



October 2010

Volume 51 Issue 10

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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

October 2010

Waves Of Love From Jim

As I've shared several times during Sunday services, I have a vision of this special place and its amazing community of individuals. A vision of our further creating this church home to be a spiritual center that inspires us to **TRANSFORM WITHIN**, make **CONNECTIONS BETWEEN**, and live with **LOVING COMPASSION BEYOND**. Now that we have begun another church season together, I encourage each of us to ask that beautiful question crafted by Rabbi Hillel and used by Robert Kennedy "If not us, who? If not now, when?"

But, what does that "within, between, beyond" phrase mean? What does it mean to be a "spiritual" center? When do you experience the presence of what many call God? I believe that you experience God **WITHIN** when you have taken time to transform your inner self to that point where your inner self matches your outward actions. You experience God **BETWEEN** when the differences between you and others blurs and you become one. You experience God **BEYOND** when your own deepest personal experiences, your own intuition leads you to that "aha" moment when a deeper understanding of what it means to act with loving compassion washes over you. To my understanding, then, a spiritual life is that which inspires us to **TRANSFORM WITHIN**, make **CONNECTIONS BETWEEN**, and live with **LOVING COMPASSION BEYOND**.

So how can we share all this transforming, connecting and loving with the greater St. Pete community? Just speak your truth in love...because one day someone will say to you "UU? What do you believe?" Rather than go on and on about our principles, our values based religion or our wedding of love and justice, or worse, just stare like a deer in the headlights, maybe the simplest thing to do is to answer that question directly, what do **YOU** believe? Because that's the whole point of our faith. As religious liberals, we have the freedom and the responsibility to flesh out our own beliefs and trust our own deepest experience. Then we live out those beliefs as fully as possible while supporting others as they walk their own paths. So, then, beyond our common values, what do you believe?

See "Minister" page 8.....

Staff

The Reverend
Jim Culver
Consulting Minister

The Reverend
Alec Craig
Pastoral Care Minister

J. Peter Schultes
Office Manager

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President’s Column

Living our Mission –Part 3

“Serving as a Beacon for Social Activism and Service” is a long standing tradition in Unitarian Universalism and something that we at UUSP do well, even if not always with one mind. In fact we approach social activism and service on a variety of levels, including outreach that is driven by things we see in our own back yards as well as issues of national and global importance.

We “do” social activism individually, as part of a UUSP ministry, through supporting efforts of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) and through the work of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). As individuals we may belong to other organizations that reflect our values yet have no affiliation with Unitarian Universalism.

I believe all of these approaches are significant contributions to our Church’s mission-especially when you consider defining “the church” as Reverend Jim did in his sermon on September 12th wherein he proposed a revision of our name to “the Community of...Alana, Alec, Alex, Adele, Alberto, Alexandra, Alice, Alison, Allen, Aletta, Amali, AnnaMay, Anne, Anne, Annette, Arthur, Audre, Barasha, Barbara, Barbara, Beatrice, Becky, Beth, Beth, Betsy, Bette, Betty, Bill, B.J., Bonnie, Brandon, Bud”.....well, you get the picture.

Just as with spiritual and intellectual growth we live this part of our mission, within ourselves, between ourselves and beyond ourselves. (Yes, borrowed from Rev. Jim’s sermon-again).

So what opportunities does UUSP offer with regard to social activism? Our social justice programs on the homeless and migrant outreach have won awards for the Florida District of the UUA and offer opportunities for hands-on involvement including serving food at the Friday night picnic for the homeless, collecting food and children’s clothing for migrant families and traveling to the camps to deliver the much needed donations. These two subcommittees also coordinate with other groups in our area to multiply the impact of this outreach.

In recent years our Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual and Transgendered subcommittee has struggled despite our values opposing discrimination. While UUSP continues to participate in St. Petersburg Pride with the West Central Cluster, some of our GLBT members continue to feel marginalized. As we undertake the Welcoming Congregations program I hope everyone will participate in the activities designed to help us better understand each other and how we can collectively overcome the barriers that make some members of our community feel “less-than”. Please don’t assume we already are welcoming; remain open to the possibility that there is something to be learned that can truly enhance our community.

See “President” page 8.....

Covenant Group Sessions Resume

Our Covenant Groups are starting up again for the third year. The first session will take place beginning the week of October 17. Here is the schedule; Mondays 7-9 p.m. at the home of Dave Coale 111 26th Ave. N, Phone 727-898-8038; Tuesdays 7-9 p.m. at the home of Dean Robinson 2935 4th Ave. N, Phone 727-322-0828; Fridays 2-4 p.m. at the home of Tina Spangler, 445 14th Ave. N, Phone 727-896-6823; Saturdays 10:30 a.m.--12:30 p.m. at the church, Phone Sally Carville 727-526-9837 or Dorothy Byrne 727-259-9300

In addition this year we will have a short-term group that will start meeting in November, TBA. Something new has been added this year.

Covenant Groups; like a lifelong adventure, a spiritual journey can be a search for deeper meaning, a quest for eternal truth, and a venture into uncharted waters of who we are.

Participants in our Covenant Groups will meet for six months. At the end of the six months, the group either ends or agrees to randomly move into new groups. In either case, the final meeting allows members to practice “endings,” and to hold themselves accountable to saying a “good goodbye” to one another. Forming new groups at the end of each six-month cycle allows our Covenant Groups to truly live out the idea of “Radical Hospitality,” as they continually make room for the newcomer.

Everyone who attends our church is invited – even encouraged – to join one of our Covenant Groups.

The Guests Are Coming! The Guests Are Coming! Keep Up the Good Work!

UUSP continues to attract many guests, many of whom are repeaters. The Congregational Life Ministry has identified 30 guests who are repeats from early August to mid September. Overall attendance at Sunday Service is good, with 91 adults and 14 children on Sep 12, and 95 adults and 12 children on Sep 19. Please continue to engage our guests during after service Coffee Hour. Also, before service, if someone is there and you do not know them, introduce yourself, and invite them to try one of our many activities such as Gilmour Gladflies, the Women's Walking Group, the newly formed Men's Group, as well as Yoga, Social Action Projects, the choir, etc. *If they are a person who has started coming this summer, promote our next UU101, to be held at 12:30 after the Sunday Service on October 10. A light lunch will be offered. Childcare offered upon request.*

West Central Florida Cluster Fall Picnic and Craft Fair

All Florida UU Families and Friends are invited to share in the food, fun, and fellowship. Saturday, Oct 9 10 am to 3pm At Spirit of Life UU Church at 18412 Burrell Road in Odessa

Bring a Potluck dish to Share: Casserole, Salad or Dessert
(Grillables, Rolls, Drinks, Paper provided.)

You are encouraged to display and sell your Crafts or you may want to host an Affinity Table for Sharing Your Concerns

For information or to reserve a craft or affinity table, call Alec Craig at 727-393-3499

October 2010

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| <p>3</p> <p>(All day) Food Collection 8:45am Adult Choir 10:00am Discussion Group 10:15am Children's Choir 12:30pm Sunday Lunch 7:28pm Collage Game Night</p> | <p>4</p> <p>8:00pm Gentle Yoga</p> | <p>5</p> <p>12:00pm Facilitators' Meeting 8:30pm Spanish Meetup 7:00pm Program Council Meeting</p> | <p>6</p> <p>8:00pm Hatha Yoga 7:00pm BOT Meeting</p> | <p>7</p> <p>8:15pm Handbells 7:00pm Musical Rehearsal 7:00pm Adult Choir</p> | <p>1</p> <p>10:00am Community Yoga 8:45pm Picnic In The Playground</p> | <p>2</p> <p>8:00am Flow Yoga 11:00am Yoga4Kids</p> |
| <p>10</p> <p>8:45am Adult Choir 10:00am Discussion Group 10:15am Children's Choir 12:30pm UU 101 7:28pm Collage Movie Night</p> | <p>11</p> <p>11:00am Flournoy Memorial Service 4:45pm Beacon House 8:00pm Gentle Yoga</p> | <p>12</p> <p>8:30pm Spanish Meetup</p> | <p>13</p> <p>8:00pm Hatha Yoga</p> | <p>14</p> <p>8:15pm Handbells 7:00pm Musical Rehearsal 7:00pm Adult Choir</p> | <p>15</p> <p>10:00am Community Yoga 8:45pm Picnic In The Playground</p> | <p>16</p> <p>8:00am Flow Yoga 11:00am Yoga4Kids</p> |
| <p>17</p> <p>(All day) Food Collection 8:45am Adult Choir 10:00am Discussion Group 10:15am Children's Choir 12:00pm Blood Pressure Screening 12:00pm Migrant Children's Clothing 12:30pm Welcoming Congregation Planning 8:30pm Glimour Gadflies</p> | <p>18</p> <p>8:00pm Gentle Yoga</p> | <p>19</p> <p>8:30pm Spanish Meetup 7:00pm Migrant/Immigrant Ministry</p> | <p>20</p> <p>8:00pm Hatha Yoga</p> | <p>21</p> <p>8:15pm Handbells 7:00pm Musical Rehearsal 7:00pm Adult Choir</p> | <p>22</p> <p>10:00am Community Yoga 8:45pm Picnic In The Playground</p> | <p>23</p> <p>8:00am Flow Yoga 11:00am Yoga4Kids</p> |
| <p>24</p> <p>8:45am Adult Choir 10:00am Discussion Group 10:15am Children's Choir 11:00am Share The Plate</p> | <p>25</p> <p>4:45pm Beacon House 8:00pm Gentle Yoga</p> | <p>26</p> <p>8:30pm Spanish Meetup</p> | <p>27</p> <p>8:00pm Hatha Yoga</p> | <p>28</p> <p>8:15pm Handbells 7:00pm Musical Rehearsal 7:00pm Adult Choir</p> | <p>29</p> <p>10:00am Community Yoga 8:00pm Pumpkin Carving 8:45pm Picnic In The Playground</p> | <p>30</p> <p>8:00am Flow Yoga 11:00am Yoga4Kids</p> |

Lilting Musical Notes

For our music ministry, we are asking all authors to become lyricists as we wed original words that are distinctly our own to ageless hymntunes that we have loved, yet currently do not use because of the antiquated language linked to those tunes. Then, coupled with choir anthems and musicals created and composed here, we'll publish our original hymns, songs, anthems and musicals for use in liberal churches everywhere, making a difference in the musical world. For those willing, please create original lyrics to Beethoven's music Ode To Joy based on this idea...that this special place is our church home.

Old example:

Joyful, joyful we adore thee
 God of glory, Lord of love.
 Hearts unfold like flowers before thee
 Hail thee as the sun above.

Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
 Drive the dark of doubt away.
 Giver of immortal gladness,
 Fill us with the light of day.

Line 1: 8 syllables
 Line 2: 7 syllables / rhyme with line 4
 Line 3: 8 syllables
 Line 4: 7 syllables / rhyme with line 2
 Line 5: 8 syllables
 Line 6: 7 syllables / rhyme with line 8
 Line 7: 8 syllables
 Line 8: 7 syllables / rhyme with line 6

For our readings this church year, we are asking all authors to create Responsive Readings that may be used as the first of several readings prior to the sermon. As this project unfolds, we'll publish our original readings for use in the pews as well as for our members to have at home. For those willing, please create an original reading (4 – 12 brief lines) that speaks to the concept of transforming ourselves within to the point where our inner selves are reflected in our outward actions.

Example:

ONE: I'll begin reading and you say something after me.
MANY: Hey, but what if we want to speak first.
ONE: Forget it...I got hold of the mic.
MANY: What's with the "one" and "many" thing anyway?
ONE: Join the 21st c. would ya.
ALL: Oh forget it. Amen. Awomen. Achildren. Abeings...

Learn More about Unitarian Universalism and UU St. Pete --

October 10, 2010 On Sunday, October 10, Rev. Jim will be offering UU 101, a course explaining the basics of our value based faith, major programs offered by UU St. Pete, and how we govern ourselves. All who have not attended this course previously are welcome. *Newer attendees to our Sunday Service and those interested in becoming members of our congregation are especially welcome.* Since the course will begin at 12:30, a light lunch will be offered. Class will be in Conway and will last about one and one-half hours.

Group Contacts

Administrative

Jeff Baughman 403-0655

Building & Grounds

Fred Russell 542-5449

Care Ministry

Rev. Alec Craig
 393-3499

Children's Religious Education

Morgan Gresham
 327-6075

Ministry on Ministry (MOM)

McKell Moorehead
 894-0264

Communications Working Group

Morgan Gresham
 327-6075

Hospitality Team

Cheryl MacNeill 323-1439

Congregational Life Ministry

Dave Coale 898-8038

Music

Jim Culver 616-318-4664

Parish Nurse

Rose Farrow 289-6952

Scope

Peter Schultes 898-3294

Social Justice

GBLT Subministry

Homeless Subministry

Reggie Craig 631-1031

Migrant Subministry

Karen Coale 898-8038

Worship Ministry

Pat Robinson 418-7004

Yoga

Vandana Dillon 896-5856

Greetings from your Migrant/Immigrant Ministry

Standing on the Side of Love with Immigrant Families

Food Collections on October 3rd and October 17th

Please bring non-perishable food items on these two Sundays. Our youngest members will collect your donations at the Offering during service.

Your September donations were provided to one of the immigrant families that we are providing a helping hand to: Martina and her son, Alan, who live in Clearwater. Some of you met them when they joined us at a First Sunday luncheon in the spring. For those of you who did not have the opportunity – their picture is on the Social Justice bulletin board – along with our own Luis.

Immigration Service on October 24th

The likelihood of Comprehensive Immigration Reform getting any traction soon in the US Congress seems rather dim. However the need for reform, and the heartbreaking separation of families, continues. Immigration in this country is very complicated as it entails many issues.

Join us on Sunday, October 24th to gain a better understanding of these issues and hopefully to dispel some of the myths about immigrants circulating during this heated political season.

Holiday Gift Distribution – So Many Ways to Help Out

UU St Pete will once again participate in the National Farm Worker Ministry's Holiday Gift Distribution – which will take place on **Saturday, December 18th** at St Clement's Church in Plant City. We expect 700 children to register for this event, and we want to provide a packet of new underwear or socks to each one.

The *Share the Plate* collections on **September 26th**, **October 24th** and **November 28th** will be used to purchase these necessities. Of course you can also donate packets of new undies or socks – and bring them to our service on December 5th, or place them in the bin labeled: ***Holiday Gift Distribution – Undies and Socks*** by the Social Justice bulletin board in Gilmour Hall.

Your help is also needed on the day of the event. We are planning on two shifts, and at least 25 volunteers are needed to transport our donations and volunteers to Plant City, set up and then assist each family as they select these basic necessities for their children. Sign-up sheets will be at the Social Justice table after service through out the autumn.

Spanish speakers are needed to work with each family during the actual distribution, which starts around noon. The two shifts for these folks are -- noon to 2:30pm and 2:00pm to 4:30pm.

English speakers should come earlier to help set-up. Their shifts would be 10:30 to 1:30 and 1:30 to 4:30pm. Carpooling and rides can be arranged.

Gilmour Gadflies

Our next outing is Sunday October 16 at the Casual Clam 3336 9th Street North (MLK) St. Petersburg, FL
A menu is on the website <http://www.casualclam.com/>

If you need to remove your name from the list or want to be added to the group of fun people going to **the Casual Clam** please contact Allen at alspasadena@gmail.com or 341-1511 by Tuesday evening October 12 when we have to make the final restaurant reservation.

We have one half of a volunteer and she will need some help to continue the fun. Any Takers??
 Allen and I will retire from coordinating Gilmour Gadflies at the end of the year.

Happenings and Events

October Celebrations Anniversaries

10---Bill & Sally Wallace

29-Jennifer Parramore & Peter Hood

Birthdays

1---Mark MacNeill

4----Mary Sayers

13----Molly Davis

25----Jim Dillon

A Month of Sundays

10/3/2010 **Alec Craig**
“Association Sunday” Join Reverend Alec in this “Leap of Faith” program.

10/10/2010 **Jim Culver**
“Are We Coming Out Or Going Away?”

10/17/2010 **Pat Robinson**
Presentation of Welcoming Initiative

10/24/2010 **Karen Coale**
Immigration Reform

10/31/2010 **Jim Culver**
“Halloween or Election Day. Which Is Scarier?”

Wheel of Life

With great sadness we report the death of Valerie Flournoy. Although they were in our church community for just a short time, she and John became very active.

Please join us in a celebration of the life of Valerie on Monday October 11 at 11:00 a.m. in the sanctuary.

Needs, Wants or Things to Share

The left side of the bulletin board outside of Gilmour Hall has space for our members and friends to leave notes of what concerns them most. Please take the time to read these notices and respond as appropriate.

Notes from All Over

Collage Connection Group Movie Night

Sunday, October 10, 2010 - 7:28pm - 9:30pm

Location: Conway West Room (Library)

We will start the movie as soon as everybody is settled and seated. (With popcorn, of course.)

The movies is TBA. (What? You've seen that one before? Are you sure?)

Come out, enjoy the movie, and meet some great people, and then come again every week. We'll be having discussion groups, game nights, and coffee-house nights with open-mic. If you can't make it this week, still let me know if you're interested, so I can be sure to keep you in the loop for what's going on in the future.

Please feel free to share this invitation with other college-age folks.

From the Website

If you missed Alec's sermon from this past Sunday, or if you want to hear it again, the audio is available [on the uustpete.org website](http://uustpete.org). There is also a video of our handbell ringers' calypso-flavored performance.

Check out our [Worship Service section](#) for more audio and video from past services.

Collage Connection Group Game Night

Sunday, October 3, 2010 - 7:28pm - 9:30pm

Location: Conway West Room (Library)

Snacks, board games, card games, or any other table top games, and good company...

It really is that simple. I'll bring the snacks and games, but feel free to bring your favorites too.

....."Minister" from page 1

To share our community with others all you really have to do is talk about what you and your family have found that meets your personal needs. You don't have to be a scholar or UU historian, just one sincere person sharing with another. Sharing your beliefs about this faith community you love that celebrates together religious freedom, reason, diversity of persons and theologies, and which accepts each individual's responsibility to walk this life with integrity. Here's one of my favorite analogies that I've shared with others...taken from my favorite UU symbol... not the chalice, but the casserole dish. Our liberal theology is based on pot-luck. Everyone brings something different, everything is shared, and everyone takes a bite of they like. With this kind of sharing, we open our hearts and our doors to others who value what we value. We'll share our transforming, connecting and loving faith with others in the same spirit and for the same reason we do all that we do...to bring Dignity, Meaning, Worth and Joy to all our days.
Waves of love. Jim

....."President" from page 2

If letter writing, calling your elected officials or attending rallies is the way in which you would like to participate in social activism that opportunity exists. In the past year, a new group, the "Better Advocacy Society" was formed. This group helps to educate and coordinate information on opportunities to advocate for a variety of issues. You may not agree with other's opinions on what needs to be done, and you don't need to. This is not a group that represents the views of UU St. Petersburg; it is a group of people from UU St. Petersburg who want to utilize the democratic process in creating change.

Of course you can always write a check. You can support the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee through the annual "Guest at Your Table" initiative, participating in Justice Sunday, the sale of Holiday cards, and the Fair Trade Coffee Project. We also have "Share the Plate" Sundays where one half of the non-pledge offering is shared with a local organization to better the lives of people in our community.

Social activism and services begins within, but our church community allows us to move it between and beyond.

In Service, Teresa Kelly

A Welcoming Congregation

Citing the principles of our UU faith—especially the one that affirms the inherent worth and dignity of every person—the 1989 General Assembly voted to initiate the Welcoming Congregation program. This action followed the formation of a committee which found that many gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered individuals reported feeling unaffirmed, unwelcomed and unsupported in their liberal religious communities. A congregation that is part of this program commits to being inclusive and expressive of the concerns of GLBT persons at every level of congregational life.

There are 45 congregations in the Florida district of the UUA and 23 of those have been registered as Welcoming Congregations. The Unitarian Universalist Church of St. Petersburg is not one of them! I, and many other members and friends of our congregation, are asking why that is the case. Sure, we're welcoming, right? Well, if we are, we need to shout that out proudly! The church has completed many of the steps needed to achieve Welcoming Congregation status but we have more to do and now plans are afoot to pick up where we left off.

I have done what military recruits are always told to avoid – volunteered to lead this charge! Please join me in a planning meeting to discuss, who, what, when and how we want to proceed.

The meeting will be held at 12:30 p.m. on October 17th, following a service dedicated to the Welcoming Congregation program.

Pat Robinson

**Women's Forum,
Wednesday Oct. 20th, 6 P.M.
In Conway Hall** - All of the women at UU St. Pete are invited to our first Forum of this season. Bring a dish to share for our pot luck supper. There's always plenty of good food and good conversation and our program this month will be presented by Dorothy Byrne, who will share memories and stories of her recent trip to China. Let's get together and enjoy each other's company!

UUA Trustee Tidbits

Joan Lund, October, 2010

Early in my tenure as a Trustee I wrote about the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council (UUPCC) but I have not written about becoming a partnership congregation and the benefits of doing so. There has not been a more important time in human history to engage in international understanding and encourage global connections. These positive connections with UU congregations around the world can be a bridge that connects us, create boundaries of collaboration, provide opportunities for pilgrimage, hospitality, learning, and service, and challenge us theologically to open ourselves to changed values and behaviors. Our Sixth Principle calls for member congregations to affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. Being a partner offers an opportunity to connect directly with those in cultures different from our own and to learn together to build sustaining global communities for a healthy world.

There are economic guidelines to insure the relationship between partners address as explicitly as possible which include working to preserve and protect the long-term health and sustainability of the relationship, ensure reciprocity and equal commitment between the partners, use continuous and multiple means of communication, and to make certain economic relationships do not dominate and overwhelm the other more important manifestations of the partnership. If money is to be involved it must be used to build relationship.

In building the partnership foundation it is important to have conversations about what each seeks in the relationship; what are the theological underpinnings of the partnership? Both partners need to be aware of differences in how they may view the relationship.

Most partnerships exist between Transylvanian churches and our UUA congregations and Transylvanians more often want true friendship that is real community individual by individual. Assumptions must not be made that partner church's cultures are similar; a partnership is one of understanding and acceptance to theology and customs. It is wise for the partnership to develop an ongoing vision which includes a written covenant that describes how the congregations agree to be together.

Much more information is available at <http://www.uupcc.org/handbook.html> or by contacting the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council at www.uupcc.org. Becoming a partner church could be a vital means to enrich your congregational life in untold ways. I hope you will consider this important endeavor. Please know you may contact me for questions and conversation at 813-931-0727 or jlund@uua.org.

More from the Migrant/Immigrant Ministry

Clothing for Migrant Children

Farmworker families are beginning to migrate back to our area. For the past several years this congregation has supported these families by donating gently used and new children's clothing. As your kids, grandkids or neighbor's children return to school and have no need for the clothes they have outgrown – please bring them to UU St Pete as they will be very appreciated by the children who live in these camps. They arrive here with only what they can wear or bring in a very small bag.

Please place your donated clothing in the bin by the Social Justice bulletin board in Gilmour Hall labeled: *Clothing for Migrant Children* Thank YOU!

Please **only children's clothing** – as our partner organization, the National Farm Worker Ministry, has ample donations for the adults.

Besides donating children's clothing we also could use some help to:

Sort the clothing donations before (10:00am) or after service (12:00pm) on Sunday's, **October 17th** and **October 31st**.

Join us on Saturday, **November 6th** when we visit three camps in the Plant City area – providing a shopping environment for the kids and their mothers. We hold the babies and chat with the children as they select what clothing they want and need. We carpool – and could use some SUVs and vans.

Help Plan Outreach and Social Justice Actions

The Migrant/Immigrant Ministry meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm in the Church Office. Help us plan outreach projects such as food collections, migrant camp visits and the Holiday Gift Distribution as well as social justice actions. Please join us – we welcome your input.

From the R.E. advice column's Hypothetical Mailbag

Dear D.R.E. Careena:

When I (cough AHEM "finally") volunteer as an R.E. teacher, what is the procedure? I have no experience teaching children, and am shy about the idea of leading the lesson myself.

Signed, Brevity Jenkins

Dear Brevity:

Have no fear! When you sign up as an R.E. volunteer, you may request to serve as an ASSISTANT to the Lead Teacher for that classroom. If you would PREFER to present part of the lesson plan, we're happy to email it beforehand. But all we require is that you be an extra warm body in the room: passing out juice, helping the Lead Teacher maintain focus, and keeping our program in accordance with the Church's safety policy (which states that we cannot divide the classes by age unless we have enough adults to put 2 in each classroom). Our safety policy is cautiously and logically constructed to protect our students from "stranger danger." But if you happen to have a criminal background check that includes a Disorderly Conduct weekend in Tijuana in the 1980s, we won't fault you...but we will ask to read the tattoo.

Dear D.R.E. Careena:

When I pass by the R.E. staircase and hear the happy laughter of learning children, I am overwhelmed by my paternal instinct. I can barely suppress the urge to teach them songs, tell them stories, and build pyramids out of Lego blocks. But you see, I have a creeping anxiety that spending one Sunday as a Volunteer Teacher would end in pain and tears. What if they were to misbehave? What if I were to forget the structure of the lesson, FREEZE like a deer in the Hummer headlights, and start babbling to six year olds about Zimbabwean irrigation policies? What if they were to duct tape me to the ceiling, "Gulliver's Travels" style, and steal my wallet, cellphone, and keychain? I am very fond of my souvenir Tijuana keyring, and have therefore refrained, thus far, from volunteering.

Signed, Paranoid in Pinellas.

Dear P.I.P.: The "two adults per classroom" policy is for everyone's protection, not just the children's; a violent uprising is highly unlikely. Getting lost in your lesson plan is a more valid concern: I was present for your lecture on Sub Saharan irrigation, and found it a little dry. But I have a solution: you will only have to prepare as an ASSISTANT Teacher. It's easy-peazy-mac&cheezy. Someone who is already a member of the R.E. committee can take that week's Lead Teacher position, and it won't matter whether you would have accidentally turned a lesson about redlight cross-walk safety into a discourse on theoretical physics...we've got your back. But you have to put your back in the classroom, first.

Got a question for the advice column, or about R.E. Volunteer opportunities? Submit your email to

UU.Dir.RE@Gmail.com

The UUSP Men's Group

“Whooo....are you?” The UUSP Men's Group will meet on October 20 at 6:30 PM at the home of Bill Maguire. Members will discuss the story of their name. Who are you? What name appears on your birth certificate? How do you choose to be known? Who chose your name- your father? Your mother? Maybe you were named after your great-grandfather? Often the person choosing a baby's name is the power in the family. How has that affected you and who you have become? This is an opportunity to get to know the members of the Men's Group a little better, so come and join us. Mike Manning will assist or connect you with a member of the group who will provide you a bit more information. Look for invitations and offerings from him and the office.

Articles to Scope:

You can submit via email to pubs@uustpete.org or place your article in the *Scope* mailbox at the church office. The deadline for *Scope* is the 20th of every month.

Please sign all submissions. Due to space constraints, lengthy articles may be edited and non-time sensitive articles may be held for subsequent issues.

Letter of Interest

Sept. 12, 2010

Dear Anonymous Donor,

We want to extend our deepest gratitude for the final gift of \$10,000 that you have provided to Unitarian Universalist Church of St. Petersburg, and for the total gift of \$257,500 over the past five years.

Your gift laid a foundation that strengthened this congregation during a time of need, and given us the building blocks on which we can grow towards our 100th year and beyond. This unrestricted gift to our operating fund – a true rarity – provided much needed financial support, of course. It is quite likely we would not have survived through the recent economic downturn without the monetary cushion of your gift.

But equally as important was the trust you placed in our church and your conviction that UU St. Pete was an institution worthy of your investment. That trust has turned around what had been a culture of negativity and despair to a culture filled with positive energy, warmth, respect and stronger connections with our community and with the broader Unitarian Universalist Association.

Over the past five years, UU St. Pete has strived to live up to the intent of your gift – to honor our church's past, ensure its future and enhance our ability to share the values and benefits of Unitarian Universalism with the wider community. Inspired by Rev. Beth Graham's encouragement to honor your gift by "singing it back," or sharing the gifts each of us has inside us to make a better world, we have accomplished much:

UUSP has expanded from part-time interim ministers, to a fully staffed congregation with strong professional leadership in worship, music, pastoral care, and children's religious education. Our current ministerial leadership, Rev. Jim Culver and Rev. Alec Craig, are a dynamic team, challenging us from the pulpit, inspiring us through music, comforting us in times of need, and through their examples, teaching us how better to care for each other.

Membership has grown from fewer than 100 to about 130 currently. We have discovered that membership is about much more than numbers – it is about ownership and taking responsibility for our own congregation, sharing time, treasure and talent to the best of each individual's ability.

We have a mission statement so that we know why we are members of this congregation and what we stand for. We have an all-church covenant that we say weekly, "Love is the spirit of this church, and service its law..." that reminds us how we want to be in community together and how we want to treat each other.

Nearly half the congregation participates in one of the several Covenant Groups, or Small Group Ministries, that offer the chance to deepen our spiritual insights and interpersonal connections. We have an active Pastoral Care Ministry that ensures we reach out to every member and friend in time of trouble.

We have a thriving Social Justice Ministry that has focused on outreach to the migrant farmworker, homeless and GLBT populations. Our work has expanded from donations to those in need, to growing involvement in local, state and national legislative efforts to make our world a more just place to live.

We are working hard to become a truly intergenerational congregation. We have a lively RE curriculum for our children led by our Children's RE Director Careena Cornette, as well as many opportunities for young people and adults to interact in worship, in music and plays, and other church activities.

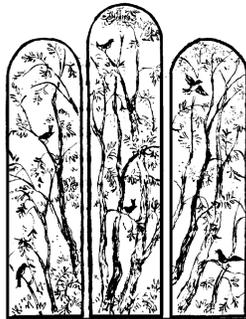
We have invested in needed repairs and improvements to our beautiful structure, so that it might be preserved as a home for generations of UU's to come.

We are deeply gratified that the Florida District honored you, our Anonymous Donor, with the Unsung Unitarian Universalist Award this year. We anticipate that an article describing your gift to UU St. Pete and how we have used it will appear this fall in the Florida District newsletter. We also are planning to ensure your contributions will be remembered for years to come, through a tree that will be planted on our property in your honor.

Thank you so very much for your gift and your love. Please know that you will live in our hearts forever.

In faith and service, Teresa Kelly President, Board of Trustees
Margie Manning, Dave Coale, Sally Carville Past Presidents, Board of Trustees

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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.”