



Domelight



Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa
Rev. Elizabeth Brown, Minister

February 2007
Katie Templin Culbert, Dir. Religious Education

Interim Inklings

As your interim minister, part of my job is to facilitate the health of the congregation by recommending best practices. In this column I'd like to focus on two programs—Religious Education for children and youth, and Membership, two areas where committee participation has lately been small. My recommendation is that, in both these areas, the whole congregation function as a Committee of the Whole.

This is, of course, a parliamentary term. But I am using the term in a different sense. I am basically suggesting that every member of UUCT become a member of the R.E. and Membership committees. Remember, many hands make light work.

Children's Religious Education

Our children are our future. This platitude rolls easily off the tongue, but what does it really mean? It means we must cherish and nurture this precious resource.

Too often in our liberal religious tradition our children graduate from high school, go off to college or the workplace, and lose their connection with Unitarian Universalism, returning only when they themselves become parents whose children need quality religious education.

We could do more to strengthen children's ties to Unitarian Universalism. What if we all made an intentional effort to know our children? More UUCT members need to attend R.E. events. There are many ways to get involved, both long-term (serving on the R.E. Committee, teaching a unit), and short-term (chaperoning an event, driving a carload on a field trip, providing snacks). Typically such jobs are done by parents, but parents need and deserve an occasional break. This all boils down to the African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child."

Membership Team

A group of UUCT members met in January to learn more about welcoming and retaining new members. We watched a DVD about the practices of the Jefferson UU Church in Golden, Colorado. Many were inspired by what we saw—and also a little intimidated when we realized how much work it takes to be truly welcoming.

This work cannot be done by a small handful of people. Instead, the whole congregation needs to think of itself as one big membership committee. It is the responsibility of every member of UUCT to be hospitable toward every new person who walks in the door. One or two people cannot successfully greet every guest.

As a newbie among you, I have one recommendation that can easily be followed immediately: PLEASE WEAR YOUR NAME TAGS. If you have lost yours, make a new temporary one while another is being made.

The average retention rate of visitors who stay to become members of UU congregations is one in five. Based on my observation in the five months I've been here, we are not even retaining one in twenty. Even allowing for the transient status of many of these guests because our area is a tourist destination, we retain fewer than one in ten.

We can—we must—do better. Because we have a unique message the world needs to hear.

In community,
Rev. Liz

The Prez Says

Diana Stevens

Just to update you on a few things.

The two large air-conditioner units on the side of the building were stolen in December. There have been a lot of these types of thefts lately as the price of copper has risen and it can be sold for quite a bit. By the time you read this, we will have replaced the units, one 5 ton and a 3 ½ ton. We also have put cages around them (as recommended by the investigating officer and the insurance company) to prevent them being stolen again. Our insurance company did cover the units, minus the deductible, but not the cages. This comes out of our building repair fund. See Ed Benedict for details if you are interested.

Our Interim Ministry is going quite well as we prepare for our new minister. There is an agenda of processes that needs to be accomplished so that we can put our past behind and welcome our new minister with great enthusiasm and openness to new experiences. Re-read Rev. Liz Brown's Domelight articles and you will see what we have done, are doing, and still have to do before her time with us is over. If you have questions about the Interim process, ask her or one of your Board members. Remember, the only constant in life is CHANGE.

We have a new Office Administrator, Eric Tringale, a student at USF. He is working Tuesday 4-8 and Thursday 2-6. As you can see, the hours have been reduced to 8 and we are glad he is a very focused man. Stop by to say, 'Hi' but don't stay too long. We hope to recruit some volunteers to do specific tasks that can not be done in his 8 hour week. (This was one of the budget adjustments.)

Look at the calendar for all the activities going on this month and feel free to join in. Read the Board minutes out in the hallway for additional information on what is happening at the church.



Missing your Domelight?

As recommended by the board and approved at the Congregational meeting on December 17th, 2006, the Domelight will no longer be mailed effective with this issue. This change is to help trim the associated costs from the budget. However, the Domelight is still an important part of this congregation and will continue to exist on the website at www.uutampa.org.

Notification that the Domelight has been posted on the website will be sent to the UUCT e-group. If you do not subscribe to the e-list and would like to, go to the Yahoo group, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UUTampa/> and follow the instructions to join the group.

For those in our congregation that do not have access to the Internet, paper copies of the Domelight will be available at the church. Also, for a \$15.00 donation, the Domelight will be mailed to you. PLEASE NOTE: the donation is for a 1-year Domelight subscription.



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*Download from <http://www.uupampa.org> free of charge. For a 1 year subscription by mail, please make a \$15 donation to the church office. Mark it **DOMELIGHT SUBSCRIPTION**. Domelight deadline is generally the Sunday closest to the 15th of each month. Deadline for the next issue is **February 15th**. Articles may be submitted by e-mail to Domelight@chrisandjamie.net*

Submissions should include a contact name and phone number.

Editor: Chris Hendrickx



Evensong Class (Sample Covenant Group)

Co-facilitators Joan Lund and Rev. Liz Brown
Feb. 6 – March 27, 7:00-9:00 PM
(consecutive Tuesdays)

Evensong is an eight-week series of gatherings focused on earnest listening and sharing of thoughts, beliefs, and journeys in spirituality and religious life. It will be presented in the Covenant Group format—group size will be limited to twelve, advance sign-up is required, and the group will be closed after the second session. If you are interested in being part of this group, please contact Joan at (813) 931-9727 or Rev. Liz at (727) 599-6132.



Betty Lee Award Nominees Requested

Ed Benedict, Volunteer Treasurer

Throughout our Church's history we have recognized individuals for their contributions of personal time and energy in service to our community. During our more recent history,

several members have been singled out for such recognition by being awarded the Betty McCluer Lee Distinguished Service Award. Our most recent recipient was Kathy Albury, who was recognized for "...service meeting...high standards of diligence and dedication."

The Board of Trustees will announce the next receiver of the Betty McCluer Lee Distinguished Service Award at the Annual Congregational Meeting in May. If you know someone from the congregation that you would like to nominate for this service award, please submit their name and a paragraph describing why you believe they should receive the award to Ed Benedict by email (pntb3781@aol.com) or put a copy of your submission in the Treasurer's box in the Church's office by March 15.



Choir Notes

This plea comes from not only Nadia, our wonderful choir director (who has admitted that she would not be at all unhappy to see the whole congregation join the choir), but from the all the members of the UUCT choir....we would love to have more of you joining us on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings! We have just gained a new, much needed soprano voice, but could also use more sopranos, altos, tenors, and basses. We know you are out there because we can hear you singing away in the congregation on Sunday mornings during the hymns. Come on, we don't bite, so why don't you bite the bullet and come join us for rehearsals on Wed. nights at 7pm? There are no auditions, no fees, and we welcome all with open arms!



Board Bytes

Tempie Taudte

In addition to the monthly reports from the Minister, DRE, Treasurer, and Board / Committee Liaisons, the Board discussed the following agenda items at the meeting in December:

- The Board will review the church Bylaws and present proposed revisions to the congregation at our annual meeting on the first Sunday in May.
- The Board voted to support congregational participation in the "Beyond Categorical Thinking" program, which will help us prepare for a new minister next year.
- The Long Range Planning Committee, chaired by Ara Rogers, is getting organized. It's time to start thinking of ways to move forward toward our goal of an outstanding Religious Education program.
- The Board revised the job description for the Vice President to include being the UUCT representative at our Cluster meetings.

- The Board approved a new Accessibility Committee, with Suzie Siegel and Tempie Taudte as co-chairs. The committee will assess barriers to accessibility and address ways to make our church a welcoming, comfortable and safe place for all members, friends, and visitors.
- Two church air conditioners were stolen in December. The Board will obtain estimates and make arrangements to have them replaced as soon as possible. With the exception of our deductible, most of the cost should be covered by insurance.
- The Board authorized Grant Wilson to form an endowment fund task force to write an endowment section for the Bylaws. There are members of the congregation who may be willing and able to contribute to such a fund.

To learn more about these topics, please see the most recent copy of the minutes, which is posted on a bulletin board in the foyer.



CARE

Joyce Formica

Did you know that a book of past *Joys & Sorrows* is available to review? It is located on a table in the hallway next to the kitchen. We also have a bulletin board located in the same area, listing individuals who are willing to help others. If you know of anyone in our church community who is sick, please advise us so that we can call or send a greeting card. A new feature on the bulletin board, for the next few months, will be excerpts from the "Hug Therapy" book by Kathleen Keating, drawings by Mimi Noland. We'll be sharing some humor and proper hug etiquette, so check it out!



UU Can Make a Difference! Religious Education for Children and Youth

Katie Culbert,

Director of Religious Education
DRE@uutampa.org; 813-988-8188

As I was showing Bill Blymiller a brochure I had created for the church a few weeks ago, he informed me that in the future whenever I listed the four visions of the church I needed to make sure to list the one pertaining to Religious Education (RE) first. I looked at him puzzled and asked why. "Because the congregation had decided to make Religious Education the number one priority of the church, that's why!" Wow, did this make me happy! I am so thrilled to hear that our congregation understands the impact that a top notch liberal Religious

Education program can make on our church and our community. It excites me to think about the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa as a family church that focuses on providing diverse, fun, creative, expansive religious education to children, youth and adults in the Tampa Bay area.

I have been in many UU churches around the country and have seen churches that bubble with enthusiasm and joy – these churches are truly intergenerational with a whole hearted congregational commitment to RE. They feel an obligation to volunteer in the RE program, they take responsibility for the children and youth outside of RE classes and youth group, they participate in intergenerational family events, and they support their congregation with time and money – understanding that without that support the RE program and the church would struggle. When you voted to make RE your number one priority you said, “YES!” I want our church to be that family church that bubbles with enthusiasm and joy. “YES!” I do take responsibility for the children and youth of our liberal religious community. “YES!” I will attend intergenerational services and events. And, “YES!” I will commit my time and money to the growth and development of our RE program.

Now we begin the process of truly making it happen. One of the main priorities will be addressing our space issue. The small dome is not an adequate facility for teaching RE for many reasons and this will be discussed throughout the process. Ara Rogers is helping facilitate the long range planning group that will be exploring our options. Thank you Ara and thank you UUCT for choosing to commit to providing a center for liberal Religious Education for all ages of people in the Tampa Bay area.

Religious Education Activities Calendar 2007

Sunday, February 4 th	RE lesson: Lesbian and Gay Family Equality
Friday, February 9 th	District Youth Ministry Consultation at UUCT
Saturday, February 10 th	District Youth Ministry Consultation at UUCT
Sunday, February 11 th	RE lesson: Lesbian and Gay Family Equality
Sunday, February 18 th	RE lesson: Gender Equality and Sexism
Sunday, February 25 th	RE lesson: Gender Equality and Sexism
Sunday, March 4 th	RE lesson: Responsibility for Animals
Sunday, March 11 th	RE lesson: Responsibility for Animals

Sunday, March 18 th	RE lesson: Responsibility for Animals
Sunday, March 25 th	RE lesson: Responsibility for Animals
Friday, April 6 th – Saturday, April 7 th	Campout at Lake Louisa
Sunday, April 8 th	Easter RE lesson, Egg hunt, and party
Sunday, April 15 th	RE lesson: Environmental Justice
Sunday, April 22 nd	Earth Day Project
Sunday, April 29 th	RE lesson: Environmental Justice
Friday, May 4 th – Sunday, May 6 th	YRUU Youth Conference at UUCT
Sunday, May 6 th	RE lesson: Environmental Justice
Sunday, May 13 th	RE Wrap Up
Sunday, May 20 th	RE Sunday Intergenerational Service
Saturday, June 2 nd	End of the Year Sock Hop at Compton Park

Please note: Katie will be away on Maternity leave from approximately late February/early March through mid-April. While she is away you may contact RE Committee members Judy Lehman 866-0591 jr.lehman@verizon.net, Molly Hays 948-8031 bomoka@aol.com and Kaarla McKenzie 983-1855 kaarla@sourceexecutive.com or the minister, Rev. Liz Brown, at 813-988-8188 minister@UUTampa.org.



Adult Religious Education

Denise Dorsey

Our classes, book-of-the month, and *Popcorn & Opinions* series are continuing and expanding in new directions. We are attempting to better meet the needs of our diverse congregation, to move in the direction of an educational focus, and to enjoy ourselves in the process.

CLASSES:

1. EVENSONG (Sample Covenant Group) will take place on Tuesday evenings, February 6th through March 27th, from 7:00 -9:00 pm. (See article, page 4 for full details)
2. The second session of the year-long program on the report "Engaging Our Theological Diversity" will be held on Monday February 12 at 7:00 PM. This series of discussions deals with UUism and its varying theological views. This discussion will be on "Framing the Question," a chapter in the Commission on

Appraisal's report. Joan Lund will be facilitating this session. This series is open to everyone, and it is not necessary to have attended previous sessions to attend this one. Copies (or links to copies) of the material discussed is on the UUA website, or you can email Bill Blymiller at bill@blymiller.com for information.

BOOK OF THE MONTH:

The book of the month for February, *Pursuit of Happiness*, will be facilitated by Robin Leigh on Sunday, February 18th at 12:15 pm (after the service) in the Large Dome. (You may want to bring a lunch snack to curtail any hunger pangs.)

From Publishers Weekly: [The author, Chris Gardner] chronicles his long, painful, ultimately rewarding journey from inner-city Milwaukee to the pinnacle of Wall Street. Born in 1954, he grew up like too many young blacks: poor and fatherless, with a mother strong on children and church, yet soft on men. His violent, hateful stepfather refused to accept Gardner as a stepson and thwarted him at every turn...Gardner's own weakness was women, and when one of them left him with a son, it led to a period of homelessness on the San Francisco streets. Determination and resourcefulness brought father and son not merely to safety but to the top. Gardner is honest and thorough as he solidly depicts growing up black and male in late 20th-century urban America.

MOVIE:

Popcorns and Opinions presents, *Chocolat* starring Juliette Binoche & Johnny Depp. Showtime will be at 7:00 pm on February 16th, location TBA. Suzie Siegel will facilitate the discussion following this delight. Bring food and/or drink to share, and prepare to be charmed.

From Product Description: *Chocolat* is the beautiful and captivating comedy from the acclaimed director of *The Cider House Rules!* Nobody could have imagined the impact that the striking Vianne (Binoche) would make when she arrived in a tranquil, old-fashioned French town. In her very unusual chocolate shop, Vianne begins to create mouth-watering confections that almost magically inspire the straitlaced villagers to abandon themselves to temptation and happiness! But it is not until another stranger, the handsome Roux (Johnny Depp), arrives in town that Vianne is finally able to recognize her own desires!

Don't forget to check out the additional offerings for adults elsewhere in the Domelight, from CUUPS, RUUGS, SHAAG, Current Affairs, Choir, A Walk in the Park, and Interweave. Branch out, try something new, and enjoy!



SHAAG /SHAAFT

The humanist/atheist contingent of the UUCT continues to have twice monthly discussions on the first and third Mondays of each month. The group, acronymed SHAAG or SHAAFT with the appropriate placement of the words atheist, free thinker, secularist, humanists, agnostic in it, is open to any one who wants to attend. The topics discussed are available via a link on the Church website at www.uutampa.org. Join us for some spirited discussion. If you have questions about the group please email Bill Blymiller at bill@blymiller.com.



Interweave

Interweave Continental is a membership organization actively working to end oppression based on sexual orientation and gender identity, recognizing that we will not be free until all oppression is a thing of the past. We are an affiliate organization of the Unitarian Universalist Association. We value and affirm the lives and experience of Queer people of faith of all ages, races, ethnicities, income levels, and abilities. By providing and supporting leadership, and working in collaboration with other organizations of similar vision, we strive to connect and nurture all Queer individuals, communities, groups, and their allies.

The local UUCT Chapter of Interweave will announce their next meeting during Sunday services. Please see the Order of Service for details or questions can be directed to Jonathan Roudabush.



UUA Trustee Tidbits

Joan Lund

Early in my elected role as Unitarian Universalist Association Florida District Trustee, I wrote two columns: one summarizing the role of the Trustee, the second, the role of our President, and Moderator. But I have not written about UUA and why we are organized as an Association. With thanks to John Blevins, Prarie Star Trustee, I offer information about our UUA. In one sentence, we associate with other congregations so that we can do together those things that we cannot do as individual congregations. As a member congregation of a UUA, our responsibilities include educating and guiding ministers through seminary and assisting in ministerial searches, as well as developing religious education curricula for all ages. Through President Rev. Bill Sinkford and the Washington Office for Advocacy, we influence public policy and practices via our combined voices. Our UUA provides assistance to church management teams and promotes lay-leader development through workshops and education.

Our Association is organized into twenty districts; each having one trustee on the UUA Board and three at-large trustees elected at General Assembly (GA). There is one youth trustee. The Florida District includes most of Florida as well as Valdosta, Georgia, and the Virgin Islands. Each district has its own board and staff which is employed by both the district and UUA. The role of the district is to be the representative of the Association in district congregations. Districts arrange for consulting services, workshops, and assist volunteers in reaching their goals. Our UUA and districts are funded by the contributions from the congregations to the Annual Program Fund (APF), determined by membership numbers, or as a percent of the congregation budget (large congregations) and district dues. The Association redistributes a portion of the APF contributions from congregations to all twenty districts. The annual Grant to each District is calculated in the fall of each year and paid quarterly.

There are a number of priorities (these change as necessary and are determined by our delegates to GA) on our UUA "agenda". These include insuring that our Association and our congregations are continually working on eliminating racism, classism, and oppression in our society. We want to determine how to reach those folks who may be interested in our principled liberal faith and to successfully engage those who do come to our congregations. Of course there are many other priorities on which our Association is working. Be sure you check out www.uua.org for further information and ways the Association might assist you or you might assist the Association. I always include my email if you wish to contact me: jlund@uua.org, and look forward to hearing from you, if you so choose. I wish you love and happiness this Valentine's month.



A Drink from CUUPS

Chris Hendrickx

Circles in the Woods CUUPS (Convent of Unitarian Universalist Pagans) is a committee within the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa.

Full Moon Celebrations

We host Full Moon Celebrations on the Saturday closest to the Full Moon at 7:30PM followed by shared feasting. This is an open family event, so yes, children are welcome! However, childcare is **not** provided, so parents **are** responsible for the care of their children. Donations to help pay for the upkeep of the property are welcome!

Upcoming Rituals:

Feb 3rd, 7:30PM: Every year Sacred Oaks Circle, a sub-group to CUUPS, holds a Dedication ritual for those who are accepted to

pledge to the group. This ritual is always a serious and spiritual experience.

Wicca 101

Our Wicca 101 series is in full swing. Classes are on the first and third Mondays of February and March at 7:00PM. All are welcome to come learn about Wicca. A \$5.00 donation per class to cover materials would be appreciated.



Your help is needed!

Just a reminder, please help to clean the church. This is not only needed on Building & Grounds day, but also whenever you're there. Make sure all food is picked up and put away. Clean up all of your dishes. Take the garbage and recycle out and make sure to put lids on those cans to keep the critters from making a mess. Just these few simple tips can help make sure that we have a sanctuary that's ready to use when we want to use it, and helps keep the grounds looking beautiful!



Migrant Workers Program

The Charity Committee would like to remind you that there is a basket for food offerings at the church entrance. The basket is for nonperishable food and personal items, no clothing. Please try to remember to bring something to share with those less fortunate.



Minister's Hours

Rev. Liz will be in the UUCT Office on Mondays and Thursdays from 1:00PM to 7:00PM.

She is available for consultation in her home office on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays between 9:00AM and 5:00PM at 727-599-6132.

She tries to observe a Sabbath (i.e., a total day off) on Wednesdays and her monthly Sunday off. However, like most ministers, she is available 24/7 for emergencies.

Ministry Note: Rev. Liz will be on vacation from Jan. 30-Feb. 5. She will be available at 727-599-6132 for pastoral emergencies only.



Walk in the Park

A group of UUs meet at Lettuce Lake Park Thursday mornings at 8:30AM for a brisk walk on the paved path and good conversation. To find the parking area and meeting place, take

the Lettuce Lake Parkway to the end. Turn left and then immediately turn right into the parking lot. We will gather there and begin the walk at 8:30AM. You are welcome to join us. For more information, contact Patricia McCracken at 813-988-6453.



Perpetual Gift

Consider giving a gift to the church by purchasing a hymnal in memory of a loved one or to honor a special person. Our hymnbook *Singing The Living Tradition* is available for \$32.00 a copy which includes shipping and handling fees and a personalized bookplate. When we receive five requests, we will place an order. Mail your check for \$32.00 made payable to UUCT, attention Hymn Book. Or place the check in the Sunday collection plate with a note. You will be notified before the book is placed in the sanctuary.



Friends of UUA

Friends of the UUA will be conducting a fundraising phonathon beginning the week of February 19th and continuing through the third week in March. Outreach Associates, a telemarketing firm located in Pittsburgh, will be phoning members who are currently active Friends of the UUA to ask them to renew their support.

Theme: Progress Report on Tapestry of Faith Lifespan Curriculum

Our contract with this firm requires that all callers must be courteous, respectful, and succinct as they offer identified Unitarian Universalists an opportunity to support our Association directly. Your feedback about the calls will help us to monitor their quality. We have established a Friends Phonathon Hotline to facilitate that feedback: Members may call (617) 948-6525 to leave a message to ask to be placed on the "no call" list or to share a comment directly with a UUA staff member.

Your willingness to support the UUA enhances our ability to provide services and programs to member congregations and presents avenues for future growth of Unitarian Universalism throughout the country.

Calendar of weekly events

SUNDAY

- 10AM (Grades 1-12) Youth R.E. (Small Dome)
- 10AM Meditation in the Meadow (follow Signs)
- 10AM Current Affairs (Small Dome)

- 11AM Sunday Service
- 11AM Child Care for babies in the Nursery

WEDNESDAY

- 7:00PM Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY

- 8:30AM Nature Walk in the Park
(info: 813-988-6453)

Calendar of February Events

- Feb 1** RE Committee 6:30PM
- Feb 3** CUUPS Full Moon Celebration 7:30PM
- Feb 5** Wicca 101 – Wheel of The Year 7:30 PM
- Feb 6** Evensong 7:00 PM
- Feb 7** Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM
- Feb 8** Worship Committee 7:00 PM
- Feb 9-10** YRUU Consultation
- Feb 11** Interweave 12:30 PM
- Feb 12** Finance Committee 7:00 PM
Theological Diversity 7:00 PM
- Feb 13** Evensong 7:00 PM
- Feb 14** Valentine's Day Concert 7:30 PM
- Feb 15** Board meeting 7:00PM
- Feb 18** Book: Pursuit of Happiness 12:15PM
Concert 1:00PM
- Feb 19** Wicca 101 – Magick & Ethics 7:00PM
- Feb 20** Evensong 7:00 PM
- Feb 21** Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM
- Feb 24** Breathwork
- Feb 27** Evensong 7:00 PM
- Feb 28** Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

A Month of Sundays at The Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa

February 4

Tito Basu will speak on the topic of “Irreverence.”

February 11

Rev. Liz will speak of Love (a nice narrow topic!). This service will also contain a Chocolate Communion and New Member Recognition ceremony.

February 18

In honor of Black History month, Rev. Liz will speak of the participation of Unitarian Universalists in the voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery.

February 25

The Worship Committee is coordinating a service about the experiences of different age groups—young adulthood, middle age, and older adulthood.

Want to get this by mail? – See Page 3