



The UNICORN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Santa Cruz County
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December Sunday Services

All Sunday Morning Services Begin At 10:00a.m.

"The Witness"

Dec 3

In a departure from our usual service format, our Fellowship will present a play produced by The Faithful Fools Street Ministry in San Francisco. We welcome Sarah Weidman as she performs "The Witness," written and directed by Martha Boesing. The piece is based on one woman's journey through the despair of homelessness as she searches for compassion and enlightenment. Sarah and fellow Faithful Fools member, Alex Darr, will be available for the discussion during coffee hour.

Tom Crahen, Service Associate

"Beyond Categorical Thinking"

Dec 10

Who is the ideal minister? Can the ideal minister be categorized by age, gender, gender identity, nationality, physical ability, race, sexual orientation, or family structure? What do we hope for? Please see the article on page 5.

Rev. Keith Kron and Rev. Ann Schranz

"Home for the Holidays"

Dec 17

Where is home, and how do we know we are home? In this "All Ages" holiday service, we will explore listening and the sounds of peace. Bring bells!

Rev. Ann Schranz and Sylvia Forsyth

"Music and Memory on Christmas Eve"

Dec 24

At 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. services, we honor what matters. In particular, the morning service will include sharing, and the evening service will include music.

Rev. Ann Schranz

"Ready for Anything?"

Dec 31

The new year beckons, a few short hours away. Are we ready for anything? Should we be? We will look at the role of intention and the relationship between intention and action.

Rev. Ann Schranz

Opening Words

*When the song of angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the
hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the
nations, to bring peace among the brothers,
to make music in the heart.*

Howard Thurman



Ministerial Search Committee

We have reached the most exciting place in our search. This week we received seven applications from potential future ministers for this congregation. They are of both genders, old and young, from north, south, east, and west, different heritages, and of different sexual orientations. They are all fabulous, and I am sure every one would serve us well. The hard part will be choosing.

Our packet is ready. The packet is a fifty-nine page (plus appendices) book about the fellowship, its history and people, what we are looking for in a minister, and how we would like our fellowship to develop in the future, including pictures and graphs. Our next step is to choose the smaller number of candidates with whom to exchange packets so we can narrow down the candidates to the best three whom we will invite to Santa Cruz, to visit with their families in the spring, and give sermons at neighboring churches in secret. We expect to make that decision in early January.

If you want to be part of this exciting effort, we would like to invite you to the Beyond Categorical Thinking Sunday, December 10. We will have as our guest the Reverend Keith Kron who will do a service plus a workshop to help us prepare for a new minister, to help us be in touch with the characteristics in a person that are important for the future leadership of this fellowship and those that are not.

We are always open to discussing our process with you. We are: Bruce Fihe, Chair, Randy James, Mark Rogers, Stephen Morairty, Andy Kreyche, Loraine Sandoval-Vigil, and Jenny Wood.

In the Interim with Rev. Ann Schranz



Last month, I spent several days at “The Mountain” UU retreat center near Highlands, North Carolina. I was one of six Unitarian Universalists working on a four-session adult education bisexuality curriculum to be used in our congregations as a follow up to the Welcoming Congregation program or as a stand-alone project to increase awareness of bisexuality and bi-phobia. “Interweave Continental” had submitted a grant proposal to the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, and we received a \$6,000 grant. We plan to make this curriculum available in a Web-based form (similar to Living the Welcoming Congregation and Crossing Paths: Where Religion and Transgender Meet), though some printed copies will be available for those without access to the Web. We plan to have this curriculum written and available by General Assembly 2007.

Unitarian Universalists have been at the forefront of the movement to secure support for sexual minorities. From the early 1970’s, when the first resolutions were passed at General Assembly, to the creation of the “Office for Gay Affairs” and on to the development of the Welcoming Congregation program, UU’s – not without struggle – have sought to understand and advocate for sexual minorities.

Yet bisexuals remain marginalized and invisible even within the queer community. The language around same-sex marriage and civil unions – referring to them as “gay and lesbian relationships” – has further marginalized many bisexuals involved in same-sex relationships. Just as UU’s have struggled over issues of race – and continue to struggle – they struggle over issues of bisexuality and gender expression.

As you search for a new settled minister, it is important to examine thoughts and feelings about minorities of every kind. Your settled minister search committee has arranged for Rev. Keith Kron, Director of the UU Association’s Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Concerns, to preach here on December 10 and to offer a workshop that weekend. His topic will be “Beyond Categorical Thinking.” Expect to be challenged to move beyond categorical thinking!

Rev. Ann

President's Letter

As we enter this holiday season, many of us will enjoy practicing and continuing traditions. For me, one tradition has always been the opening of one gift on Christmas Eve. Perhaps each year you enjoy a special meal, made with love by a family member that you only see once a year. Maybe it is watching a tree lighting, or the lighting of the first candle on a Menorah. These consistencies bring comfort to us, and a sense that in the chaos of the world, some things remain the same. We live in a world that is fraught with change. Things, events and people are all operating outside our control. It can bring a sense of peace and comfort when we find that there are things to count on, that a small amount of predictability still exists.

I enjoy "Joys and Sorrows" when I visit other UU congregations. In a new place, with new people, and a different way of doing the service, I can recognize a common thread and say, "This is home, I remember this". May you treasure the ways that things continue in your life.

I am available to you in the office Thursdays from 9am to 12 noon, and by phone at 831-332-7599.

Yours in service, Lora Lee

News From Our Greater UU Community

***UULM:** Rev. Lindi Ramsden can be contacted at lramsdn@uulmca.org or visit the UULM website at uulm.org

Save the Date & Spread the Word:

January 13, 2007, UULM Regional Conference, Rev. Bill Sinkford will be the special guest, Orange Coast UU Church

February 2007, UULM Regional, Liberal Voices in a Conservative Landscape Conference, UU Church of Fresno

March 27 (tentative date) 2007 CA Interfaith Coalition Legislative Issues Briefing Day, Sacramento

***PCD:** www.pcd-uaa.org

Other important dates:

January 13, 2007 PCD

Growth Conference with Rev. Larry Peers!

DO NOT miss this opportunity for learning, networking and "making a difference" to your congregation!



Board Highlights

Board approved the following:

*Board voted to support Brad Trusso and the Finance Committee in moving a total of \$2,398.00 from Ministers Salary to two places: Housing (\$2,200.) and Flex Benefits (\$198.00).

*Board passed a motion to accept the rental ad hoc committees policy re: building use, as given out at the September 2006 Board meeting, including the friendly amendment of adding fee schedules to the policy, with a review of the ongoing process in January 2007.

***Other Items of interest:**

*ISSP service will end in January. Transportation costs have become prohibitive. Homeless center will expand their facilities to meet additional needs.

*Appropriate software has been installed, and Scott Young is working on an internal audit.

*The first Communications Committee meeting took place November 13th in the Gallery. Contact Terra Collier-Young to find out about the work of this important committee.

*December 10th service will be sponsored by Beyond Categorical Thinking. Service will be followed by a workshop free to members.

*Our church website has been redone and looks beautiful. A thank you to Rich Fallis for his work on the website.

*Creation of the printed packet to be sent to prospective ministerial candidates is now ready. A copy will be placed in the office for general reading.

Thank you to all who have contributed.

Respectfully submitted, Lois Cole, Secretary

eScrip: An Everyday Fundraiser



The UUF is participating in a successful fundraising opportunity that we can utilize just by grocery shopping! Stores like Nob Hill, Safeway, and Macy's will donate a percentage of your purchase back to the Fellowship. You can register at our website www.uufsc.org or contact Scott Young at 492-4995.

**Support Growth in the Pacific Central District
by joining the**

PCD Chalice Lighters

Contact Karen Aaker,

our PCD representative, for details



Committee On Ministry

Wow, can you believe it's December! Your Committee on Ministry met in November and, besides normal business, we got reports on the last Board meeting and the Coordinating Council meeting, and we started working on one of the Interim Ministry evaluations.

We also talked about the retreat and felt it was a success, recognized the skilled leadership, and noted that it was in line with our goal this year of evaluating how UUFSCC is doing on fulfilling our mission statement: *"We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Santa Cruz County, join together to foster our spiritual growth and to promote social justice. Honoring religious diversity and affirming the inherent worth and dignity of all people, we commit our combined actions and personal sources to these goals."*

The new announcement policy experiment is about half way through and you may contact the C.O.M. members with your feedback on how you think it is working. Please feel free to contact any one of us with your thoughts, or you may prefer to use our suggestion box which should be on one of the greeter tables each Sunday.

Erica Crawford for the C.O.M. including Thomas Witz, Marley Smith-Merrill, Linda Neher, and Lee Cavanaugh

Communications Committee



"The mission of the Communications Committee is to promote accurate and consistent publications within the UUF and to the greater community."

This is the working mission statement crafted at our first "brain storming" meeting attended by Scott Young, Bruce Fihe, LoraLee Chapman, and me, Terra Collier-Young.

We came up with a plan that we think will work, and I hope you agree. Let's put together an "Action Study Committee", consisting of five people, to meet for three months, beginning in January. A few key items for this group will be to provide oversight and support for the website and newsletter, to promote press releases and outside advertising of special events and services, including our weekly listing in the Sentinel.

Please consider joining and we'll start the year in clear communication!!

Yours in service, Terra Collier-Young

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UU Events at Stebbins at Asilomar

**Cruise Stebbins: July 28 - August 2, 2007*

It is the affordable way to enjoy an all inclusive vacation experience with UU's and friends on the Monterey Bay at Asilomar. Stebbins invites you to the potluck lunch "Committee of the Whole" meeting to present your proposal to be on staff, hear other presentations, and vote for workshop proposals on Saturday, **December 9, 2006, 11:30a.m. to 2:30p.m.** at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Marin, 240 Channing way, San Rafael, 94903, Fireside Room. For more information email: ruthlorain@sbcglobal.net, or talk to Helen Oxley or Marsha Hudson about their own wonderful experience at Stebbins in prior years.

**PCD Spring Thing at Asilomar, April 6 -8, 2007*

It is a relatively unstructured gathering of about forty UUs and friends. The days are free for your own activities, exploring the Monterey area with conversation and games in a friendly atmosphere in the evenings. Ursula Gobets, Registrar, (408) 739-2787, 1155 Tucson Ave. , Sunnyvale , CA 94089 e-mail: augobets@pacbell.net Ask for a registration form and reserve your space now with a deposit of \$60 per person; **registration deadline is January 3, 2007.**



Beyond Categorical Thinking

On Sunday, December 10, our congregation will participate in the Beyond Categorical Thinking (BTC) workshop offered by the UUA for congregations involved in the search for a new minister.

The BCT program is designed to promote inclusive thinking and help prevent unfair discrimination in the search process. It will include opportunities to consider the hopes, expectations, and concerns regarding a new minister, explore how thinking categorically about people sometimes interferes with choosing the best candidate.

Please set aside the time to attend this important workshop, December 10, from 1:00p.m. to 3:30p.m.

*Time well spent today
will be greatly rewarded in the future.*

Social Action News

“Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part”;
The Seventh UU Principle.



At our recent Open House, SAC invited members of the Fellowship to share with us their ideas and wishes concerning social and economic justice issues, including ecology and the environment.

Recent scientific news has made us more aware of the problems associated with global warming and each day we read about some of the effects this has had upon climate and weather around the world. People and nations are taking steps to slow down and stop this process. Most agree that there isn't much time left to act. So as aware beings, we must endeavor to tread lightly so that our human footprint does not consciously add to the violation of the fragile earth space we inhabit.

We can help, by insuring that we personally and collectively commit to maintaining a healthy, sustaining environment at our facility and in our homes. The fact that our fellowship generates the electric power we use, and sends a surplus into the electricity grid, is a commendable and significant plus. We also, among other things, compost and recycle waste. Your Social Action Committee believes that we as a fellowship need to do much more still.

What can UUFSCC do and what are the possible steps? One first step might be to create a “Sustainable Living Task Force” under the aegis of the SAC. The task force would examine the UUA Green Sanctuary requirements and see what would be asked of us as a fellowship to meet its goals. By joining the UUA Seventh Principle Project, we can work with other UUs around the country, and get important guidance and assistance. For a small investment we can obtain the Green Sanctuary manual. But we need more help. Won't you step forward and play an early part in getting this effort underway?

For more information
please call SAC Co-Chairs:
Brian Heath @ 464-8442
Ruth Valdez @ 662-1738



The Poet's Corner

“War”

Sis, boom, ba

Bang, bang!

Ah!

Cry baby, cry,

You hurt, you hurt.

Oh dear child.

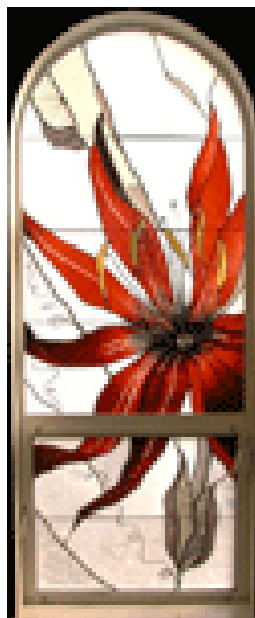
Cry baby, cry.

Baby? Baby!

by Gene Stevens



Your Art Committee



Some time ago the Board approved that we proceed with researching and acquiring a major art work for the main wall in the sanctuary. We developed a questionnaire & handed it out to members and spoke with many about this. The results were very diverse as to what the membership wanted. We have since done a lot of research about art works in other UU Churches and artists capable of designing and installing a major art work.

At the November meeting we had a presentation by artist Susan Wagner with an extensive and professional portfolio of her works. We were able to see an installation at the St. Joseph's Monastery of the Poor Clares in Aptos. Take a few minutes to go to her website, www.susanwagnerglass.com, and give your eyes a treat.

We will continue to explore the possibilities and other artist will be interviewed. Please contact me if you would like to come to the meetings on the first Monday of each month at 10a.m..

All are welcome, Marylou Lamb

Reflections of the Season

The Pig Revisited

No pigs are found in holy manger scenes
The cow is present, honorable and worthy
The ox, the ass
The lamb a symbol of the Son of God
While the *pig*--
A tone of voice conveys it all--
 glutton
 cop
 someone mired in filth



But not to me
Pigs bring gifts to me in dreams
One night a small dream pig trotted up to me
At eye level he gazed into my eyes
Licked my face
Disconcerting me while blessing me
Another night two dream pigs lay together in a pen
A large pale one, male
A female half his size, the color of intense
persimmon
These pigs loved each other
They were overjoyed to learn
Their separate owners granted them permission
 to sleep in the same pen several nights a week
They did not have to breed
Produce new piglets for their owners
They could lie quietly against each other in the night
I argued with these pigs
Urged them not to be so joyful
Explained they needed no permission
It was their right to be together
They were entitled
The pigs ignored me
Cared nothing for my arguments
My sense of justice
I could not disturb their bliss

 It is time for a new manger scene
 A creche surrounded by a ring of pigs
A few guardians facing outward from the circle
 The others facing inward toward the Child
 Persimmon colored females
 Strong males, large and pale in color
 Each pig standing
 Listening intently
Hearing angels sing throughout the land

Helen A. Oxley April, 2006

Musical Ministry

The monthly Open Mic needs support:

The Open Mic has successfully offered a causal venue for musicians and others to share their talents for several years now. Marijke Meijer, the coordinator, would appreciate help in getting a few of the details taken care of, otherwise December will have to be the last open mic for her. Please call her ASAP at 477-7588.

If December is to be the last Open Mic, please consider coming out and giving it a grand send off: December 16th, third Saturday of the month. Sign-ups begin at 7:30p.m., and start time is at 8:00p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Chant and Meditation Circle:

On December 27, the fourth
Wednesday of the month,
at 7:30p.m. we will gather



in the Sanctuary for our Chant and Meditation Circle.

Please join us as we gather the calm, sing from our souls, listen with our hearts, and relish the silence. The December chant night will be lead by Terra Collier-Young

UUF FYI's

***Gerry Bailey's Books:** Our dear friend and UUF member Gerry Bailey recently passed away. Yet he continues to enrich our Fellowship experience. Many of the books he collected during his life have been given to us here at the Fellowship. These books include volumes of poetry, social justice, and more. Sara Hummingbird has generously agreed to sort them out and work them into our library.

***Calling all digital photographers:** Please put me on your "send" list when you take pictures of the members and friends of the UUF, on any occasion! I would love to have a photo gallery on the back page and highlight articles with the author's picture. Please send to unicorn@uufsc.org with "photos" in the subject line.

***Dinner Club for December** will not be held since it is a busy month for many of our members. The next dinner club will resume in January, 2007. Iran Mohsenin

***Gourmet Dinner Alert:** Fellowship members who love to cook and those who love to eat (or both) should start planning for these spring events. Members who are willing to cook a gourmet dinner should contact Rosalie Kraft, 475-5660. This year we had twelve dinners and two picnics. Can we have this much fun in 2007?

Hospitality's Hospitality



Happy Holidays!

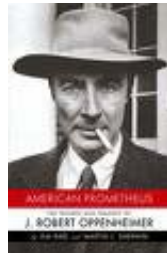
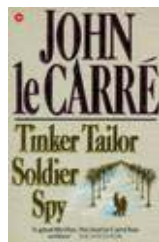
Let's join in the holiday festivities with a delicious potluck!

December 3rd
A-G Clean-up
H-N Main Dish
O-R Salad or Bread
S-Z Dessert

First Friday Book Group

You can't say the First Friday Book Group is taking 2007 lightly, as least as far as its January selection goes. After discussing LeCarre's *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* in December we'll move on to *American Prometheus: the Triumph and Tragedy of Robert Oppenheimer* by Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin in January.

We hope you will decide to join us on December 1st for LeCarre's book and/or on January 5th, 2007, for the book on Oppenheimer.



We meet at 7:30p.m. at Joan Roberts's home. There may be holiday eggnog at the December meeting. Can we tempt or bribe you with that enticement? If you need more information please call 688-7598.

Sunday Services Requests That We Make Room for Everyone

Have you noticed that many people attending Sunday morning services like to sit in the seats on the left side of the sanctuary? And then, those who arrive later have to squeeze past to seat themselves?

The Sunday Services Committee has a request to make; would folks consider migrating to the right, toward the piano, giving room for latecomers? It might even make newcomers feel more welcome.

We may find that these small considerations make everyone more comfortable.



Marcia Heath, chair-person for the Sunday Services Committee

CUUPS:

the 6th Source and 7th Principle

Winter, with its long dark nights, is the time of year that we celebrate the light at the heart of darkness.

For this reason, winter is known as the season of faith and the season of rest, the period of going inside the house and inside ourselves. It offers an opportunity to envision the new year with those sparks of inspiration that come to us in the darkness. It is an interior season, not only because the days are shorter, but because winter's silence allows us to hear the call of the new.



This is a time to find inner strength and resolve, for it can be a challenging time, one in which our faith is tested. Consider these three kinds of power: presence, communication, and position. The first is the power of awareness of ourselves and that which is around us. It is our vibration tone, our harmonic resonance, our witness-self. The second is the power of our voice, how well we communicate our individual truth: what we feel, think, and know. The latter asks us to look at how we use our position to serve, create, and take responsibility.

Contrary to the natural rhythms of the Earth and the dormancy of our hemisphere, our culture makes this season the busiest time of the year, when we get together with friends and family, travel across the country, and enjoy holiday parties. Although such beloved celebrations are important, be sure to take some contemplative time for yourself.

May the sacred dark and silence bring you the gift of insight and the power of personal reflection.

Blessed Be, Terra Collier-Young
(text adapted from "Living a Sacred Life" by Robin Heerens Lysne)

Saturday Stewardship Day's



The Facilities Committee is supporting the Social Action Committee's call for us to be an UUA Green Sanctuary by developing a "Sustainable Living Task Force." See the SAC article for details.

Please note the Stewardship Day changes: "Power Tool Day" will be on the first Saturday of the month, December 2, from 9:00a.m. until noon, and "Gardening Day" will be on the second Saturday, December 9, from 10:00a.m. until noon. *See you there!*

Our Covenant

We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Santa Cruz County, appreciating our varied cultural and religious experiences, covenant with one another to:

aspire to build together a nurturing community in which each may find wholeness of spirit and integrity of self;

pledge ourselves to mutual trust and respect as we search for truth and explore the larger meanings and deeper issues of human existence;

with the children among us, seek to realize the greater potential of the human spirit, drawing on the wisdom and inspiration of the past and present, commit ourselves, with reverence for life, to protect and enhance our natural environment;

work, valuing peace, justice, and human dignity, toward a world made safe for all peoples.

To these ends, with joy, creativity, and firm resolve, we join in covenant with one another.

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