



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF CLEARWATER

Where Seekers Find a Home

OCTAGRAM

JANUARY
2009



Happy New Year!



February 7
A Festive Auction and Chinese Feast.
Year of the Ox.
We're Doing It In Asian This Year!

Let's all pull together to make this year's auction
as successful as it needs to be.

You and You and You, say "Yes" and "Yes" and "Yes".

This is going to be a FUN event for the entire family. There is no place else in town where \$15.00 will buy an adult an authentic Chinese dinner, served in a romantic Asian ambiance accompanied by unique Chinese Lion Dancers. This is an opportunity to bid on great treasures, helpful services and exciting getaways during the live and silent auctions. Your money benefits our very own UUC. This is YOUR chance to help OUR religious COMMUNITY.

NEEDED:

Large potted faux bamboo plants borrowed for decorations.



Two men to help with decorating. Must be able to use stepladders, string lights and help put up/take down decorations during the week of the auction and after auction. (February 2-8)

Please call Joanne if you can help with any of above items, (727) 729-8515

STILL NEEDED:

Everyone's help selling ads, buying and selling tickets, and obtaining gift certificates from your favorite businesses and fun adventures. It's as easy as going to the UU website.

Donation forms are posted there for everyone's convenience.

Don't forget, we need good quality, gently used treasures for our live auction.

We can't DO an auction without TREASURES!



WITH EVERYONE'S HELP, OUR AUCTION WILL BE A HUGE SUCCESS. YES!

Co-Chairs: Sage Chaney, (727) 536-8867, Sheila Knaust, (727) 735-8460, Joanne Osburn, (727) 729-8525

Random Reflections



On January 11, we will celebrate *Association Sunday*. This year, funds raised on *Association Sunday* will help to grow our faith by supporting wonderful programs in two areas that I am deeply passionate about and committed to: **lay theological education and excellence in ministry**. According to UUA President Bill Sinkford, "Fifty percent of the funds

raised will go to grants to congregations, districts, and seminaries, to create programs which focus on spiritual and theological deepening. [And the remaining fifty percent] will be divided equally to support the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association's new initiatives for continuing education programs for ordained ministers, scholarships for promising students preparing for our ministry, and support ministers of color."

This year's *Association Sunday* is focused on a core belief of our faith that our spiritual lives and religious understandings keep growing and changing – keep evolving and hopefully deepening – by the people and experiences that companion us along the way.

As Unitarian Universalists, we expect that we all have on-going and intentional work to do when it comes to figuring out life's majesty and mystery, its blessings and its burdens.

At UUC, we support one another to deepen spiritually, mature emotionally, inquire intellectually, and serve selflessly. We teach our children to follow the challenges and contributions of a questioning mind and the dictates of a compassionate and caring heart. We hear our ministers preach about the lifelong journey we are on, as sentient, thinking, and feeling beings. We respond with joy to the wonderful music that our chorale and our musicians offer us that celebrate the connection between crea-

tion's grandeur and our own toehold in its plans. But as great as all of our programming is to our worship and our faith journey, it is not enough for us to stop there.

To practice our religion, we need to test the muscles of this faith out there in our lives, in this world, in good times and in bad times, in easy times and in difficult times.

This year's *Association Sunday* is focused on *Growing Our Spirit*, providing relevant resources to help our clergy and our lay people in their theological deepening. Why? So that we, in turn, can share better with others the promise and abundance which is at the core of this open-hearted faith.

We need to *Grow Our Faith* in one another, in Unitarian Universalism, and in the good we can and should do for others. And we need to *Grow Our Spirit*: our group spirit, the human spirit, the holy spirit, the spirit of life, the spirit of love that keeps calling us to a life of service and connection.

The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations is deeply grateful for our contributions to the Annual Program Fund each year, and couldn't function without them. But on this special day, we are being asked to give generously in support of the ministry, lay and professional, that will secure the future and vitality of our faith – projects which cannot be funded by the UUA's operating budget alone.

Come celebrate with us on *Association Sunday*, because we are stronger and better together!

May the New Year bring more joy, peace, abundance, and contentment in our lives.



Go Shining.

Abhi Janamanchi

President's Letter

Dear Friends:

As the year has unfolded it is obvious that UUC is facing financial challenges. Our religious community, like others from many denominations, is suffering from the present national economic crisis. Because of this we are looking at a projected shortfall of more than \$30,000 by the end of May 2009. Meanwhile, we have to have essential cash to pay out ministers' and staff salaries and maintain our buildings and grounds.

On Saturday, November 22, Board of Trustee and Finance Committee members with others to review the current situation and to brainstorm ways of raising revenue and cutting costs. The

ideas coming from that meeting will be reviewed and researched by the ad hoc UUC YES WE CAN Committee and the Board plan to hold a series of Town Meetings to present to you financial realities, proposed solutions, and ask for your input.

To keep you up to date each Sunday as you gather for the service, you will see a poster that will track our current cash flow and how it compares with the projected budget.

The good news is that we are all in this together. We have wonderful ministers, hardworking and productive staff, and a community that is important to us. As we face the stress and anxiety of our world, we have a place to find support, love, and spiritual sustenance. Let us work together, to preserve what we have.

Sincerely, Susan Hegner, President

Choosing Love This Holiday Season — A Pastoral Letter from Rev. William G. Sinkford

Dear friends,

As the winter days of this holiday season grow shorter, we light candles in the darkness. Outside there may be blustering wind and even snow, but inside our homes and congregations, we create warm sanctuaries. We celebrate the joys of the season and anticipate the return of the light.

In this season of contrasts, I am reminded of the words of the Rev. Rebecca Parker: "Your gifts, whatever you discover them to be, can be used to bless or curse the world."

This past November, I spent several weeks on a pilgrimage to Africa, accompanied by Rev. Eric Cherry, UUA director of international resources; Paula Cole Jones, an antiracism consultant for the UUA's JUUST Change Consultancy; and Maria Sinkford, my wife. We went to learn about truth and reconciliation in South Africa; to fellowship with Unitarian Universalists in Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa; to meet with justice-making partners; and to visit Goree Island, one of the departure points for Africans enslaved in the transatlantic slave trade.

Along the way, we were witnesses to humankind's capacity for cruelty - and for compassion. One of the most important and difficult parts of the journey was visiting Goree Island, off the coast of Senegal.

There we saw the small, dark cells where enslaved people were held. Dozens of human beings were crammed into these dank and crowded spaces and were only allowed outside once a day. There were separate cells for slaves who resisted, for virgin girls who were to be raped by slave traders, and for slaves who were force-fed so that they could be transported across the ocean. Slaves who became sick were thrown into the shark-infested sea.

And we saw the "Door of No Return." Through that door, Africans departed the island alive and enslaved, or dead.

There is no way to completely describe the horror of this place, but I left Goree Island with a deep respect for the tenacity and courage of those who survived to mother and father a new people here in America. And I wondered if I myself could have survived the hardship and cruelty that they endured.

But we also witnessed the human capacity for love and for hope. One of the most wonderful moments of the trip was our visit with the Manya Krobo Queen Mothers Association of Eastern Ghana, a program partner of the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office.

In this district of Ghana, each of the 320 Queen Mothers represents one of the district's member communities. The entire dis-

trict is governed by a chief, who is selected by the Queen Mothers Association.

When the HIV/AIDS epidemic began, the Queen Mothers were the information-gatherers. Ghana has suffered less from HIV/AIDS than most West African countries, but rates in this district were high. The Queen Mothers and the chief responded with a massive educational campaign. They received some money from the national government, but relied mostly on personal contact with people in impacted communities. Their campaign successfully cut in half the rate of new infections in their communities.

Meeting the Queen Mothers was inspiring. Theirs is an impressive and hopeful story. In the face of a virulent epidemic, they were able to save lives through their compassion and dedication.

During our journey, we visited a school and the orphanage run by our Unitarian Universalist brothers and sisters in Kampala, Uganda. The resources of the Kampala congregation are modest, but these Unitarian Universalists have nonetheless been successful in vastly improving the lives of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

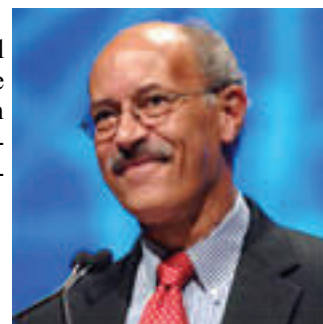
For many here in the United States and around the world, this year's holiday season will be a challenging one, in which the continuing problems of war and poverty will be exacerbated by worldwide economic strains. Now, as much as ever, it is critical that we affirm the primacy of love and hope.

I am heartened by the stories of Unitarian Universalist congregations that are practicing generosity this holiday season. I am proud to hear about our congregations that are collecting goods to keep struggling families warm, that are supporting food banks, that are resisting rampant consumerism and promoting ethical consumption, and that are advocating for a more just society.

There are so many opportunities in this holiday season for each of us, and for our congregations, to shine the light of compassion. Even if we have meager resources and great challenges, we can still serve the larger good.

My holiday prayer is that we will continue to find ways to choose love. By affirming the human capacity for compassion, we - individually and collectively - can be a blessing to the world.

In faith,
Rev. William G. Sinkford,
President
Unitarian Universalist Association



[Read and see more about Rev. Sinkford's journey on the UUA website, www.uua.org.]

Social Justice News

► Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Holiday Celebration



On January 19, 2009 UUC members and friends will join many other groups at the breakfast and/or the march to Coachman Park in honor of the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. The program begins with breakfast at 7:30am. The line-up for the march to Coachman Park begins at 9:45am at the North Greenwood Aquatic Center 900 North Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, Clearwater. Participants will then march from the center to Coachman Park for a rally and celebration. Tickets to the breakfast are \$4 for adults and \$2 for children under 10. They can be purchased at the door. For more information, contact Bertha Kelley, (727) 461-1369, or Steven Sorrells, (727) 423-0204. Children are welcome to march but young ones should be in a stroller as the walk is over a mile long. Remember to wear your UUC T-shirt. Participate in the celebration, as you can see by the picture, we had a wonderful turnout last year.



► Split the Plate

The December 14 Split the Plate was for Metropolitan Charities, one of the largest and most respected HIV/AIDS and GBLT service organizations. We will send them a check for \$604. On January 11 we will collect for Association Sunday and UUC. The funds will be split 70% for the UUA to help them continue assisting UU congregations and making their voices heard for justice and compassion in the world and 30% will go to UUC to continue our good work. We have a correction in the amount donated for the Coalition of Immokalee Workers in November.

We received an additional donation of \$50 making the total collected for the CIW \$807. Fantastic!

► The Khasi Hills Sponsor-A-Student Project Update

We are in the middle of our renewal drive and need your help to meet our goal of one hundred sponsors. Please turn in your renewals, new sponsorships or donations at the Social Justice table, leave them in the Social Justice mailbox, or give them to Catherine Conover or Marlene Calderone. The cost is just \$50.00 to help educate a child for the entire year. Remember, education is the answer to most of the world's problems. The deadline to participate in this wonderful project is January 31. Call Catherine with any questions (727-725-3855).



► The Mitten Tree / ASAP Homeless Services

We more than doubled the number of mittens this year and once again the Mitten Tree Project was a huge success. Your generosity is overwhelming. Gifts were donated for fifty children from the Shepherd Center of Tarpon Springs, and sixteen from Metro Charities of St. Petersburg. It warms my heart that so many children, who otherwise may not have received a gift, will have a happy holiday. In addition, we collected gifts for the three occupants of the room we sponsor, through the Better World Fund, in the women and children's shelter of ASAP Homeless Services. All the organizations were very grateful for our support. The Social Justice Committee thanks you.

► UUSC Holiday Cards

Your support of the sale of UUSC holiday cards will assist the Service Committee during these difficult economic times. The entire amount will be sent to UUSC.

► UUSC Guest at Your Table

Remember to continue "feeding" your Guest at Your Table box. We are allowing extra time this year and will collect them by the end of March. Don't forget to become a member of UUSC by completing the membership form on the side of the box.



► Fair Trade

Fair trade coffee, tea and chocolate are available on the second Sunday of the month at the Social Justice table in the Social Hall.

► Social Justice Committee meeting

The next SJC meeting will be Saturday, January 10. Help us get the New Year off to a great start. We will be deciding whether to continue meeting on Saturday morning or change to a Thursday evening. Join us in the Westwood Room at 9:30 am. Bring your ideas and energy. Everyone, members or friends, interested in Social Justice Issues is welcome.

Congratulations

Above & Beyond Honoree for January

The UUC Board has selected Ms. Soledad Loba to receive the January 2009 Above & Beyond Award. Soledad has established herself as the “go to” person for all special events at UUC. Her creative talents and limitless energy are wonderfully reflected in the beautiful settings she establishes for special events. Soledad always goes way beyond expectations in everything she does, including hosting of the Singles Movie Series. Her dedication to our spiritual home is apparent to everyone who knows the outstanding work of this month's award honoree.

Thank you, Soledad.



Soledad Loba!

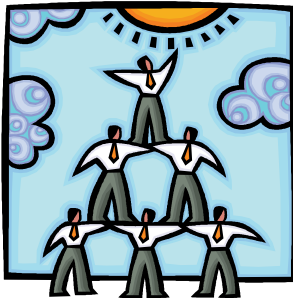
Stewardship 2009

Our congregation is not short on enthusiasm, commitment, or generosity. We see all three with attendance at Sunday Services, Sunday RE, with our Social Justice and outreach programs, with our adult and children's religious education programs, with our social and fundraising events, with participation in Covenant Groups or other small group ministry programs. We see constant reminders within our community of the generosity given in time, hard work, and financial gifts.

Our congregation is blessed with the spiritual inspiration, guidance, and the love of Rev. Abhi Janamanchi and Rev. Millie Rochester. Their dedication to UUC and to every single member is largely responsible for the enthusiasm and commitment we all feel towards our spiritual home.

Next month we will once again begin the process of our annual Stewardship Drive to fund our operations and support our ministries. As that time approaches, try to set some time aside to reflect on a number of questions about UUC, our UU Principles, and their priority in your life.

What meaning do we find here at UUC that is important to us? Is it spiritual inspiration? Is it the community of a supportive group of open minded people?



Is it the support and comfort extended by our ministers and community in times of extreme need? Is it the varied opportunities to do good for others and the greater community at large? Is it the opportunities that UUC offers to stimulate your thinking on matters you might not otherwise consider as you go about

daily life? Is it the opportunities for your children to learn values that will help them on a path to a balanced life?

If any of those questions and their answers resonate with you why are they of value to you? What brings you and your family back to UUC Sunday after Sunday?

Yes We Can!

As you think of these questions and their value to you, reflect on where you are willing to commit your gifts. That is what Stewardship is all about, you and your values, and maintaining the ministries of Rev. Abhi and Rev. Millie and our wonderful community.

Over the coming weeks you will be hearing from various UUC Leaders about our current financial status. Like the over all economy, UUC is also facing a difficult period. Your leadership is reacting to this situation with determination to minimize the impact on our ministries and programs. We will need your help and generosity as we face these challenges together. A “Yes We Can” attitude has been committed to by leadership. Please join us.

Our campaign this year will be a little different than in the recent past. We are making plans that will simplify the process for everyone. Our two Stewardship events will be a party on February 28 followed by Stewardship Sunday on March 8.

Please mark your calendar now for February 28 for our Stewardship Kick-Off Party in the Social Hall from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Food, Beer, Wine, and soft drinks will be served. Some great entertainment is planned. Speeches will be few and short! Fun will be the order for the evening, so please plan to attend. There will be no charge for this fun filled event.

—Bill Snell, Stewardship Chairman

Open Issues Forum — Sundays at 9:30 am

January 4

John Chase

Obama and his Green Team

President-Elect Obama has said that national security and energy security are one and the same. But with so many other interests competing for attention and funding, how do we get an optimal outcome?

January 11

David Swindall

Losing and Winning Strategies in Relationships

Since 1984, David has had a practice in marriage and family therapy. He works with anger management and is a specialist in conflicting relationships management.

January 18

Bill West

A Mini-peek into the Ancient Worlds of Japan and China

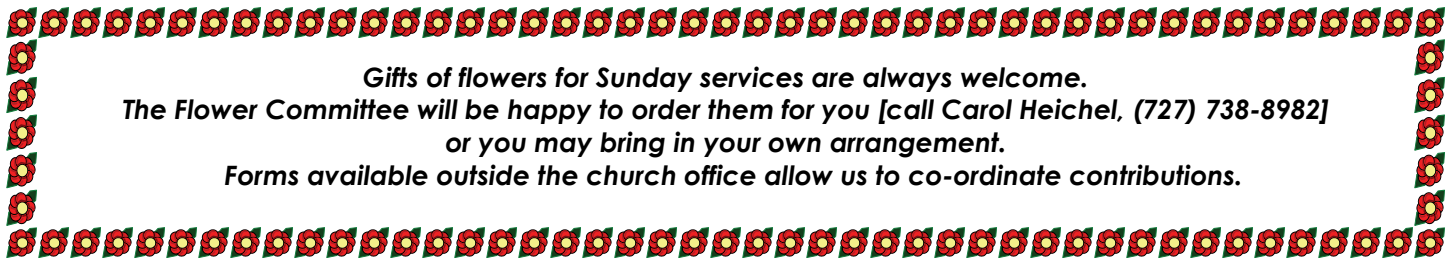
An authoritarian on Asian culture, Bill will include an explanation of the Lion Dance, to be performed at the upcoming February 7th "Asian Fest," allowing a further in-depth knowledge and appreciation for the event.

January 25

Nancy Warner

My Recent Visit to Three Unitarian Churches in Australia

—Dot and Chuck Sollinger, Committee Co-chairs, (727) 797-7784



Worship Services — Sundays at 10:30 am

January 4

Altruists and Avatars

Ms. Elly Kelly Baker

This season of change is especially hopeful. A positive shift in consciousness is expanding---a paradigm shift from separation to connection, from conflict to collaboration, from fear to love. We are letting go the lines which tied us to the Land of Duality. We're finally pushing offshore, learning to dock our egos, trust the winds of change and raise our sails of sympathetic vibration as we discover infinite oceans of interactive consciousness. If you feel you're still in the marina, no problem. Shining stars of wisdom and compassion, altruists and avatars, will guide our journey.

January 11

**Pursuing Excellence:
Realistic Goal or Pipe Dream?**

**Rev. Abhi Janamanchi
& UUC Chorale**

In December, I participated in an 'Excellence in Ministry' summit in Seattle, WA. Some of the questions that came up at the conference included – "Is 'excellence' a good thing? Or is it tyrannical? Why should a minister or a religious community be committed to excellence? Excellence vs. Perfection – what's the difference? What's wrong with mediocrity?" The service will investigate. We will give and receive a special offering to support lay and professional theological education as part of *Association Sunday*.



January 18

Revisiting the Dream

Rev. Abhi Janamanchi & UUC Chorale

AS we gather to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and witness the inauguration of the first African-American President in our nation's history, we will revisit and review Dr. King's dream of a more equitable, just, and peaceful society and how we might get there.

January 25

Incredible India!

Rev. Abhi Janamanchi

India is the world's most populous and fastest growing democracy; India has the youngest population on the planet and a middle class as big as the population of the United States. The challenges India faces are universal – from combating terrorism, poverty, and disease to protecting the environment and creating a healthy economy. In other words, India is the world in microcosm. An Indian author, Mira Kamdar, rightly says, "As goes India, so goes the world." The service will explore what there is to lose and what there is to gain from India's rise.

January 2009

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

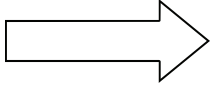
Friday

Saturday



<p>4 <u>9:30 AM - 10:30</u> <u>AM Open Issues (P)</u> <u>10:30 AM - 11:30</u> <u>AM Worship Service (O)</u> <u>12:15 PM - 1:00</u> <u>PM Chats with Abhi or Millie - Guests & New-comers (L)</u> <u>1:00 PM - 3:00</u> <u>PM Digital Photography (P)</u></p>	<p>5 <u>9:30 AM Duplicate</u> <u>Bridge (P)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Clearwater Audubon Society (O)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 8:30</u> <u>PM Covenant Groups Facilitators Meeting (L)</u></p>	<p>6 <u>11:00 AM - 12:00</u> <u>PM Membership (W)</u> <u>12:00 PM - 12:30</u> <u>PM Loving Kindness Meditation (O)</u> <u>2:00 PM - 4:00</u> <u>PM Covenant Group (L)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 10:00</u> <u>PM Buddhist Film & Discussion Group (L)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Pathways to Membership (P)</u></p>	<p>7 <u>10:00 AM - 11:30</u> <u>AM The Book of Jonah (P)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Chorale Practice (C)</u></p>	<p>8 <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM World Religions - Understanding India (P)</u></p>	<p>9 <u>10:00 - 11:30 AM</u> <u>Readers Forum (C)</u> <u>7:00 PM Zen Med (L)</u></p>	<p>10 <u>8:00 AM - 12:00</u> <u>PM Community Bazaar (Parking Lot) tentative</u> <u>8:00 PM AA (P)</u></p>
<p>11 <u>9:30 AM - 10:30</u> <u>AM Open Issues (P)</u> <u>10:30 AM - 11:30</u> <u>AM Worship Service (O)</u> <u>12:30 PM - 2:00</u> <u>PM Auction Com(L)</u> <u>12:30 PM - 1:00</u> <u>PM Laughter Yoga (P)</u> <u>12:30 PM - 1:30</u> <u>PM Young Adult Median Covenant Group (W)</u> <u>1:00 PM - 3:00</u> <u>PM Digital Photography for Dummies (P)</u></p>	<p>12 <u>9:30 AM Duplicate</u> <u>Bridge (P)</u></p>	<p>13 <u>12:00 PM - 12:30</u> <u>PM Loving Kindness Meditation (O)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 10:00</u> <u>PM Buddhist Film & Discussion Group (L)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Pathways to Membership (P)</u> <u>7:30 - 8:30 PM AA (W)</u></p>	<p>14 <u>10:00 AM - 11:30</u> <u>AM The Book of Jonah (P)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Chorale Practice (C)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Executive Committee (W)</u></p>	<p>15 <u>9:00 AM - 3:00</u> <u>PM Take down and hang art (O)</u> <u>2:00 PM - 4:00</u> <u>PM Private Event (L)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM World Religions - Understanding India (P)</u> <u>7:30 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Women's Spiritual Drumming Group (L)</u></p>	<p>16 <u>10:00 - 11:30 AM</u> <u>Readers Forum (C)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00 PM</u> <u>Art Reception</u> <u>7:00 PM Zen Med (L)</u></p>	<p>17 <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Celebrations of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with Fred Johnson and Friends (O)</u> <u>8:00 PM AA (W)</u></p>
<p>18 <u>9:30 AM - 10:30</u> <u>AM Open Issues (P)</u> <u>10:30 AM - 11:30</u> <u>AM Worship Service (O)</u> <u>12:30 PM - 2:00</u> <u>PM Auction Com (L)</u> <u>12:30 PM - 2:30</u> <u>PM Partner Church Event (P)</u> <u>12:30 PM - 1:30</u> <u>PM Partner Church Luncheon (S) tentative</u></p>	<p>19 <u>9:30 AM Duplicate</u> <u>Bridge (P)</u></p>	<p>20 <u>12:00 PM - 12:30</u> <u>PM Loving Kindness Meditation (O)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 10:00</u> <u>PM Buddhist Film & Discussion Group (L)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Pathways to Membership (P)</u> <u>7:30 - 8:30 PM AA (W)</u></p>	<p>21 <u>10:00 AM - 11:30</u> <u>AM The Book of Jonah (P)</u> <u>5:30 PM - 8:00</u> <u>PM BARCC (L)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Chorale Practice (C)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM UUC Board Meeting (P)</u></p>	<p>22 <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM World Religions - Understanding India (P)</u></p>	<p>23 <u>10:00- 11:30 AM</u> <u>Readers Forum (C)</u> <u>7:00 PM Zen Med (L)</u></p>	<p>24 <u>7:00 PM - 11:00</u> <u>PM No Talent Show Committee (S)</u> <u>8:00 PM AA (P)</u></p>
<p>25 <u>9:30 AM - 10:30</u> <u>AM Open Issues (P)</u> <u>10:30 AM - 11:30</u> <u>AM Worship Service (O)</u> <u>12:30 PM - 2:00</u> <u>PM Auction Com(L)</u> <u>12:30- 2:00 PM</u> <u>Psi Symposium (P)</u></p>	<p>26 <u>9:30 AM Duplicate</u> <u>Bridge (P)</u></p>	<p>27 <u>12:00 PM - 12:30</u> <u>PM Loving Kindness Meditation (O)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 10:00</u> <u>PM Buddhist Film & Discussion Group (P)</u> <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Program Committee (C)</u> <u>7:30 - 8:30 PM AA (W)</u></p>	<p>28 <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM Chorale Practice (C)</u></p>	<p>29 <u>7:00 PM - 9:00</u> <u>PM World Religions - Understanding India (P)</u></p>	<p>30 <u>10:00- 11:30 AM</u> <u>Readers Forum (C)</u> <u>6:00 PM - 8:00 PM</u> <u>Soup Off/POT LUCK (S)</u> <u>7:00 - 9:00 PM</u> <u>Men's Night Out (CL)</u> <u>7:00 PM Zen Med (L)</u></p>	<p>31 <u>7:00 PM - 10:00</u> <u>PM Cultural Outreach (O,S)</u> <u>8:00 PM AA (P)</u></p>

Events in January and Beyond



NOTE: Adult Ed courses for January through February are listed together at the bottom of page 9

Women's Spiritual Drumming Circle, January 15

"New Beginnings" will be honored in the Women's Spiritual Drumming Circle as we gather Thursday from 7:30-9:00 pm in the Library in the Social Hall. Bring your own drum or experiment with those offered in the circle. No prior experience is needed. The Circle meets monthly on the third Thursday. FMI, call Elly Kelly Baker (727) 848-7910 or 207-4994.

"Still Painting at 88" Art Reception, January 16

Vernon Good began his study of art 75 years ago at 13 years of age. He paints a wide range of subjects that are traditional and very realistic. He is President of the Tarpon Springs Art Association. Please join us for a reception of his art from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the Octagon. The last day to see the current Plein Air Show, "Outside Art," is January 14. The prices are on the wall labels for each piece. UUC receives 30% of income from these sales.
—Charlene Carnes, Chair of Art Committee

MLK Day Music Celebration with Fred Johnson and Friends, January 17

Join Fred Johnson at 7:00 pm, Friday, in the Octagon for a wonderful celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. There will be both gospel and Bahia choirs and other acclaimed area musicians. Love offering of \$10 requested.

Trip to Romania Partner Church Planning Meeting, January 18

Travel to Transylvania and connect with our Unitarian birthplace. A preliminary planning session for all interested in touring Romania, and possibly Hungary, at 12:30 pm in the Patio Room. The UU Partner Church Council's introductory DVD, Partners in Faith will be shown. UUC has been in partnership with the Unitarian Congregation in Rupea/Kohalom, Transylvania in Romania for over ten years. Two groups from UUC have visited Rupea during that time, thereby fostering friendships and gaining deep respect for our religious heritage. This is an amazing opportunity to visit the land of our Unitarian ancestors and to share in worship and fellowship with their descendents. A follow-up meeting will be on February 15, Sunday, at 12:30 pm when John Dale of the UU Partner Church Council will give a presentation and assist us in further planning. FMI call Elly Kelly Baker, (727) 848-7910 or 207-4994.

2009 Church Calendar Planning, January 27

The Program Council, composed of committee chairs, will meet on Tuesday to plan the church calendar for 2009. We want to schedule major church activities through out the year, so church members don't get 'burned out' from a lot of activity in one month. Committee chairs will be receiving more information by email. Anyone having calendar items can attend the meeting or contact me. Sue Boone, 531-5236.

"Meet and Greet" Our New Members with Pot Luck Dinner, January 30

We have another group of wonderful new members whom we all need to meet and get to know. What better way to facilitate this interaction than to share food together? Hence, we will have a pot luck dinner, Friday in the Social Hall from 6:00 to 8:30 pm. Bring your favorite dish to share and convince our new members that we really are a "food based" religion! Rev. Abhi and Rev. Millie will be there and perhaps we'll even have some surprise musical entertainment.

Quartet to Play at UUC as Fundraiser, January 31

Pat McGiverin, flute, Linda Jones, piano, Don Ekberg, string bass, and Ed Kraemer, percussion, invite you and your friends to a "crossover" (mixture of jazz and classical music) jazz concert they will play at UUC on Saturday evening at 7:00 pm. Most of the program will consist of the nearly hour-long "Suite No. 2 for Flute and Jazz Piano Trio" by Claude Bolling. This composition is subdivided into eight contrasting movements, parts of which Pat describes as "exceedingly difficult." They will also offer some half dozen delightful arrangements of George Gershwin songs, including "'S Wonderful" and "Embraceable You." As many of you will recall, the same four musicians played several sections from Bolling's first jazz suite at a Sunday service in our sanctuary a few months ago. Claude Bolling, a living Parisian composer with more than one hundred film and TV sound tracks to his credit, is often referred to as Duke Ellington's "spiritual son." The concert is envisioned as a cultural outreach event, free of charge, but donations (suggested \$10) will be welcome and will contribute to the cost of extensive maintenance work done by Max Shimer on the fine old Steinway grand piano in the Octagon.

Events in January and Beyond (continued)

UUC Auction Fest and Chinese Feast, February 7

See front page for article.



The International Convocation of UU Women (ICUW), February 26 to March 1, 2009

The ICUW will be gathering in Houston, TX, with intention for "Weaving global partnerships to enrich women's lives." This historic event marks the first national gathering of UU women in fifteen years and the first time internationally ever. Join in the purposeful and celebratory energy of bringing our collective faith to action as we create a UU Global Village network to benefit women and families worldwide. The ICUW strives to create a worldwide learning community of UU women, dedicated to enriching women's lives, worshipping together and sharing our stories, and supporting emerging leaders among us. The convocation focuses on women's issues through education, engagement, theological reflection, action and transformation. It is open to all genders. For more information go to the website www.ICUW.com, contact Sue Boone at (727) 531-5236, or Elly Kelly Baker at (727) 848-7910.

Stewardship Kick-Off, February 28

For details, see article by Bill Snell on page 5.

Sign Up Online for the Adult Ed Courses You Won't Want to Miss! (www.uuclearwater.org/adults.htm)

Digital Photography (part 2), January 4

Learn what the next step is after taking your holiday photos. Having participated in the first part of this series is not a prerequisite. Led by long-time member Eliseo Santana. Sunday, January 4, 1:00 – 3:00 pm; \$20 for the series.

Pathways to Membership (sponsored by the Membership Committee), Starts January 6

Reflect on your own spiritual odyssey, meet and get to know fellow seekers, learn the story of Unitarian Universalism and UUC, its programs, and membership. Led by the Revs. Abhi Janamanchi and Millie Rochester, and the Membership Committee. Tuesdays, January 6, 13, 20, 7:00 -9:00 pm; no cost.

The Book of Jonah, Starts January 7

The book of Jonah is not merely a "fish" story, but a brilliant lesson in divine forgiveness and mercy. It ends with a question mark; we must provide the answer. Led by Rabbi Arthur Baseman. Wednesdays, January 7, 14, 21, 10:00- 11:30 am \$20.

Understanding India, Starts January 8

An introduction to the culture and belief systems of this vast land, led by the Rev. Abhi Janamanchi. Thursdays, January 8, 15, 22, 29, 7:00 -9:00 pm; \$20. Minimum 20 participants.

The Global Food Crisis & Ethical Eating, Starts February 3

Examine the ethical dimensions of how we perceive and integrate food in our lives – based on a 2008 Unitarian Universalist Association Study/Action Issue. Led by member Dotti Doyle. Tuesdays, February 3, 10, 17, 24, 7:00 – 9:00 pm; \$20.

The Early Church & Separation of Church & State, February 8

Presentation and discussion of the issues addressed in the book *So Help Me God*, by Forrest Church. Led by Bill Tanney. February 8, 1:00 – 3:00 pm; \$20.

Articulating Your UU Faith, Starts February 12

Practice what to say after you say, "I'm a Unitarian Universalist." Gain inspiration, resources, and the opportunity for meaningful connection with fellow UUs. Led by the Rev. Millie Rochester. Thursdays, February 12, 19, 26, 7:00 – 9:00 pm; \$20.

**** Re-scheduled from original date of January 30****

Money Tunes, February 13

A presentation weaving Irish-American fiddle fusion and philosophy, on the nature of prosperity. Led by Elan Chalford. Friday, February 13, 7:30 pm in the Octagon; \$10.

UUC True Dharma Buddhist Study Group Tuesday Nights at 7:00 pm, Patio Room, Social Hall, UUC

Congratulations! If you are reading this now, consider yourself among the special few. If you have begun reading this sentence and have remained attentive to the end of the line, wonderful! You are truly amongst those rare beings on this sandy peninsula who have survived the holidays and the news with some hope and cognitive faculties functioning. Leave the wreckage of 2008 behind, what is dead is dead. What is truly lost will not be found. Something else will appear. It's all in your mind anyway. Where else does it matter? Where else is matter? Prove it!

We invite you to discover new levels of meaning in 2009 with the investigation of your mind and heart, new hidden depths hitherto unexplored or identified. Tuesday night. Not AA. No committees. No membership. No God. No theology. No Zen. No atman. No Brahman. No soul. No Oneness. No diversity. No wealth. No penury. No choir practice. Your own deep heart. Tuesday nights, 7:00 pm. Patio Room Social Hall UU Clearwater. Charitable giving opportunity to loosen attachments and cover expenses.

We await consideration from Lama Zopa of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition to establish a formal FPMT Study Group. Study Groups focus on the exploration of the lam-rim, the graduated path to enlightenment, as taught by the Dalai Lamas and the Gelug Order of Tibet. We intend study the works of Indian and Tibetan masters and contemporary Western geniuses of psychophysical transformation and accelerated moral evolution. We also discuss the monkey mind and practice mindfulness meditation such as MBSR, tranquility (shamatha) and insight (vipassana) meditation, metta bhavana, analytic meditation, giving and taking (tonglen) and other visualizations, mantras and prostrations. Member presentations, Discovering Buddhism film series with Richard Gere, classic Buddhist films, contemporary films like **Jews and Buddhism**, **Sacred Sites of the Dalai Lamas**, Q & A, lots of discussions. Tea and vegetarian/vegan snacks brought by attendees.

All meetings are open to the public whether you have experience with the Buddha's teachings or not. We never know who will appear or who will not appear. We try to extend loving kindness to all and have had our share of cynics, curmudgeons, the bigoted, the lazy, Christians, humanists, Hindus, UUs, school marms, bipolar whackos. Hey, baby (Buddha), this is "real" life on the Florida Sun-coast. Birth, aging, sickness, death and all the delicious and devastating roller coaster bumps, twists and reversals in between. Are you prepared for the next bardo? Dana (charity donation)- \$5 per head- is happily received to cover expenses and purchase educational materials. We have free books sometimes. Friendship and a listening ear or two always. See you Tuesday. Deep bows.

True Dharma Frank Tedesco, Ph.D., truedharma108@gmail.com, (727) 512-4805



Festival of Lights

What a special service the Festival of Lights was on December 21 thanks to all of the children, youth and adults who participated! There were 59 children and youth at church that day!

Thanks especially to Cindy Nohe and her son, Kevin, for their stage management, to Rev. Abhi, Janet Clark, and Soledad Loba.

The music was beautiful thanks to Frank Wells, Linda Jones, and the Chorale.

Bouquets all around!

—Rev. Millie

Ongoing Events and This and That

RE News

The children's RE program continues to grow and thrive. Each Sunday, I am privileged to work with a group of dedicated people who truly enjoy being with our children and youth. However, additional teachers and assistants are still needed. We are especially looking for teachers for the Jr. Youth (Middle School), YRUU (High School) and assistants for the third to fifth grade class. All lesson plans and supplies are provided. Teaching teams work together and support one another so you are never on your own. Come be a part of RE and make a difference in the lives of our children and youth. Please contact Christine Pensa, RE Assistant, at christinepensa@att.net or (727) 442-3028 for additional information.

PSI Symposium

January 25 – Margo Mastromarchi will lead a discussion on *Angels and Everyday Miracles*. Her website is www.oracleofthedove.com.

February 22 – True Dharma Frank Tedesco will lead a discussion on *Neuroplasticity and Technologies of Transcendence: The Quantum, the Lotus and the Evolution of Consciousness*. His websites are www.truedharma.org and www.truedharmaworks.org.

All meetings are in the Patio Room starting at 12:30 pm. For more information, contact Bobbie Watson, (813) 251-2991. Join us for good conversation and coffee. All are welcome.

Membership Committee Meetings

The monthly meeting for the Membership Committee is on the first Tuesday of every month from 11:00 am to 12 noon in the Westwood Room. All are welcome.

—Mary Thornton, Membership Chairperson

Join the Tech Team

The tech team is looking for new members to work in the sound booth once a month. No experience is needed. You will learn how to operate the sound board, record DVD's and CD's, operate the DVD projector and more. It's a fun way to be a part of the Sunday service. If you are interested in learning more about the Tech Team contact John Frasier or stop by the sound booth after any service. Join us!

Community Builder Information Needed

If you would like to be included in the wide array of volunteer opportunities available at UUC and you haven't completed your Community Builder Information Form now is the time to do so. If you need another copy of the form, or if you have questions about it, please contact Bill Norsworthy at bnorsworthy@verizon.net.

Coffee Hour Woes

The after-service coffee hour provides an opportunity to socialize with old friends and meet new members and visitors. However, to make coffee hour a success we need you to sign up to host. Thanks to Janine Tompkins, the coffee is already brewing when we arrive and thanks to Ellen Morgan and her helper, Janna Jacobs, the goodies are in the refrigerator. All you have to do is set out the goodies, make the punch, put out the creamer and sugar, and clean up. If people do not sign up to host, we will have to severely pare down the provisions. Please choose a date and sign up to host on the poster which is located on the easel by the coffee urns. We are counting on you. Sincerely, the kitchen witch, Susan Hegner



Readers Forum

Readers Forum meets Fridays, 10:00 to 11:30 am, in the Choral Room. On January 2 we start a new book, *Inheriting The Trade*, by Thomas Norman DeWolf.

There is *Something* in the Air

Just a heads up for you to be aware that some of us are very sensitive to the smell of cosmetics and have allergic reactions to perfume. So let us go easy on the scent and aftershave and make UUC a perfume-free zone. Thank you. Susan Hegner

2008 Holiday Bake Sale Results

We did it again! Our Holiday Bake Sale was a big success in attendance and delicious home made goods donated and in buyers! Cash donations came in too. Our gross income was \$1,135.90. A big "thanks" to my many wonderful "elves," UUC staff, and everyone who helped make this day a success through their dedication and hard work. Happy Holidays to all of you, Anneliese Ekberg

SUUSI

The SUUSI Equinox is Sunday Jan 18th. Make plans now for the last week of July and enjoy heaven on earth, SUUSI (Southeast Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute). It's a spiritual food-based UU vacation you'll never forget!! Learn more at www.suusi.org

Next Deadline Jan. 18

Please send OCTAGRAM submissions by email to Octagram@uuclearwater.org. Deadline is midnight of the third Sunday of every month. For February issue, deadline is January 18, 2009.



2470 Nursery Road, Clearwater, FL 33764

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OCTAGRAM

The Monthly Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalists
Of Clearwater and the Octagon Arts Center

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**DO YOU HAVE A COMMENT OR A
QUESTION RELATING TO THE
MINISTER OR MINISTRY?**

If so, please contact one of the Members of
the Congregational Committee on Ministry:

Elly Kelly Baker	848-7910
Guy Chaney	536-8897
Sally Demarest	781-7665
Fred Seidl	331-7401
Hal Sparks	(813) 961-3898

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**Sunday Worship Service
information is on centerfold.**

Visit: www.uuclearwater.org