



September 2011

Volume 52 Issue 9

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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

September 2011

Waves Of Love From Jim

All existence is connected.
My behavior matters.
Act now.

Before beginning this month's thoughts, just a reminder that on Homecoming Sunday, September 11, we will hold our traditional Water Communion ceremony. Everyone is invited to come forward and contribute water, actual or in spirit, to a community water bowl. As you do so, please simply say the name of the place you were at this summer from which the water was symbolically taken.

So, here we go again, launching another church year together. As we begin our fourth church year together, it's time again for me to share those ideas that I feel so passionate about that these thoughts will permeate our next 52 weeks of services, sermons and musical messages.

Last season we explored the concepts of "spirituality" and "God." Beyond sharing with others the commonality of what we love, I encouraged you to dialogue authentically and personally about what YOU believe, explaining that the give and take that occurs during the sharing of our own unique journeys is part of the learning experience for Unitarian Universalists. No two answers to "God" type questions could or should be alike. I shared that if I were answering "God" questions or "religion" questions, I'd reply that I believe we experience the presence of what many call 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 fade away 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 religion or a spiritual life is that which inspires us to TRANSFORM WITHIN, make CONNECTIONS BETWEEN, and live with LOVING COMPASSION BEYOND.

See "Waves" page 5.....

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The Reverend
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Board of Trustees

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President's Column**Homecoming**

Homecoming. No, not the kind of homecoming of my adolescence, where a queen and her court are driven in convertibles around the perimeter of the football field, waving and smiling; followed by a dance that could determine your place in the social pecking order for the year to come. I mean a much more significant event.

At UUSP we have named the second Sunday of September as our homecoming service. We often refer to it as the beginning of our church year, which is not really accurate since our fiscal year begins on July 1st each year. Rather, it is a homecoming of a more spiritual nature. Summer vacations have given way to a new school year, our beloved "snowbirds" begin their migration back to Florida and we start to refocus on our mission.

Not that the mission is abandoned during the summer- far from it. We still feed the homeless, tend to those facing personal crises, play together, make repairs to the building and participate more actively in worship services.

But in setting aside a specific day to honor all who make up this community and why it exists in the first place, we can tap into deeper parts of ourselves and the gifts we bring to this special, even sacred, place.

In my youth I never had much appreciation for the concept of a sacred place. In my frame of reference, sacred was designated as such by some "authority" and was achieved by the performance of a particular ritual which made it somehow worthy of higher regard, and different behavioral norms than other places.

I realized in time that one of the reasons I had trouble with the concept was because I felt that ANY place or time could be sacred. For me, it can be purely aesthetic as in nature, but it ultimately is all in how I feel when I am in the space or time. Am I transformed, or do I play a role in transformation? Can I feel the best that is in me come into focus and can I share that in a way that makes a difference?

Being President, I have first shot at the Sundays that I get to offer the welcome and for the past two years I have looked forward to hosting the homecoming service. It fills me with joy. It excites me to see all the possibilities that are ahead and even the challenges of the past become redefined as growth.

Let's continue growing together – and no, you don't need a new dress, corsage or even a football.

In Service,
Teresa Kelly

Standing on the Side of Love with Immigrant Families

Food Collections on September 4th and September 18th

Please bring non-perishable food items on these two Sundays. Our youngest members will collect your donations at the Offering during service. The food will be given to our adopted families.

Clothing for Migrant Children

Farmworker Families will soon be returning 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. Thank YOU! Please *only children's clothing* – as our partner organization, the National Farm Worker Ministry, has ample donations for the adults.

Share the Plate Sunday – September 25th

We will once again participate in the **Holiday Gift Distribution** for Farmworker Families in the Plant City area. UU St Pete and our friends in the Cluster have provided over 700 kids with the basic necessities of new underwear and socks. We expect the number to increase this year. This will be the first of three Share the Plates to support this project.

Immigration As A Moral Issue workshops will begin soon. Using the UUA developed curriculum we will dialogue on and explore the complexities of today's immigration landscape. Six workshops will be offered after service and coffee (12:30pm) beginning on September 18th and concluding on December 4th.

We are holding these workshops this fall because the Florida legislative session begins in early January, 2012; and we expect punitive immigration bills to be presented again in the upcoming session. **Lunch will be provided if you sign-up in advance. Child care can also be arranged.** Please leave a message at kcoale@tampabay.rr.com or 898-8038.

Here are the topics and dates for the workshops/discussions:

September 18th: Understanding the Causes of Migration

October 2nd: History of Immigration in the U.S.

October 16th: Economics of Immigration

November 6th: Security, Enforcement, and Human Rights

November 13th: Who Benefits from a Broken System?

December 4th: Seeking Solutions

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 on September 20th – we welcome your input.

September 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 5:30pm Zumba 6:15pm Handbells 7:00pm Adult Choir	2 9:30am Stretch And Tone 6:45pm Picnic In The Playground	3 9:30am Zumba 5:00pm Meet & Greet: Community Leaders
4 10:00am Discussion Group 11:00am Food Collection	5 9:30am Zumba	6 10:00am Handcrafters Guild 5:30pm Zumba	7 9:30am Zumba 7:00pm Social Justice	8 5:30pm Zumba 6:15pm Handbells 7:00pm Adult Choir	9 9:30am Stretch And Tone 6:45pm Picnic In The Playground	10 9:30am Zumba 10:00am Choir Retreat
11 10:00am Discussion Group 10:15am Children's Choir	12 9:30am Zumba 4:45pm Beacon House 6:00pm Homeless Ministry Meeting	13 5:30pm Zumba	14 9:30am Zumba 7:00pm Board of Trustees	15 5:30pm Zumba 6:15pm Handbells 7:00pm Adult Choir	16 9:30am Stretch And Tone 6:45pm Picnic In The Playground	17 9:30am Zumba 10:00am Non-Violent Communications Workshop
18 10:00am Discussion Group 10:15am Children's Choir 11:00am Food Collection 12:30pm Immigration Seminar	19 (All day) Covenant Group 9:30am Zumba 4:45pm Beacon House	20 10:00am Handcrafters Guild 5:30pm Zumba 7:00pm Migrant/Immigrant Ministry	21 9:30am Zumba	22 5:30pm Zumba 6:15pm Handbells 7:00pm Adult Choir	23 9:30am Stretch And Tone 6:45pm Picnic In The Playground	24 9:30am Zumba
25 10:00am Hospitality Ministry 10:00am Discussion Group 10:15am Children's Choir 11:00am Sunday Service	26 9:30am Zumba 4:45pm Beacon House	27 5:30pm Zumba	28 9:30am Zumba	29 5:30pm Zumba 6:15pm Handbells 7:00pm Adult Choir	30 9:30am Stretch And Tone 6:45pm Picnic In The Playground	

“Waves” from page 1.....

Also last season, our UUA President the Rev. Peter Morales urged us to put this centuries-old and ever-evolving faith into a few words in order to seize the moment and allow this liberal religion to become a religion for our time.

This church year, I am passionate about growth. Growth of our special place that is a by product of our own individual personal growth as processed through more deeply exploring the first of our prior season’s ideas... transforming through the exploration of the God WITHIN.

During the past several years, many people have had meaningful, enjoyable experiences at UUSP. However, few people have adopted sustained spiritual practices, and no one has shared stories with the community concerning transformed behavior in their daily lives. Until we all, each of us, devote the time and effort to daily transform our inner selves to that point where our inner self matches our outward actions, membership in this beloved community will only be an enjoyable experience rather than a life changing transformation understood by the many rather than the few.

So what will this 2011-2012 church season of growth bring? For our religious community to take the next steps in our continued growth, I offer no suggestions that utilize Seven Habits, 10 Keys or 12 Steps. I offer hard work, commitment, love and passion shared by the many rather than the few. We won’t find answers from the UUA in a “How To Do It” church leadership book or a best practices workshop. We already know what we need to do. All of us want to serve, so each can transform our inner selves until ALL of us serve. All of us want a financially healthy community, so each of us can experience inner transformation, aligning our priorities until ALL of us give. All of us want a spiritual community that goes beyond our everyday experiences, so we each can work daily on our own unique life journeys. ALL of us. In this country today, there are many more churches in decline than in growth. Declining churches expect their answer to come from the outside. We here at UUSP will take responsibility for our own solutions. We will commit to the hard work of transforming within, and by doing so, further transform our beacon of liberal religion in St. Petersburg. To begin this process, on Homecoming Sunday, September 11, I’ll invite you to create a mantra that resonates with you. Mine is at the beginning of this vision. Also, please remember that September 11 will feature our annual Water Communion ceremony.

.....See “Waves on page 8

Group Contacts

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393-3499

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McKell Moorehead
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Hospitality Team

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Homeless Subministry
Reggie Craig 631-1031
Migrant Subministry
Karen Coale 898-8038

UU Service Committee

Marilyn Barber 298-5096

Worship Ministry

Margie Manning 374-0570

Happenings and Events

September Celebrations Anniversaries

4th--Jim & Vandana Dillon
28th--Waldo & Barbara Rowell

Birthdays

9th--John Sawyer
10th--Karen Coale
14th--Marilyn Barber
17th--Warren Houk
20th--Lois Cairl
26th--Wini Stowe
26th--Doddie O'Keefe
30th--Robb Sanborn

A Month of Sundays

4th---"Returning" Alec brings us a reflection with anecdotes and readings on issues related to returning.

11th---"Did I Ever Say This Was Easy?" Homecoming/Water Communion--Jim welcomes us back with "Waves of Love."

18th---"Can We Transform Our Community Within?"--Jim also has scheduled RE dedication.

25th---"Our Moral Responsibility in Light of the 'Arab Spring'" In this sermon, Jeff Nall discusses Americans moral responsibility.

Treasurers report

UUSP ended our 2010-11 fiscal year on June 30 with a surplus of \$6,251. It was the first surplus in several years.

Several factors helped us achieve this milestone. Pat McGiverin, our formerly anonymous donor, had increased her gift to the church from \$2,500 to \$10,000 for FY 2010-11 before her death. We also received a substantial dividend from our mutual insurance company. Our growth in membership numbers, and deeper understanding of the meaning of membership, meant we received more pledge income than we had expected. Additionally, most of our ministries were very frugal and spent less than was budgeted.

Here's a summary of the final budget report for FY 2010-11.

Pledges received \$106,494

Endowment contribution \$37,498

Contributions and loose offerings from Sunday services \$12,843

Special project income \$7,104

Property use income \$8,864

Other income \$12,514

Total revenue \$185,317

Compensation \$107,349

Programs \$10,272

Building and grounds expenses \$45,900

Other expenses \$15,545

Total expenses \$179,066

Surplus \$6,251

UUA Trustee Tidbits from Joan Lund

Last month I committed to writing Trustee columns through next spring about topics related to Justice GA, June 2012 in Phoenix. Unfortunately I don't have any additional specific information about this historic GA yet, but am compelled to write about the connection between our UUA Second Principle (Justice, equity and compassion in human relations) and our UUA faith community's commitment to help bring to the world tolerance and social justice. Our work next year at GA will be all about justice and much about compassion.

Karen Armstrong's, the Ware Lecturer at this year's GA and author of many books on religion including *Twelve Steps To a Compassionate Life*, message centered upon the Golden Rule, which requires we use empathy to put ourselves in the shoes' of others and act toward other humans as we would want them to act toward us. In 2008 Armstrong was awarded the Technology, Entertainment, Design (TED) prize. TED is a nonprofit organization best known for excellent conferences on "ideas worth spreading". With the prize money she established the Charter for Compassion which is inspiring compassionate actions, by building partnership networks with organizations around the world.

In her words, "The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat others as we wish to be treated". Compassion can be defined as an attitude of principled, consistent altruism. She believes compassion is intrinsic in all human beings and we need to work to cultivate and expand our capacity for compassion. According to Armstrong compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, take ourselves out of being the center of our world, and put another there, and to honor every human being with equity, justice and respect. She believes each one of us must look into our own hearts, discover what gives us pain, and then refuse to inflict that pain on anybody else.

Although compassion may be recognized and admired by all of us and has resonated with humans throughout history, Armstrong believes in many ways compassion is alien to our modern way of life.

It is important that as many UUs as possible attend GA 2012 where there will be many events, activities, and ways to bear witness to social justice both in Arizona and in our home community congregations. If ever you determined you want to go to a General Assembly, this is the one. Wouldn't it be wonderful if there are more Florida UUs percentage-wise at GA than any other district? We can do it! Call or write with your thoughts, ideas, and concerns. I look forward to hearing from you.

jlund@uua.org or 813-931-9727

UU NOTABLE NEWS

GREAT AMERICAN EVENTS / UNIVERSALISTS

Free Online Literature Available Worldwide on Six Continents

P.T. BARNUM

"The Greatest Showman on Earth"

Plus Illustrations Based on his Struggles

Link: http://harvardsquarelibrary.org/P_T_Barnum/Home.html

Supplementary Selection

Papers on Power

A Series of Reflections by the Retiring Director of the Harvard Square Library

Link: http://harvardsquarelibrary.org/Papers_on_Power/Papers_on_Power.html

Rev. Herbert Vetter, Director

<http://www.harvardsquarelibrary.org>

Key Musical Themes From A Person Of Note

It's that time again! Whether you sang in the Adult Choir or Children's Choir, rang with the Handbell Ringers or acted in any of our past five musicals, it's time to wipe the summer beach sand off of your flip flops and share your love of this special place with the other half of our congregation by once again lending your voice, wrists or ham bones to your music ministry. If you've not yet participated in one of our music ministry groups and are looking to become more connected to this special place, please know that there's always a spot waiting for you and yours whenever you're ready.

UU2 BAND rehearsals are held on Sundays from 9:00 – 9:45 prior to the morning service. If you play guitar, keyboard or any other instrument, drop in and join a group that provides leadership for our two hymns each Sunday.

ADULT CHOIR rehearsals are held on Thursdays from 7:00 - 8:30 pm in the music room on the RE floor (2nd floor of Conway Hall). This fun loving ensemble explores music reading skills and healthy vocal production in addition to preparing anthems and songs for Sunday services. Whether you sang with us previously or only sing in the shower, choir here at UUSP is all about being in a beloved community. Please also know that the love keeps going after rehearsal as we “afterglow” at the Old NE Tavern a few minutes from church.

HANDBELL RINGER rehearsals are held on Thursdays from 6:15 - 7:00 pm in the music room on the RE floor (2nd floor of Conway Hall). Don't let the beauty of this ensemble's music fool you into thinking that playing bells is way too complicated for you. It's not...it's fun...and it's yet another ministry that allows us to share our lives together in community.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR rehearsals resume on Sunday, September 10 at the usual time of 10:15 - 10:35 in the sanctuary. The children and youth will sing 3 songs of their own, 3 intergenerational songs with the Adult Choir, and 2 numbers from our Spring musical. Plus...there are lots of acting parts in this year's musical for sheep, cows, giant slayers and the schoolmates of Jack-ie (as in the beanstalk).

Waves of love, Jim

.....”Waves” from page 5

One final thought...a challenge of sorts. Or perhaps our community's version of *So You Think You Can Dance...Around Religion?* My professional goal this season is to sit down with each and every member of UUSP and ask...what are you doing on a daily basis to connect your spiritual life with your everyday reality? What are your next steps on your journey? How does UUSP fit into that journey? Then, with deeper inner understanding, we will open our hearts and our doors so that our friends and neighbors might DISCOVER here their own unique journeys and their capacity for love; We will DEVELOP within each of us an awareness of our own talents and gifts, our own deepest spiritual experiences; We will LOVE & SUPPORT each other while on our own unique journeys, journeys that inspire us to TRANSFORM WITHIN, MAKE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN and act with LOVING COMPASSION BEYOND; We will INSPIRE each other to share our talents as a ministry both in our own church home and in the world, for IF NOT US, WHO? IF NOT NOW, WHEN? We will do these things in the same spirit and for the same reasons that we do all that we do, to bring Dignity, Meaning, Worth and Joy to all our days.

Waves of love, Jim

P.s. Did I mention that you may bring water on Sunday, September 11 for our annual Water Communion ceremony?

Religious Education Report

UU-ism and Child Psychology (Part One in a series, by Careena)

Uh-oh, what's that "rustling pages" sound? Why, it means that your R.E. Coordinator has been studying Child Psychology again. No, no, Careena, "practical application" doesn't mean trying to affix Post-It footnotes to the students while they're running across the playground!

Whoops.

According to our present understanding of psychology, infants are born not "immoral," but "amoral." Learning morality comes not only from others' teachings, but from the consequences of their own actions. They learn that they experience negative feelings (remorse, shame) when they have harmed others.

During Europe's medieval period, the Catholic Church placed an emphasis on the innocence of children. During the Reformation, however, the concept of "original sin" was much more heavily emphasized, and consequently, baptisms took place closer to birth. Morality cannot begin to develop until the toddler has grasped the concept of Theory of Mind. That's a ten-dollar phrase meaning, "People's thought process, desires, and beliefs might be different from mine." It's the ability to put oneself in another's shoes, and it's far more literal than the Golden Rule. A toddler who is crying in front of the snack cabinet may literally not understand that her parent has a different viewpoint than "Madison must obviously be wanting a cookie, which will in no way spoil her dinner."

Another important component of morality is the cognitive ability to reason. After all, if a kindergartener enjoys a cup of ice cream, why wouldn't their goldfish do the same? As we examine the development of ethics and morality throughout childhood, you can reflect on the ways a child's experience of religion is different than your own. You can also take a stab at explaining to the child why the family hamster Hano interest in skateboarding. Next month: the "Heinz Dilemma" through the eyes of elementary versus middle school students.

Dynamic Youth Ministry

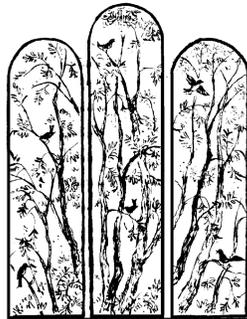
Dynamic Youth Ministry is a one-of-a-kind, full-semester course grounded in Unitarian Universalism. Offered online, it is open to the general public (not just seminarians!), bringing together learners from around the world. We are thrilled to once again offer this opportunity through Starr King School for the Ministry.

This transformative course combines reading, writing, and online discussion with voice-to-voice peer and instructor interaction, and a face-to-face immersion/praxis component.

Our inspiring guest presenters have included notable clergy such as the Revs. Bill Sinkford, Pat Hoertdoerfer, Wayne Arnason and Meg Riley; exemplary religious educators such as Jessica York, Tera Little, and Samaya Oakley; non-profit and interfaith professionals, and recent youth leaders themselves.

Registration opens August 22, 2011. For complete information, visit <http://online.skism.edu>. We also invite you to join our Facebook group, "Dynamic Youth Ministry". Thank you for spreading the word to any religious professionals, volunteer leaders, and others who may be interested!

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