



February 2013

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#### UUSP Mission Statement

"Providing a compassionate and welcoming community, inspiring spiritual and intellectual growth, and serving as a beacon for social activism and service."

# SCOPE

Unitarian Universalist Church of St. Petersburg

719 Arlington Avenue North

February 2013

## Alarums and Diversions

One of the most difficult balancing acts we have to do in any community, small or large, is dealing with the relationship of the individual to the group. It has become common wisdom to say that most of the problems of our society can be traced back to the excessive individualism of our history and culture. I don't entirely agree. Although preservation of the safety of the community is vitally important, so is being willing to include those who, as Thoreau so famously said, "march to the beat of a different drum". We need those who don't just go along with things as they are, who think critically, who act independently and who imagine the formerly unimagined. Without such people our culture would become stultified.

I think that what these commentators are talking about is not so much individualism as narcissism, the conviction that the only thing that matters is your own perceived wellbeing, and anybody else simply doesn't matter. There seems to be a serious increase of that in our society with our consumerist culture encouraging people to stay in a state of infantilism where it is all about their personal needs, and they are even unaware of the needs either of other individuals, or more particularly, of society.

That, I believe, is behind our horrifying gun culture in this country. One of the saddest responses to the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School was that shortly after the news broke, gun stores were bought out of all their similar weapons, not because the buyers were afraid for their personal safety, but lest rational laws should be passed forbidding the sale of such guns to private citizens. The arguments for the absolute right of individuals to own as many of any kind of gun that they want reach almost the level of hysteria. Should the second amendment to the United States Constitution have any limitations put on it in any form our lives, our culture and our democracy are on the line. There were proposals to arm our teachers, and even suggestions that those innocent lives were sacrificed by gun control advocates themselves in order to get their anti-gun laws passed were made.

Somehow, in spite of the greater importance of the freedoms mentioned in the first amendment, we have readily consented to reasonable limitations on freedom of speech, of the press and of religion. They make sense, after all. There are laws against libel, against, tritely enough, giving a false alarm of fire in a crowded theater, and against certain religious practices that endanger others. It is the preservation of community that trumps these individual rights. It seems only reasonable that gun laws might be enacted for the preservation of our children's lives.

*Katy*

**Staff**

The Reverend  
Katy Korb

*Developmental Minister*

Jim Culver  
*Music Director*

Careena Cornette  
*Director of Religious Education*

J. Peter Schultes  
*Office Manager*

Aaron Johnson  
*Custodian*

Greg Burton  
*President*  
*Board of Trustees*

The Reverend  
Alec Craig  
*Minister Emeritus*

The Reverend  
Wes Stevens  
*Minister Emeritus*

**Board of Trustees**

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Karen Frank, *Secretary*  
Kent Fanning  
Mike Manning

**Contacts**

Office Phone  
727.898.3294  
Office E-mail  
office@uustpete.org

Web Address  
www.uustpete.org

Info-net  
<http://infonet.uustpete.org/>

**President's Message by Greg Burton**

Mardi Gras will be late this year. Not that Unitarian Universalists are known to fret much about Lent. But the idea of Carnival is not without its Humanist appeal.

Mardi Gras is a well-loved tradition in New Orleans. We at UUSP, formerly known as the United Liberal Church of St Petersburg, have our own traditions. One that will be returning this year is the pledge dinner. It will again take place in Gilmour Hall. The theme this year is Mardi Gras on Mirror Lake. The meal will be catered by a local chef who specializes in Cajun Cuisine. There will be a guest musician and a fun one-act play for additional entertainment.

There also will be wine and cheese before dinner so we can visit with old friends. The menu was designed to be welcoming to all, vegans included. So block you Saturday evening, February 23rd. Social Hour will begin at 5:30 and dinner will be served in time for anyone with tickets for an evening performance to still join us.

Our irreverent Mardi Gras will be part of this year's Miracle Weekend. What is that you ask? Stay tuned for more details. But just as you will not want to miss out on our Cajun feast, neither will you want to miss the next day's Sunday service.

**Charitable contributions notice:**

As you may have heard, Congress extended the IRA Charitable Rollover for 2012 and 2013. The bad news is they extended it for 2012 after 2012 was already over. Many people took their required minimum distribution from their IRAs in December, to avoid penalties. But wait! The good news is due to the late extension, Congress provided two special transition rules:

If you are 70½ or older, you are once again eligible to transfer up to \$100,000 from your IRA account directly to qualified charities without having to pay income taxes on that money.

- a.. Qualified charitable distributions from your IRA made before February 1, 2013 may be counted retroactively for the 2012 tax year.
- b.. A taxpayer who took a distribution from an IRA account in December 2012 may make a gift of cash to a charity before February 1, 2013 and treat this as a direct transfer from their IRA for the 2012 tax year.
- c.. Qualified charitable distributions from your IRA made February 1st through December 31st, 2013 will not be taxable as income on your 2013 tax return.

What does this mean for you?

Will this opportunity help you on your taxes? Quite possibly. The best way to find out is to contact your financial advisor – that's what they are there for! Ask them whether this legislation can help you save on your taxes. But act quickly. Your gift must be made before February 1st.

## February Celebrations

### Anniversaries

14—Victor Beaumont &  
Dean Robinson

### Birthdays

15—Geneva Nelson

## Months of Sundays

February 3 “98 Years In the Making” Margie Manning et al

February 10 “The Heart’s Core” Rev. Korb

February 17 “Love Universal” Rev. CJ McGregor

February 24 “The Hope of the World” Rev. Korb

## Treasurer’s report –

The end of December marked the half-way point in UU St. Pete’s fiscal year. While we are in the black, with income running ahead of expenses at this point in time, we have some big expenses coming up , including the annual insurance payment on our building, for which we have budgeted about \$12,000. Separately, the Board of Trustees and the Endowment Board have begun discussions on some major needed building updates and how to fund them.

December 2012 financials

### Total income

Pledges	\$13,555
Endowment	\$3,191
Sunday services	\$899
Special projects	\$10
Building use	\$172
Other income	\$3,150

### Total expenses

Compensation	\$11,856
Programs	\$136
Buildings & grounds	\$4,856
Other expenses	\$738



Margie Manning, Treasurer

## Music Notes

### *ARE YOU EXCITED ABOUT GROWING OUR CHURCH?*

Mark your calendars for Sunday, February 17 and bring your family, friends, and neighbors to sign up for roles in our 7<sup>th</sup> musical play, *Beanstalk*. Written just for our church, *Beanstalk* loosely follows the tale of “Jack and the Beanstalk” with actors playing the following parts: Jackie (young girl), her mother, the Giant (think sports team), a bean seller (think Foghorn Leghorn), a golden egg laying hen (think Henny Youngman), a magical harp (think Harpo Marx), a cow (think 2 kids in a cow costume), an English butler, a beanstalk (think RE kids holding hands), and the village people (think cowboys, policemen...). This play will be all about our wonderful community coming together in this special place to experience a magical intergenerational experience. Nine scenes of UU messages, 7 songs and production numbers and tons of schtick all add to the fun as our special place once again brings us together in community through the arts.

# February 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 6:30pm Writers' Workshop	2
3 10:40am Band Rehearsal 11:00am Sunday Service 1:30pm Sing Out Jam Out 7:28pm Collage	4 4:45pm Beacon House 7:00pm Shaolin Kung Fu 7:00pm NA	5 10:00am Handcrafters 7:00pm Emotions Anonymous	6 7:00pm Meditation	7 5:00pm B&G Meeting 6:15pm Handbells 6:30pm Spanish Class 7:00pm Adult Choir 7:00pm World Religions 1	8	9
10 10:40am Band Rehearsal 11:00am Sunday Service 12:00pm Fair Trade Coffee 7:28pm Collage	11 4:45pm Beacon House 6:00pm Homeless Ministry 7:00pm Shaolin Kung Fu 7:00pm NA	12 7:00pm Emotions Anonymous 7:00pm Worship Committee	13 7:00pm Board of Trustees 7:00pm Meditation	14 6:15pm Handbells 6:30pm Spanish Class 7:00pm Adult Choir 7:00pm World Religions 1	15 6:30pm Writers' Workshop	16
17 10:40am Band Rehearsal 11:00am Sunday Service 7:28pm Collage	18 4:45pm Beacon House 7:00pm Shaolin Kung Fu 7:00pm NA 7:00pm Covenant Group	19 10:00am Handcrafters 7:00pm Emotions Anonymous	20 7:00pm Meditation	21 6:15pm Handbells 6:30pm Spanish Class 7:00pm Adult Choir 7:00pm World Religions 1	22	23
24 9:30am Pancake Breakfast 10:40am Band Rehearsal 12:00pm Fair Trade Coffee 12:30pm R.E. Meeting 7:28pm Collage	25 4:45pm Beacon House 7:00pm Shaolin Kung Fu 7:00pm NA	26 7:00pm Emotions Anonymous	27 5:30pm Migrant/Immigrant Ministry 7:00pm Meditation	28 6:15pm Handbells 6:30pm Spanish Class 7:00pm Adult Choir		

## UUA Trustee Tidbits from Joan Lund

Although it is the month of love and Standing on the Side of Love is very important, once in a long while I decide to write a column of personal privilege, not something in which the UUA Board of Trustees is currently involved. This is one of those times and it is a tough column to write. Hopefully my words, and the assault weapons massacres of recent times, will generate some interest, if the topic has not already done so in your congregation.

For over 50 years I have been an advocate of controlling firearms in the possession of Americans. My interest began when as a young woman I was invited to be in the pulpit at the UU Church of Wilmington, DE and had to make a decision on a topic; chose gun control. I knew, and statistics showed at that time that handguns were causing problems in society but never dreamed of the proliferation of weapons I know so little about except that all types have turned our nation into a violent, fearful, gun toting place to live. I know all the gun-rights advocates would say that there is a personal right to bear arms, even to the point of pre-dating the Second Amendment. But it was clear when the Second Amendment passed that Madison and the other MEN viewed the “right to bear arms” in the context of a “well-regulated militia” to defend the communities from massacres, not undermine it. The goal was to resist aggression from European powers, confront Native American tribes, and put down internal rebellions, including slave revolts. What is not happening in our country is quite the opposite of “security”, not what the Founders had in mind.

As American history has unfolded the American Right and today's arms industry have come to devote enormous resources to twisting the framers of our Constitution and Bill of Rights into extremists ideologues who put "liberties" like individual gun ownership ahead of all practical concerns about "security." And in today's world the propaganda spewed by many politicians has proved so successful that even those who favor common-sense gun control are deemed violators of the original intent of our Founders, as essentially un-American, and of course face defeat in elections.

Guns are robbing us of freedom, not insuring it. Eighty-three Americans die daily from gun violence in the USA, eight are children or teenagers. WE must put in place commonsense gun laws and enforce those laws. Our UUA is urging us to take action to prevent gun violence and the link to help your congregation work toward that end can be found at [uua.org](http://uua.org). I urge each of this to not let this goal fade from our vision and embark on congregational discussions about how we can reverse this tide of violence. I can be reached at [jlund@uua.org](mailto:jlund@uua.org) or 813-931-9727.

### **Group Contacts**

#### **Administrative**

Margie Manning 374-0570

#### **Building & Grounds**

Fred Russell 542-5449

#### **Care Ministry**

Joan Barclay  
520-8922

#### **Children's Religious Education**

Dolores Benjamin  
360-7592

#### **Communications Working Group**

Eric Mitchell  
327-9454

#### **Hospitality Team**

Dot Goldsmith  
344-7809

#### **Congregational Life Ministry**

Dave Coale 898-8038

#### **Music**

Jim Culver 616-318-4664

#### **Program Council**

Karen Coale 898-8038

#### **Scope**

J Peter Schultes 898-3294

#### **Social Justice**

Handcrafters Subministry  
Dani Skryzpek 488-3601  
Homeless Subministry  
Reggie Craig 631-1031  
Migrant Subministry  
Karen Coale 898-8038

#### **UU Service Committee**

Marilyn Barber 298-5096

#### **Worship Ministry**

Penny Duff 748-3178

## **The Balloon Animal of Pedagogy, from Careena Cornette of the R.E. Ministry**

In recent months, we've had an age range of students that is most compatible with the "one room schoolhouse" model. Rather than splitting by age, we have mostly elected to keep them together. The opportunity for them to flop onto their beanbags like a big pile of puppies gives them a lot of time for bonding, communicating, finding shared veins of humor, and many, many other good things. At the least, a young child can eventually learn from her older peers that the invitation to pull someone's finger is best met with a polite but firm veto.

But it does present us with a lot challenges related to seemingly incompatible learning levels. As any birthday party clown knows, it's difficult to keep a twelve year old engaged on the same level as a five year old. But in our classroom, I like to think we have hit upon the, um, "balloon animal of pedagogy" that keeps them all thinking and growing together.

My voice professor's philosophy of age appropriateness is that much of parenting (and teaching) has to do with building trust. She had a unique setting for motherhood: her little boy tagged along as she sang opera engagements all over Europe. Needless to say, he was exposed to lots of people, places, and situations that would be far outside the experience of a suburban American child. What would she do if, for example, her child was sitting quietly in a rehearsal, watching as the characters in some opera schemed, murdered, and fornicated all over the stage? How about when you are traveling by train, and your child looks out the window and sees an itinerant beggar, who is carrying a fake baby, pick someone's pocket?

She has told me that her go-to solution for difficult explanations was to let her child know, "You can trust me to explain, either now or later." There are many times when it's socially difficult to provide an explanation right then and there. She would let her son know that A) she recognized that he was curious about something, B) that she would explain it to him at an age-appropriate level when they had a chance for discussion, and C) that he could trust her to explain the rest when he reached the right age.

This sort of trust is a useful philosophy for everything from explaining painfully complex subjects like terrorism ("*Have you ever been so angry about something that you wanted to hurt somebody? It's hard to understand now . . .*") to everyday discipline problems (example, "*We are not going to buy candy right now, and I do not have time to discuss it, but when we get home, we will find a picture book about nutrition to study,*"). When we read books discussing parenting styles, this seems to fall squarely under the category of "Authoritative." (This being the most ideal style, as opposed to the other options, "Authoritarian," "Neglectful," and "Indulgent.")

So, how do we bring this philosophy into a mixed-ages classroom? The thorough explanation for a middle schooler ("*The pick-pocket was trying to elicit sympathy by masquerading as a parent, and the baby doll was held by a fake arm, which provided cover and left one arm free for picking pockets*") will be different than the explanation for a pre-schooler ("*This woman was a thief; this isn't the kind of thief who breaks into a bank. The doll is something she uses as part of her trick. If you saw someone picking a pocket, would you say something right away, look for a train conductor, or do something else?*") It seems the answer-- as usual-- would be, "Choose your words carefully, and on a case-by-case basis." Build enough trust with the younger students that they will not sit cross-eyed and bored if you take a moment to explain something on a middle school level, but will try to follow it to the best of their cognitive ability, and at least come away with a new vocabulary word.

And, when that fails, breaking out the literal rather than figurative balloon giraffe is good, too.

# FREE TAX FILING

## **THE AARP FOUNDATION TAX AIDE PROGRAM'S TRAINED VOLUNTEERS CAN PREPARE YOUR TAXES (regardless of age) AND ELECTRONICALLY FILE YOUR 2012 FEDERAL INCOME TAX RETURN**

- Copy of last year's income tax return(s);
- W-2 forms from each employer;
- Unemployment compensation statements;
- SSA-1099 form if you were paid Social Security benefits;
- ALL 1099 forms
- documentation showing original purchase price of sold assets;
- 1099-R forms for your pension or annuity;
- All forms indicating federal income tax paid;
- Dependent care provider information (name, employer, ID, Social Security number);
- All receipts or canceled checks if itemizing deductions;
- Social Security cards and other picture IDs for yourself and all dependents.

### **AREA SITES from February 1-April 15, 2013**

#### **Gulfport Library**

5501 28th Ave S  
Gulfport, FL  
Hours: MON 10 AM - 3 PM  
FRIDAY 10 AM - 3 PM

#### **St. Petersburg Main Library**

3745 9th Ave, N  
St Petersburg, fl  
Hours: WED 10 AM – 3 PM  
THURS 10 AM - 3 PM

#### **Gulf Beaches Library**

200 Municipal Dr  
Madeira Beach, FL  
Hours: TUE 10 AM-1:30 PM  
THU 10 AM-1:30 PM

#### **Sunshine Center**

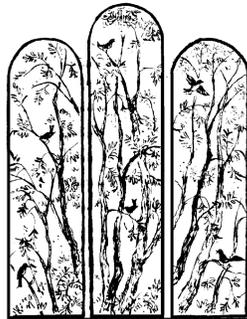
330 5th Ave  
Saint Petersburg, fl  
Hours: FRIDAY 9 AM – 2 PM

#### **NEW St. Pete Beach Library**

365 73rd Ave.  
St. Pete Beach, FL 33706  
Hours: FRI 10 am- 3 PM

TO LOCATE OTHER TAXAIDE SITES GO TO [www.aarp.org/taxaide](http://www.aarp.org/taxaide)  
or call our toll-free number 1-888-AARPNOW

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of Saint Petersburg  
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33701-3621



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