

The Flaming Chalice

Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta

Located at: 1951 East Park Avenue
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Valdosta, GA 31604

Minister: Rev. Fred Howard
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Tom Phillips – President	Carol Stiles - Vice-President /Program Chair
Rosie Asbury –Treasurer	Susan Bailey - Director of R.E.
Kimberly Tanner – Director of Membership	Jim Ingram – Director of Building & Grounds –
Tom Aiello – Secretary	Carol Stiles – Newsletter Ed.

Please contact us by e-mail at uuvaldosta@yahoo.com

What's going on... **March 2018**

Sun	Mar. 4	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. Fred Howard, “The Measure of a (Hu)Man” Meet-n-Greet after the service
			March 10-11: UU Table at the Azalea Festival in Drexel Park!
Sun	Mar. 11	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Lars Leader, “UUSC Justice Sunday” Meet & Greet after the service
M	Mar. 12	11:00AM	Break Bread delivery
Sun	Mar. 18	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Rev. Fred Howard, “Must Familiarity Breed Contempt?” Meet & Greet after the service
Sun	Mar. 25	10:45 AM	Religious Education for children Service – Dr. Tom Hochschild, “The Matrix of Domination: Understanding Intersectional Oppression” Meet & Greet after the service 2 nd Hour Interactive Conversation - facilitated by Dr. Tom Hochschild

March, 2018

Sorry the newsletter is running late! If you have items to submit or would like to help with the newsletter, please see Carol

Mission Statement

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta is committed to building a community of acceptance and love, where all people may strive for intellectual, moral, and spiritual enlightenment. We offer a place to celebrate life's passages and to join in social action on behalf of local and global communities.

Sunday Services

Sunday, March 4 – Rev. Fred Howard, “The Measure of a (Hu)Man”

I’m a huge fan of the Star Trek franchise. The futuristic stories are entertaining, yes, but especially intriguing to me is the way the writers use characters that are not fully human, or not at all human, to get us to think about what exactly that word “human” means. In other words, get us thinking about what our relationship to the stranger, the “other,” is, and what those relationships say about who we are and what we might become. This morning I’ll illustrate with a look at excerpts from one of Star Trek Next Generation’s most powerful episodes.

Sunday, March 11 – Lars Leader, “UUSC Justice Sunday”

Lars Leader, our UUSC representative, will present this year’s UUSC Justice Sunday program, Join us today to learn more “about climate forced migration, and to take action for environmental justice.” More information here:

<https://www.uusc.org/campaign/climate-forced-displacement/>

Sunday, March 18 – Rev. Fred Howard, “Must Familiarity Breed Contempt?”

Ever heard the adage, “Familiarity Breeds Contempt?” How does that square with our efforts to become a community? When I invite people to stay for meet and greet, or participate in one of our educational programs, I usually add, “So that we can get to know you better.” But if this adage is true, and we get to know more about each other and foster familiarity, could our efforts be self-defeating? And what about social media, where some of my friends seem compelled to make me a little too familiar with the mundane details of their daily life? It turns out there are some simple principles to follow in relationships that can draw us closer rather than “breed contempt.” This morning I’ll share some thoughts on this subject.

Share the Plate Sunday: *Share the Plate Sunday Offering: Donations to the plate this Sunday, not otherwise designated as pledges, will go to LAMP, Lowndes Associated Ministries to the People. For people experiencing homelessness, LAMP provides emergency*

shelter (New Horizons shelter), support services, re-housing assistance, case management, street outreach, empowerment classes, and referral services.

Sunday, March 25 - Dr. Tom Hochschild, “The Matrix of Domination: Understanding Intersectional Oppression”

People are often treated differently based on race, ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, and other social characteristics. Intersectional theory maintains that we must understand how various forms of systemic oppression overlap, and recognize that these overlapping oppressions affect people’s lived experiences in profound ways. Drawing on the works of Kimberlé Crenshaw, Patricia Hill Collins, bell hooks, Angela Davis and others, Tom will outline some of the key aspects of the theory. Then, after a short break for meet-greet, he will lead our group in an activity that will peel back the layers of intersectional oppression.

Bio for Tom Hochschild

Tom is originally from Cleveland, Ohio where he held many jobs including window cleaner, musician, janitor, bike messenger, metal grinder, door to door peddler, taxi cab driver, bartender, delivery driver, and car salesman. While working for minimum wage and taking care of his disabled father, Tom experienced the harsh realities of poverty. Now an Associate Professor of Sociology at Valdosta State University, he teaches classes on a variety of contemporary social issues such as poverty, racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, ageism, corporate deviance, political corruption, biases in the criminal justice system, media influence, health disparities, and environmental degradation. Tom was the recipient of VSU’s 2016 President’s Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Religious Education

For Children: The RE program for children under 15 years of age meets at 10:45 AM concurrent with the Sunday morning service. Older young people will remain with the adult service. Two adults are needed each Sunday to help with RE. Sign up on the volunteer list at the church or through Carol Stiles and the Worship Team.

Ministerial Musings

Rev Fred Howard

March 2018



In January I had the opportunity to attend a weekend symposium featuring Krista Tippett. Tippett's Peabody Award winning NPR show, "On Being," consists of hour long interviews with a diversity public figures on subjects like religion, meaning, and ethics. The interviews are - refreshingly - unedited. The *Columbia Journalism Review*, commenting on the show, says, "To listen to her show is to hear how intelligent and thoughtful religious people can be when they are allowed to be subjective and not merely regurgitate dogma."

Tippett has led a most interesting life. She launched her career in journalism after graduation from Brown University in 1983, working in the *New York Times* bureau in Bonn, Germany. There she transitioned to the political realm, eventually becoming chief aide to the US ambassador to West Germany. Living in Germany and working in these posts allowed her to not only "document the vast social experiment its division had become," as she expressed it, but also to witness the fall of the Berlin Wall first hand, an experience that "began to point me to the kinds of questions I've asked ever since." Among its many complementary descriptions of Tippett, the *New York Times* calls her "The diplomat seeking to resolve social divisions." Her goal, in her interviews, is to ask what she calls the "generous question." Unlike most TV journalists that ask "tough" questions that are "often an assumption masked as an inquiry looking for a fight," Tippett prefers generous questions, "questions that invite honesty, dignity, and revelation."

In her book, *Becoming Wise*, she articulates a vision of building a basis for dialogue among people with deep differences by identifying common ground. She chastises the media of our day, which she sees as infantilizing and tending to "reduce great questions of meaning and morality to 'issues' and simplify them to two sides, allowing pundits and partisans to frame them in irreconcilable extremes." Continuing, she says, "left

of center and right of center, in the expansive middle and heart of our life together, most of us have questions left alongside our answers, some curiosity alongside our convictions." This "expansive middle" is the territory she invites us to explore. For any of you interested in taking up such an exploration, I highly recommend putting *Becoming Wise* on your reading list.

Fred

Rev. Fred Howard is our part-time minister. He can be contacted by email (preferable) at fredhoward3622@gmail.com. He is available for weddings and rites of passage ceremonies by prearrangement.

Congregational Meeting!

Sunday, April 15th, after the service, we will hold our annual congregational meeting! We will vote on the proposed budget for next year as well as the slate of officers to lead the congregation. Note that "Any member, who is at least seventeen years old, who has been a member for a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the vote and has made an annual monetary contribution of record to the congregation, is eligible to vote." Our church year runs from July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018. See treasurer, Doug Tanner, with questions!

Social Action Activities Break Bread Together

We deliver meals with the Break Bread Together program on the 2nd Monday (and 5th when there is one) of each month. Let David Rodgers know if you are interested in helping with this service.

Worship Team

Each Sunday, there will be a sign-up sheet on the table at the back of the sanctuary for sign up for the upcoming services. You can also send an e-mail to Carol Stiles and she will put you on the list for that task.

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Keep in your thoughts...

- ❖ Our members and friends experience health difficulties.

UU Church of Valdosta Board of Directors Meeting News February 3, 2018, 6:00 p.m.

Among other items reported elsewhere in this newsletter, highlights of the UU Board meeting:

- New linoleum was installed in the men's bathroom; one leaking toilet was fixed.
- UU will have a table at Azalea Festival in March
- Possible music coffeehouse in April or May
- Next Meeting: TBA.

Communicating at UU Valdosta

Newsletter Editor: Carol Stiles
Newsletter deadline is the 15th of the previous month!

If you prefer reading this newsletter on the website, e-mail the editor to remove your name from the mailing label list.

Worship Team Chair: Carol Stile
Website Manager: Carol Stiles
e-Mail List: Contact Carol Stiles or Kimberly Tanner
Facebook: Kimberly Tanner
Local Publicity: Dee Tait

At the Church-in-the-Woods... Sangha Tuesdays

The KTD Buddhist reading and meditation group is meeting on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 p.m.

Taoist Tai Chi – Monday and Thursday, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Contact Dennis Bogyo or Luana Goodwin. You can e-mail the group at georgia@taoist.org

Oaken Circle CUUPS Chapter

Oaken Circle, a chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, meets each Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m., with an officers' meeting on the first Wednesday of the month.

You can contact the group by e-mail at: valdostaoakencircle@gmail.com or on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/oakencircle/>

Thank You! Thank You!

For lay-leading services: Doug Tanner, Dee Tait, Carol Stiles, Crystal Rapier, Cliff Adams
For speaking at Sunday Services: Christopher Sims
For organizing Christopher Sims' visit to Valdosta: Carol Stiles
For organizing the coffee house at Jessie's Restaurant: Joyce Rapier and Carol Stiles
For providing a ride to the airport for Christopher: Lawrence Rapier
For providing music at services: Daniel Peveto, Nephtali Santiago, Kathy Howard
For Meet & Greet: Dee Tait, the Rapier family, Dawn and Teagan, Mary Ellen Adams
For leading RE: Sue Bailey
For assisting with RE and nursery: Teagan Dunn, Kimberly Tanner
For taking out trash and recycling: Dee Tait, Lawrence Rapier, Lars Leader, Sue Bailey, and others.
For delivering Break Bread meals: David Rodgers
For photos for newsletter: Kimberly Tanner
For leading the Caring Committee: Dee Tait

UUA General Assembly, June 20-24, 2018 - Kansas City, MO

General Assembly is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through a democratic process. If you are interested in going, see Carol Stiles (Vice-President) for more information! Some scholarship funds may be available from the UUA to match a congregational pledge of support to an individual serving as a congregational delegate. Scholarship funds are also available (no congregational match required) for youth and young adults and to help facilitate the participation of People of Color and Indigenous (POCI) Persons at GA. Information from: <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration/financialaid/frugal-guide>

The deadline for financial aid application is March 31.

Christopher D. Sims visits UU Valdosta!

Christopher D. Sims, Rockford, IL, visited UU Valdosta and the Valdosta community on the weekend of Feb. 10-11. On Saturday afternoon, Feb, 10, we hosted a meet-n-greet at the church, from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Christopher shared his poem, “I was in Charlottesville – A Black Man’s Tale,” and spoke briefly about his experience in Charlottesville during the white nationalist rally last August.

This poem, a powerful reflection of Christopher’s experience, can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/notes/christopher-d-sims/i-was-in-charlottesville-a-black-mans-tale/10159450230705707/>

On Sunday morning, Christopher provided the message at our Sunday service, “What Dr. King’s Work has for the Black Lives Matter Movement and Charlottesville” and then hosted a coffeehouse at Jessie’s Restaurant in downtown Valdosta Sunday evening.

Here’s what Christopher wrote on his blog prior to the coffeehouse:

“We are looking forward to this collaboration between the Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta and myself as a nationally known spoken word poet who networks across state lines regularly.

This special event is a part of the Unitarian Universalist Association’s Side of Love campaign held every February. Thirty Days of Love is what this campaign is focused on, often looking at social justice issues we are facing in this country.

A poet for most of my life, I always look forward to traveling to a city I haven’t traveled to as a poet, lay minister, and community organizer. I am using my community organizing talents to dive into the community of Valdosta to help create art, connections, and positive vibrations. I already feel welcomed by the city of Valdosta, which is located in southern Georgia.

I will be honored to bring up local talent to the open mic that evening at Jessie’s. I have reached out to some so we will have a mixture of talents in the house as we engage in live sharing, live art.

Open mics, in my understanding, are where you will hear people’s truths and experiences. To me, this is the essence of community.”

Indeed, the coffeehouse was a community! About 30 people, some UUs, but many people from outside the congregation, listened and applauded as individuals went to the mic to share either

original poetry or poetry selected from favorite poets and sources.

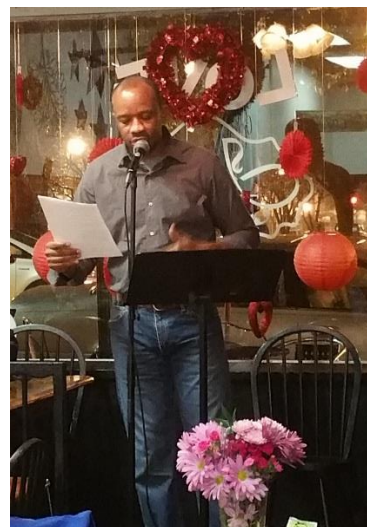
If you missed this event, you can sample some of Christopher’s work here:

<http://www.soundcloud.com/UniverSouLove> .

Read his work at

<http://www.christopherdsims.wordpress.com> and <https://www.facebook.com/UniverSouLove/>

Our thanks to Carol Stiles, who organized Christopher’s visit, and to Joyce Rapier, who made arrangements and recruited poets for the coffee house at Jessie’s!



Above:
Christopher D.
Sims and
Kimberly Tanner

Left: Christopher
reads a poem at
the coffeehouse
at Jessie’s
Restaurant,
Feb. 11, 2018.



A Message from Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, UUA President

February 14 at 11:07 p.m. posted on Facebook:

I awoke in Nepal this morning to the news of the devastating shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland Florida. May prayers of love surround and hold the families who lost loved ones, the students and teachers, the first responders and wider community. I send my love to the Unitarian Universalists in the community and surrounding areas as they grieve and tend to their shock, anger and deep sorrow. My thoughts also hold the young man who committed this violent act. Holding the humanity of all involved, my heart aches for the ways we continue to fall short in providing safety and attending to the well being and wholeness of all children and young people. This is about responsible gun regulation and it is also about services, support and practices that care for young people in crisis and need. We will learn more

in time, but may we remember our own responsibilities to nurture a society in which our children grow surrounded by peace, nurtured in love and supported in life.

A Message from the UUA

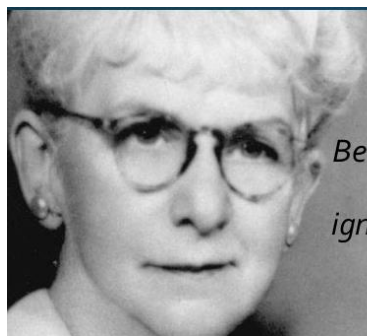
March 6, posted on Facebook:

The UUA has signed onto a letter asking Congress to provide dedicated federal funding for research into gun violence.

"The current restriction on federal funding for gun violence research limits our understanding of this epidemic and prevents us from enacting evidence-based policies that will protect our lives, our families, and our communities. We also ask for Congress to remove restrictions preventing federal agencies from sharing information that could help them better understand - and ultimately prevent - injuries and loss of life."

Read the full letter and learn more from [March for Science: www.marchforscience.com/gunviolence](http://www.marchforscience.com/gunviolence)

Saturday, March 24, is the designated day for "March for Our Lives," a movement started by survivors of the Parkland, FL, shooting. The "March for Our Lives" will be held in Washington, D.C. with many other marches scheduled across the country on the same day. Locally, Rev. Floyd Rose and the People's Tribunal are organizing a march to show solidarity with the young people leading this effort. The march will begin at Serenity Christian Church (assemble there at 2:00 p.m., 1619 S. Lee St) to the Valdosta Board of Education Building, where the rally will begin at 3:00 p.m.



*Be a nuisance where it counts;
Do your part to inform and stimulate
the public to join your action.
Be depressed, discouraged, and disappointed
at failure and the disheartening effects of
ignorance, greed, corruption and bad politics,
but never give up.*

– Marjory Stoneman Douglas

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote

- The inherent dignity and worth of every person,
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations,
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations,
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning,
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large,
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all,
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Grateful for the religious pluralism, which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations we enter into this covenant promising to one another our mutual trust and support.