza and beer.
- Offer a Christmas cookie-baking party.
- Plan a Super Bowl- or Oscar-watching party.
- Organize a walk and a picnic in Armstrong Woods or a Russian River beach party.
- Host a visit to Hallberg Butterfly Gardens or the Russian River Rose Company.
- Host a dinner party with ethnic cuisine.
- Lead an outing, like a Spring Hike at Bouverie Preserve or a Wild Flower Walk.
- Donate food or wine.
- Offer donated gift certificates from local restaurants or other businesses.
- Donate an art item, a collectable, a gift or special household item.
- Offer a service, such as party planning, or garden help.



A Donation Form is on the other side of this page. You can write on and turn in at the auction table on Sundays or in the office is on the back of this flyer. If you'd prefer to fill out a form on your computer, you'll find one at <https://web.uusantarosa.org/connect/auction/>

MARDI GRAS AUCTION PARTY FEBRUARY 17, 2018

UUCSR Auction Donation Form

Donor Name and/or Company:		
Address: <i>Please provide your FULL address (street, city, state, zip).</i>		
Phone Number(s):		
Primary:		Other:
E-mail:		
Item Description:		Item Date:
Item Value*	Quantity/Number Available:	
<small><i>*Value should be determined on the basis of what the item (or service) would sell for in current condition at current market prices. The Auction Committee reserves the right to re-price items as necessary before or during the auction.</i></small>		
Item <input type="checkbox"/> Is in hand <input type="checkbox"/> Will be received by (date)_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Need to arrange for pickup		
<small><i>Note: Solicitors are responsible for assuring that items are received. If storage is necessary, please contact the Auction chairperson.</i></small>		
Solicitor Name/Phone:		

Detach and give to donor

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa Auction Donation Confirmation

Donation Date:		
Donor Name and/or Company:		
Item Description:		
Item Value*	Quantity/Number Available:	
Solicitor Name/Phone:		

Note: Following the auction, all donors will receive a letter acknowledging their donation, which may be used for tax purposes.

A4SJ

ADVOCATES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

We meet 2nd Mondays, 10 am—12 pm, at UUCSR - Join us!

We welcome your participation! Contact Linda Harlow or visit our table Sundays in the Social Hall.

Share the Offering

UUCSR shares Sunday offerings with local non-profits that serve greater So. Co., incl. our Saturday Breakfast For Our Neighbors.

SHARE THE OFFERING

December 3: The Redwood Credit Union Fire Fund is providing help to victims of the recent fires.

December 10: The YWCA Safe House provides shelter and counseling to women and children victims of domestic abuse.

December 17: The Living Room, located on Cleveland Avenue near College, welcomes homeless at-risk women and kids into a warm and safe environment during the day. Caring staff offer lifelines during times of crisis.

December 24: The Ministers Discretionary Fund is used, at the ministers discretion, in accordance with our Mission and Vision, to provide confidential direct cash support to members, friends, or others for housing, transportation, food, medical attention, education, or other pressing financial need.

December 31: Breakfast For Our Neighbors, our own Saturday Breakfast, provides nutritious meals in a friendly atmosphere for our needy neighbors. Supported by volunteer efforts and financial generosity of members and others.

January 7: The Redwood Empire Food Bank continues to meet the existing need for food assistance in our community, and needs additional financial assistance to continue providing help for our neighbors impacted by the recent fires.

FENCE AT THE TOP

Sunday, December 10
After 11:00 am Service

Presented by Honor Jackson, Executive Director

HOT TOPIC

Fence at the Top is a mentoring program in Sonoma County providing youth with vital life skills that will foster the greatest success possible for them. The program provides on and off campus mentoring sessions, sports and health programs, field trips, motivational speakers, tutoring, employment searches and community support. These elements provide guidance to youth and encourages them to focus on their grades, what is possible and experience a taste of success. Youth who are given opportunities and tools can become productive citizens.

The Executive Director of the program is Honor Jackson, a former NFL football player for the New England Patriots and the New York Giants. He will be present on the 10th to discuss the program details.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE/CLIMATE CHANGE FILM SERIES
The Advocates for Social Justice Film Project is pleased to present this important documentary.

THE END OF SUBURBIA

Director: Gregory Greene

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2017

Following the 11 AM service in the Board Room

We are a society addicted to oil. This 2004 documentary, *The End of Suburbia*, tells us everything we need to know about our addictions to fossil fuels: the history, the science, the economics and politics, the implications, and the alternatives. This film explores the intertwining histories of the energy industry and the suburbs which emerged after WWII enabled by the rapid growth of the automobile industry. *The End of Suburbia* is a well-crafted work with engaging and frank discussions that may change our understandings of the future. Internationally known experts include Richard Heinberg of the Post Carbon Institute here in Santa Rosa.

Discussion, as always follows viewing of the film. Please bring whatever you wish to eat. We will provide snacks, not a lunch.

Elaine, Cassandra, Mary Louise, Carol D., Jeanie



**NBOP MEMBERS DECIDE
OUR FUTURE FOCUS**

On Sunday, November 5th, 2017, the NBOP Issues Assembly voted into effect the following Issue Task Forces:

- 1) Tenants / Housing / Homelessness
- 2) Immigrant Defense / Immigration Policy
- 3) Justice for the Environment

We are very excited to have this direction, as these issues also relate directly to our desire to develop a broad "Just Recovery" platform with our partners across the County. The traits and characteristics of disaster capitalism are already beginning to show themselves in Sonoma County as rents rise, immigrants are targeted, environmental protections are lifted, and political associations of the wealthy begin to take form. We must not only form the counterbalance, but our focus on deepened democracy, dignity for workers, care for the earth, and demand for dignified housing, must form the viable path forward. Our newly formed Task Forces met on November 13 and we started planning what directions each task force will take in the next two years.

Interested in becoming involved? Please contact Deborah Mason, Sibyl Day, Carol Kraemer, Wayne Smith, Jeannie Bates or Ellen O'Hare



CARING CONNECTIONS

Our UUCSR mission invites us to Take Care of Each Other.

We help fellow members who are recovering from surgery, may be in the hospital, need meals, transportation or would like a phone call to stay connected with our community.

Are you interested in volunteering? Do you love to cook? Love to talk on the phone? Like to drive? Make deliveries? How much time are you able to give to this great cause of caring for each other?

Please stop by the Caring Connections table on Sunday to sign a card. Let us know how you would like to volunteer. Also talk to us if you have any ideas, questions, or concerns. You could also call Gail Alford at 707-843-4466 to make arrangements to volunteer or let us know of a member that has a need for a caring connection. (Ask at the office for a telephone list of members that would like calls)

DESK ANGELS WANTED!

Are you becoming too isolated?
Come join our desk angels team!

The primary task is answering the telephone.
It's a "piece of cake and gluten-free!"
Opening now for 3 Thursday morning shifts &
3 Friday morning shifts 9:30-1:00.
(Subs helpful and welcome too)

A joyful time is guaranteed!
Contact Bertha Jean at the church office

Sunday Social Hour Volunteering Opps

Thank you to the people that have signed up to volunteer one hour a month. There are still shifts without any volunteers. PLEASE CONSIDER SIGNING UP- THIS IS NOT A ONE PERSON TASK!! If you would like to donate food, think of finger foods, savory items would be fantastic. Hard boiled eggs, cheese and crackers, vegetables and fruit. Celery with peanut butter was a hit this past week. If you have any questions, want to bring a celebratory cake, or would like to volunteer, contact Ellen O'Hare.

UUCSR Monthly
Work Saturday December 9
9 am—Noon

Our Work Day this month we'll be... *please come see! Help keep the building and grounds spiffy!*

**January UU Update Deadline Early:
December 11**

Please note this week-early deadline for the January Newsletter. This is due to your Editor taking a Winter-Solstice Week Vacation. Thanks for cooperating and getting your copy in!

Send Copy to Newsletter@uusantarosa.org

Share-The-Basket

We split our Weekly offering contributions.
Our social action committee, Advocates for Social Justice selects a program to receive a special donation from our Congregation.

OCTOBER RECIPIENTS

Friends of No. Bay Regional Center	\$479.61
Listening for a Change	\$372.58
Raizes Collective	\$788.62
Breakfast for our Neighbors	\$770.09

Thanks for Your Generosity!

Faith And Fitness

Saturday, December 16

10:15 am-1:00 pm

Shollenberger Park, Petaluma
 Next hike Saturday December 16 at Shollenberger Park in Petaluma, 1400 Cader Lane, off McDowell south of Lakeville Highway in the industrial area. Carpool from Santa Rosa at 10:00 (usual Fourth and Farmers Safeway parking lot location) or meet at 10:30 at the park. Easy flat 2 mile loop to the river and back. Good birding, bring binoculars for a better view as we walk around. Bring also layers, lunch/snack, water. Dogs allowed. Cancelled if raining. Contact Gretchen P.

UUCSR Women Together Presents:
WOMEN TOGETHER HOLIDAY PARTY
 December 16, Noon-2 pm

We're past Black Friday and Green Monday which, every year, means it's time to take a break from all that rushing around and relax with good friends to share a delicious pot-luck lunch at Helga Lemke's gracious home, 1983 Grosse Avenue, Santa Rosa, on Saturday, December 16th from noon to 2ish. This is always one of our most delightful and relaxed get-togethers so you won't want to miss it! Bring a friend! We'd love to share the holiday spirit and welcome them to Women Together and UUCSR!

Emergency Trainings at UUCSR, for UUCSR
 Or, What is a Knox Box?

Saturday, Dec 2, 10:00—11:00 am
 Thursday, Jan 7, 12:30-1:30 pm
 Sanctuary at UUCSR

Do you know what a Knox Box is, what it is used for, and where they are located at UUCSR? In an emergency could you find one of the 4 first aid kits at the Congregation? Do you know where the fire extinguisher located nearest to our sanctuary candles is located? Do you know the location of the nearest emergency exit? These and other very important topics will be reviewed at two upcoming UUCSR training sessions, offered by the Operations Team, who have been working diligently on a safety and security plan for our Congregation.

The first opportunity is Dec 2nd from 10:00 - 11:00 AM in the Sanctuary. (Yes, this is during the regularly scheduled Worship Associates meeting.)

The second opportunity is January 7th from 12:30 - 1:30 PM.

Please plan on attending one of the offered hour-long training sessions.

These training sessions are open to all members, but they are highly (and I mean highly) recommended for our Officers of the Day, Ushers and Greeters, Worship Associates, Music Coordinators, Glaser Center on-site staff, Religious Educators, Saturday Breakfast Crew, and Board Members.

I also commend this training to our leaders of groups who meet regularly at UUCSR, such as TIE groups, Adult Ed, CUUPS, kitchen crews, and A4SJ.

I look forward to seeing you there, and thanks to Ops Team (John Jaffray, Bud Willis, Kirsten Olney, Paul Gilger, Janis Brewster, Peter Wilson, Pam Tennant and Gretchen Vap) for taking the lead on this important training.

Fondly, Rev. Chris

**OLD AGE IS
 NOT FOR SISSIES**

2nd & 4th Mondays

FOR DECEMBER, the 11th ONLY
 10:30 a.m. in UUCSR 545 Room

Old Age is Not for Sissies is a group for Women Congregants 80 and over.

Are you one of us? Meet in Rm 545 at 10:30 a.m. every second and fourth Monday morning. Coffee service starts at 10:00 a.m.

Secret Handshake not required. Need transportation? Please call well ahead of meeting date.

Questions? Call:

Phyllis Clement
 Dorris Lee
 Shirley White

Speed Diversity Dialogue

A new approach to our collective commitment to diversity



Save This New
 Rescheduled Date!
Sunday, April 15
 12:30 pm
 in UUCSR Sanctuary

Designed and facilitated by Dr. Elisa Velasquez, Director of Diversity and Inclusive Excellence at Sonoma State University. By A4SJ Diversity Project.

Info? Elaine Wellin

Treasurer's Monthly Ledger

We just completed our first three months of the New Year, or our first quarter.

Operations posted a net deficit of (\$12,900) for the month of September. If we add in expenses for the restroom repairs that bumps us to (\$20,000). YTD, the picture improves with a loss of (\$9,400), excluding repairs, which will be paid from our Endowment. We have taken in \$115,500 so far this year and are about (\$12,000) under budget; however, total expenditures were lower than expected and our budget is close to our target. Our budget considers the normal slow funding from pledges during the beginning of a New Year, as this is typical at this point in time.

The Glaser Center reported a Net Surplus of \$5,800 for September, and YTD we are up \$7,100.

We are running close to budget. Check out the Ollie courses from SSU, as we would like this rental to continue in the future.

If it is within your means, we encourage all members to consider pledging 5% of your income. Defining your income is up to you, as we all have varying needs. For example, you could be supporting a family member during retirement. If so, you might want to adjust your disposable income accordingly. The point is not necessarily the amount you contribute, but how you cut up the pie.

Also, to help with UU cash flow, consider making automatic monthly or quarterly payments directly from your checking account. You can do this online at our website.

Fiscally yours,

Michael Randolph, Treasurer

All-Congregation Christmas Potluck on 12/25

We're throwing a big Christmas Day potluck dinner!

Come celebrate the holiday with your UUCSR family. **We're starting at 1:00 pm on December 25th.** Bring yourselves, bring your family, bring your favorite holiday dinner dish to share, bring your love and joy and caring. Bring your sparkles! See you all there.

Fondly, Rev. Chris

We don't live in the best of all possible worlds.

This is a Kafkaesque time. The television sparkles with images of despicable political louts and sexual harassment reports. We cannot look away from the pictures of furious elements, hurricanes and fires, from the repetitive crowd murders by gunmen burning with rage. We are made more anxious by flickering threats of nuclear war. We observe social media's manipulation of a credulous population, a population dividing into bitter tribal cultures. We are living through a massive shift from representative democracy to something called viral direct democracy, now cascading over us in a garbage-laden tsunami of raw data. Everything is situational, seesawing between gut-response "likes" or vicious confrontations. For some this is a heady time of brilliant technological innovation that is bringing us into an exciting new world. For others it is the opening of a savagely difficult book without a happy ending.

To me the most distressing circumstance of the new order is the accelerating destruction of the natural world and the dreadful belief that only

the human species has the inalienable right to life and God-given permission to take anything it wants from nature, whether mountaintops, wetlands or oil. The ferocious business of stripping the earth of its flora and fauna, of drowning the land in pesticides again may have brought us to a place where no technology can save us. I personally have found an amelioration in becoming involved in citizen science projects. This is something everyone can do. Every state has marvelous projects of all kinds, from working with fish, with plants, with landscapes, with shore erosions, with water situations.

Yet somehow the old discredited values and longings persist. We still have tender feelings for such outmoded notions as truth, respect for others, personal honor, justice, equitable sharing. We still hope for a happy ending. We still believe that we can save ourselves and our damaged earth—an indescribably difficult task as we discover that the web of life is far more mysteriously complex than we thought and subtly entangled with factors that we cannot even recognize. But we keep on trying, because there's nothing else to do.

The happy ending still beckons, and it is in hope of grasping it that we

go on. The poet Wisława Szymborska caught the writer's dilemma of choosing between hard realities and the longing for the happy ending. She called it "consolation." Darwin: They say he read novels to relax, but only certain kinds—nothing that ended unhappily. If he happened on something like that, enraged, he flung the book into the fire...

Hence the indispensable silver lining, the lovers reunited, the families reconciled, the doubts dispelled, fidelity rewarded, fortunes regained, treasures uncovered, stiff-necked neighbors mending their ways, good names restored, greed daunted, old maids married off to worthy parsons, troublemakers banished to other hemispheres, forgers of documents tossed down the stairs, seducers scurried to the altar, orphans sheltered, widows comforted, pride humbled, wounds healed, prodigal sons summoned home, cups of sorrow tossed into the ocean, hankies drenched with tears of reconciliation, general merriment and celebration, and the dog Fido, gone astray in the first chapter, turns up barking gladly in the last. Thank you.

— Annie Proulx, winner of the National Book Lifetime Award, accepting her prize.

Musical Notes

One thing you can be sure of in December: there *will* be music in the UUCSR services. Now, as to specifically *what* music will be performed, and by *whom ... aye, there's the rub.*

However, there are some tantalizing clues in the Worship Calendar. Special music scheduled for **December 3 is "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."** Perhaps you may have heard of that one?

December 10 promises "kid friendly songs" and then the *pièce de résistance*: Rev. Chris singing

"Forever Young." Who'd want to miss that?

December 17 will feature a lot of music, **including, as the prelude, "A UU Prayer" for quartet; for special music, "The Child in His Mother's Arms";** and for the closing hymn, the congregation will learn **"Somewhere to Begin."**

Choir numbers for the month are still being firmed up. But the Christmas Eve service will certainly feature, as always, carols in the hallway, **and during the service, the lovely "Night of Silence" sung counterpoint with "Silent Night."**

-A Bell

From Your Stewardship Team

Something's been recently appearing in my inbox – encouraging (friendly?) reminders from TaxAct.com to start getting my stuff together for the upcoming joy of tax season. This brings to mind the **concept of deductions. As in charitable deductions ... you know where I'm going with this.**

Now, I know you don't contribute to UUCSR just so you can get a deduction. You contribute because you value this community for a myriad reasons, not just for yourself and family, but also for the important place UUCSR has in the larger community of Sonoma County. Still the practical timing of your contribution can do you some good tax-wise. Enter the end-of-the-year contribution.

While 70% of UUCSR's income is from pledges, 10% comes from contributions aside from pledges. Our congregation continues to grow, and with it come new and greater commitments to sustain that growth.

The Committee on Shared Ministry is now doing its annual minister evaluation. A common theme among those polled is the idea of an assistant **minister. We've talked about this for a long time, and now it's actually in the next fiscal year's budget!** So we need to step up and make sure we can sustain that position.

We can rightfully take pride in UUCSR for our good work in the community—particularly during the fire catastrophe—as well as the spiritual nourishment provided to members and visitors alike. **Since we've given up the annual pledge drive it's** more important than ever to keep tabs on our own level of giving. And a great way to start is with idea of Five to Thrive, that is, pegging your pledge level at 5% or more of your income.

'Tis the season to be jolly ... and generous. Try to be both. It's good for ya.

-AB, For the Stewardship Team

UUSC Greeting Cards on Sale Now

Watch for Lovely Affordable Seasonal Greeting Cards from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC).

We have quite a selection of card designs. The Justice-Harvest Peace cards are blank inside, as are 2 others. The holiday selections are also very nice. We have already sold almost half of them, so be sure to stop by the next few Sundays.

Price? A 10-card package for \$10. What a Deal! Stop by the round table near the RE wing.

The sales of these greeting cards support the efforts of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, the International Social Justice representative of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

The UU Service Committee operates in many countries, partners with existing local organizations to help promote economic and environmental justice and to protect rights at risk.

Presently The UUSC is emphasizing work in Haiti, and in Myanmar, where the Rohingya people are the victims of ongoing genocidal actions.

Our congregation also supports the UU Service Committee through our holiday gifts to Guest at Your Table, and by encouraging individual UUs to become members of the UUSC organization.

Phyllis and Becky

