February 2nd
Persevering with Hope: Global Climate Change
Service Leader: Bryan Plude
Worship Associate: Roger Corman
Degradation of the earth’s environment through climate change has been building for a long time. While much has been done to slow down the increase in greenhouse gases, there is much more to do. Success in arresting climate change will require perseverance and intention comparable to that of the Manhattan Project or the effort to land a person on the moon in the 1960’s. We look to our faith to find the strength to persevere and maintain hope.

February 9th
Perseverance: Riding the Waves of Change
Service Leaders: Rev. Kathy Huff, Sabbatical Minister and Erin Howseman, Worship Associate
Finding our balance on unstable surfaces is the perennial challenge. With the undulating rhythm of life there’s wisdom in those unpredictable waves of change.

February 16th
Unconditional Love or How to choose to be happy all the time.
Service Leaders: Robin Rogers and Andy Levine Worship Associate
Robin will explore with us what he learned from the book Real Love, by Greg Baer, MD. Unconditionally caring about the happiness of another person without any thought for what we might get for ourselves.
Robin participated in Rev Chris Bell’s sermon writing class last fall.

February 23
“Perseverance: Forward Through the Ages”
Service Leaders: Rev. Kathy Huff, Sabbatical Minister and Erin Howseman, Worship Associate.
We take time to remember our ability to persevere, survive and thrive through the arc of time. Today we re-dedicate ourselves by giving enthusiastic support to our annual pledge campaign “Together Through the Decades” with members of the Canvass Committee.
Without difficulties, life would be like a stream without rocks and curves—about as interesting as concrete. Without problems, there can be no personal growth, no group achievement, no progress of humanity. But what matters about problems is what one does with them. — Benjamin Hoff, *The Te of Piglet*.

As a minister, I’ve had many opportunities to observe and know people persevere through some of life’s most harsh circumstances. I’ve also seen dear friends, family and colleagues struggle to through times of uncertainty and difficulty. And like most people of a certain age by now I’ve experienced my own share of trauma. If we are lucky, most of us are spared the kind of experiences and disasters on the scale we see in the news but all of us know something about crisis and change. And we also know that tragedy can strike at anytime. None of us are immune; all of us are at risk.

How is it that some people seem to persevere and remain steadfast no matter what? How is it that some of us even when laid off, make a big mistake, have a life threatening illness, get divorced, experience wars, and other disasters manage to keep going? Loss, failure, betrayal, set backs of every sort, with all the trials and tribulations life throws at us at any given time, well, it is a miracle any of us get out of bed. And yet we do. We get up and out back into a world that we believe can still surprise us more with its joy and love than its pain.

Scientists tell us that knowing how to bend but not break, how to make the best out of a challenging situation is a learned behavior. They tell us there are ways we can “toughen up” if we want our work and life contribute to making things better, not worse, for the people, places and causes we love and care about. (Resilience: The Science of Mastering Life’s Greatest Challenges by Steven M. Southwick).

While I am naturally a bit skeptical about a top ten list of how to weather and bounce back from stress and trauma, I’ve also seen it at work enough to know what differences some of this advice can make. Spirituality, for example, is a major component of our “stress-hardness.” When we come together to worship and pray, collaborate for social justice, share a meal, care for each other in hours of need, reflect on what gives worth and dignity. All this and more help us survive and thrive. The role of religious community in helping people persevere in the face of chaos of life’s most challenging difficulties cannot be underestimated.

Our February theme is ‘Perseverance.’ It is also Black History Month. Few other times in our nation’s history demonstrate our theme more profoundly than the perseverance of African American people. Spending time this month to learn and discover more about this shared history and how it effects today’s world is always a worthy spiritual investment. Though my ongoing reading lists are consistently diverse, I have an annual practice of revisiting one of my favorite authors Zora Neale Hurston in February. I re-read one of her novels and pour over my own treasured copy of her letters and personal notes published by her niece Lucy Anne Hurston. This year I’m also reading a book called From Rum to Roots by Lloyd G Francis. It's giving me new insight into racism and perseverance from a Jamaican immigrant’s perspective.

Whether the subject matter is our own or someone else’s when it comes to weathering the great adventure of life perhaps it helps to remember the words from that wisdom teacher so many of us grew up with -- You’re braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think. --- Pooh’s Great Adventure

See you in church!

Love,

Rev. Kathy Huff, Sabbatical Minister
Greetings from the Board President

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, FEBRUARY 16, 9 AM
CANVASS BEGINS FEBRUARY 23

We have begun this year with a bang, it seems: facilities projects underway or completed, new music folks, Sadie and Richard delighting us each week at worship, Rev. Kathy, our Sabbatical Minister, fully present and bringing rich offerings. Our community feels healthy, connected. We are many voices and it seems that we are able to hear each other comfortably and respectfully. We have grown well since the Todd and Stony Point days. I was not here through those early years. All the growth and planning, as well as the challenges, are stories from history for me. They are compelling, inspiring stories of folks who had a vision of creating a liberal religious community that would be home to all, grounded in UU principles and our mission of celebrating life, empowering people, caring for one another, and helping to build a better world. They are stories of negotiating the challenges of growth and embracing possibilities.

The valuing of each member’s contribution, whether in a committee/group setting or in our Congregational Meetings, is one of the great strengths of Unitarian Universalism that I have come to value as it is practiced here at UUCSR. We all have something to offer and it matters that we share of ourselves. Our winter Congregational Meeting will be February 16, from 9-10:30 AM. We will enjoy a bit of breakfast before and worship following the meeting. At this meeting our Budget Task Force folks will present the first go around at a budget for the coming year, 2014-2015, a draft budget. This will give us all an idea of what financial resources we will need to continue our trajectory of growth. Our annual canvass will begin the following Sunday, February 23 and we will all be invited to think about our financial contribution to our community. We will be urged to be generous, of course, and we will be because that is who we are.

In addition to our first glimpse at next year’s budget at the congregational meeting, we will be choosing board members and delegates to DA and GA. We will hear reports of progress on many of the projects that we have been working on since the fall. Of course there will be folks to be specially appreciated. As I work on the agenda I intend to find a bit more time than we often have for general questions and comments since these congregational meetings offer an opportunity for listening to each other that seems very important to me and, I trust, to you all as well. Every voice matters.

Thanks for all you do to enliven and sustain this remarkable congregation.

Jeanie Bates, Board President

Board of Trustees

Hello to you all...and Happy New Year!

We, the members of your Board of Trustees, would like you all to know that we are here to help answer any questions or address concerns you might have regarding our congregational operations, worship, or other activities. Please look for our "Ask the Board" table outside of the Sanctuary doors every Sunday morning. There you will find, not Lucy, but a smiling board member...a nickel for your thoughts!

Your UUCSR Board of Trustees

Meet the Ministers

These are brief, informal meetings held once a month following the 11 a.m. Sunday Service as indicated below. They provide an opportunity for visitors and guests to meet with our Sabbatical Minister, Rev. Kathy Huff and our Intern Minister, Bryan Plude and one or two lay leaders.

Questions are not only welcomed, but encouraged! Bring your coffee or tea and join us in the Green Room located at the opposite end of the hall from the social area.

FEBRUARY 16
MARCH 16
I spent last week at Starr King School for Ministry enrolled in an intensive course on the Quran. Although classes are complete, I still have much learning to do. I must make my way through four books about the Quran as well as read the entire scripture in the next three weeks. As a final project I will write a sermon using verses from the Quran as a starting point.

I enrolled in the course, Feminist Readings of the Quran to fulfill an academic requirement. I would have preferred to study Buddhism, but nothing was offered during this time. My initial misgivings quickly dissolved as I began to appreciate just what a wonderful instructor I had.

Dr. Ghazala Anwar is a Pakistani woman who considers herself a devout Muslim while at the same time holding some very controversial interpretations of the Quran. Her humor was infectious. Her Arabic was a joy to listen to, although I understood none of it. Some of her interpretations, if widely disseminated, could endanger her family living in Pakistan. For this reason, she told us, she teaches orally, but does not write or publish. This may seem extreme to us in our Unitarian Universalist and Western culture. However, it was not so long ago that persons with "heretical" views of the origins of the Bible or on the nature of Jesus and the Trinity were excommunicated, or worse.

The father of the Unitarians in Transylvania, Francis David, died in prison after Unitarianism fell out of favor with the king. Michael Servetus, a Spanish contemporary whose anti-Trinitarian writings heavily influenced David, was burned at the stake in Geneva by John Calvin. Our own New England forebears, the Puritans, were Calvinist, and left England because of religious persecution.

I regard Dr. Anwar as comparable to David and Servetus in her courage. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to study with her. I look forward sometime this spring to sharing my sermon with you.

Blessings,
Bryan, Intern Minister

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**Monthly Theme Reflection**

**Questions, Practices and Resources**

Our worship and learning theme for February is “Perseverance.” Here are a few reflection questions and practices to guide us.

Questions: When life gets you down, how do you regain energy and motivation? How do you keep faith with what is most meaningful to you? What have you learned by watching others who persevere in the face of despair, disappointment, or deep loss? What tools, prayers, people, inspirations restore hope in you? What do you see as your most important soul work in facing the many changes in life?

Practices: Make a list of all that boosts up the ability to persevere. Identify those in your life that need more attention, and then give it. Assess your “stress-hardiness.” Observe how your body reacts to stress for one week: consider your muscles, your heart rate, your sweat and tears. Try a new exercise, change your diet, adopt a mindfulness practice. Try it for 5 minutes a day after a week stretch it until you reach 20 minutes, keep at it for 40 days. Put a touchstone in your pocket as a reminder of your inner strength. Draw a picture or make a collage of your support and caring network. Know whom you can depend on when you really need it. Spend time with family and dear friends. Commit to making at least one new friend every 3 - 6 months.

Movies: 12 Years as a Slave (R), 127 Hours (R), Brave (PG), Bolt (PG), Freedom Writers (PG13), Clash of the Titans (PG13), The Blind Side (PG13), Shawshank Redemption (R), Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (NR), The Perfect Game (PG), Billy Elliot (R), Soul Surfer (PG).

Books for Adults (A) Youth (Y) and Children (C): Perseverance by Margaret Wheatley (A); Many Windows, Seasons of the Heart by Faith Baldwin (A); When Things Fall Apart by Pema Chodron; Resilience: The Science of Mastering Life's Greatest Challenges by Steven M. Southwick; Mexican White Boy by Matt de la Peña (YA); The Book Thief by Markus Zusak (A,YA); City of Bones, The Mortal Instruments series by Cassandra Clare (YA); American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang (YA); The Tao of Pooh by Benjamin Hoff (A,YA); A Chair for My Mother by Vera Williams; (C) Little Cloud, by Eric Carle (C); Harriet and the Roller Coaster Nancy Carlson (C) The Short Tree and the Bird that Could Not Sing by Dennis Foo (C).
This month we will explore perseverance in Sunday worship. The will to persevere is a trait that is crucial to success in life – no matter how one might define success. It takes perseverance to learn in school, to get a job done, to create and keep healthy relationships, to learn games and the list goes on. Almost everything that is new takes persistent effort to master. Perseverance is not only a trait it is a skill and something that can be taught to our children. Parents can help their children develop a persevering nature by providing them with challenging activities that are within their developmental scope and encouraging them to take the step-by-step measures to learn.

A few weeks ago I saw a father and son at the park. The father was trying to teach the boy to play catch. The father told his son (probably six or seven years old) to stand way back, pay attention and catch the ball. Each time the ball flew right past him and the father's frustration was expressed. Loudly. The boy sauntered over to pick the ball up and hurled it into the barranca. No one was having fun. Somewhere along the way the dad seemed to forget about baby steps. The boy needed many more lessons in short distance catch, or rolling the ball back and forth, or starting with a larger ball or something he could handle successfully. Clearly this was not a lesson in perseverance. It looked like the little boy gave up very soon after the game began.

It is important for children to experience mastery, and understand that mastery comes from hard work. It takes time and effort. Parents help children by expecting follow-through, helping kids set reasonable goals for themselves and rewarding them with praise each time they reach an incremental goal.

Baby steps are such a natural expectation of little ones. But once our children have mastered many things we sometimes loose sight of the fact that learning at every age has its curve and even our teens need structure and encouragement to persevere. The well rehearsed line, “This is boring” is not always a matter of boredom, but a matter of giving up. Frustration from not attaining preliminary goals leads to a sense of failure and can become a pattern. Teens can use help in breaking down a goal or activity into the many aspects that lead up to mastery and figuring out how and when to move on to the next step. Its just like learning math – there is a method and a process. And the methods and processes work in things as diverse as learning about developing new relationships, learning how to play an instrument, learning to develop leadership skills or learning to drive.

Perseverance, like spiritual practice, takes intentional effort, repetition, and sometimes loosing oneself to wonderment. Children will benefit from parents who model hard work to attain mastery and then share with them the fulfillment they feel when goals are attained.

In faith,
Deborah

---

**Here’s What’s Happening in RE Classes**

Sr. High Youth Group meets every Thursday from 4-6pm. Deborah Mason, Rev Chris and Eric Fischer serve as Youth Advisors. Contact Deborah (debmasonuu@gmail.com) for more information.

Grades K-8 will gather together for Children's Chapel on the first Sunday of each month. When there is a 5th Sunday all ages gather for Justice or Arts Sunday.

February RE class schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Children's Chapel</th>
<th>Theme: Perseverance</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>02/2/14</td>
<td>Children’s Chapel all ages together</td>
<td>Grades 3-5*We Believe: Session 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/9/14</td>
<td>Grades K-2 <em>Love Surrounds Us</em></td>
<td>A Vote For Everyone (Principle 5)</td>
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<td>Session 11: Hear Our Voices</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/16/14</td>
<td>Grades K-2 <em>Love Surrounds Us</em></td>
<td>Grades 3-5*We Believe: Session 13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Session 12: A Peaceful and Fair World</td>
<td>In Harmony (Principle 6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/23/00</td>
<td>Grades K-2 <em>Love Surrounds Us</em></td>
<td>Grades 3-5*We Believe: Session 14</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Session 13: Peaceful Choices</td>
<td>Web of Nature (Principle 7)</td>
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Treasurer’s Report

Together Through the Decades
Annual Pledge Drive Kick-Off!

As many of you know, this year is the tenth anniversary of our home at 547 Mendocino! And as it turns out, it is also the 60 year anniversary of our congregation’s existence as a Unitarian congregation. So what better time to celebrate us – Together Through the Decades! That is the theme of our Annual Pledge Drive which is kicking off on February 23.

Our Pledge Drive is a time to celebrate our commitment to ourselves and each other and for each of us to reflect on our relationship to our congregation. Generosity is a core value of our congregation. Many of us are intensely committed to our mission and give generously in several ways; we volunteer our time, we provide our expertise in specific areas and we donate our hard-earned dollars. During our pledge drive, each of us commits to the financial contribution we will make to support our mission in the coming year. In order to fund our priorities next year, our budget calls for a 5% increase in pledge revenue. (The draft budget will be presented at the congregational meeting this month.)

We have a significant number of building and equipment repairs and maintenance projects and several improvements planned.

We will be redesigning our website in order to help expand our outreach and help others find us and participate.

We are experiencing an explosion of growth in Religious Education with many more families with children than even before. Yippee! We will also be providing additional support to our youth group.

We have committed to becoming a teaching congregation.

We are significantly expanding our Adult Education offerings.

We will be identifying and funding additional leadership development opportunities.

We are increasing the dues we pay as a member of North Bay Operating Project.

This year our pledge drive will be conducted through one-on-one visits with congregants by a dedicated band of visiting stewards (your friends and fellow congregants). So when you get a call from one of them, please find the time to meet and talk about what is important to you and your hopes and dreams for the congregation. Please take some time to think about what the congregation and its mission mean to you and make your financial commitment for the coming year accordingly.

On February 23, we will celebrate with cake after the 11AM service as part of our kick-off celebration. Please join us!

Linda Balabanian, Treasurer

Social Hall Noise Reduction Project

Bid proposal requests have been sent to several contractors for reducing noise in the Social Hall and improving our ability to understand each other when there are large numbers of us present, as after Sunday Services.

This project is the result of a long-standing desire to make the Social Hall better for us. An engineering study was done several years ago, and the recommendations in that report are the basis for our present effort. While perfect ‘speech intelligibility’ is practically impossible, substantial improvement is expected.

The engineering study estimated that under crowded conditions the number of words understandable could be increased from 65% to perhaps 85%.

This work will cost a lot of money, but help from some of our members, and from our reserves, will make it possible to start this year. The job may be done in stages, and some of the labor can be done by our Maintenance volunteers.

Submitted by John Jaffray
Member of the Operations Team
Thank you to everyone who participated in our online Ministerial and Congregational Evaluation Survey in November and December of 2013! We had an excellent rate of response (over 130 respondents), and the results were overwhelmingly positive. Reverend Chris Bell was evaluated by the congregation as excelling in virtually all areas of his ministry (There were concerns expressed by a few that Chris may overextend himself at times, but perhaps this supports the need for and good timing of his sabbatical.). We were able to share the evaluation survey results with Chris prior to his departure at the end of December.

The survey also reflected a very high level of satisfaction with the life and functioning of our congregation. We are doing well as a community! There were a few comments provided regarding concerns or dissatisfaction which COSM will follow up on. We very much appreciate ALL feedback.

The results of the survey have been provided in their entirety to the Human Resources Committee and the Board of Trustees. The program that was used to construct the survey has provided us with detailed results in a PowerPoint format. If you are interested in seeing the full results of the survey, please contact me (My email and phone are in the current directory) and I’ll be happy to provide it to you.

We would also like to bring to your attention that there is now a COSM SUGGESTION BOX located to the left of the entrance to the work/boardroom area. We appreciate your suggestions, feedback, concerns, frustrations, joys, etc. about how life at UUCSR is treating you and the people, issues, and spiritual concerns you care about. Of course, if there is a matter that needs urgent attention, contact or speak to a member of COSM immediately rather than using the suggestion box.

The Committee on Shared Ministry is charged with monitoring the general health of the congregation, supporting the minister in his or her various roles, and providing conflict resolution when needed. COSM is here for you. Current members of the committee are Bill Foshee, Judy Hutchinson, Mary Lill Lee, Lucia Milburn and myself. In case you don’t know any of us yet, look for the lavender COSM nametags to find one of us between or after services.

Yours in Community,

Cathy Read
Chair, Committee on Shared Ministry

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Save the Date:
Coming Sunday March 23, 2014
The Annual R.E. Cake Auction

This year we have a new twist.

The RE kids will pair up with a teen from the Youth Group and create a fabulous and delicious cake to be auctioned after the 11:00 service.

This year the proceeds of the auction will support the Youth Group Service Trip to Habitat for Humanity, Taos.
The Arc of the Universe Bends Toward Justice. Our great forebear, the 19th century Unitarian Minister and fervent abolitionist Theodore Parker, said these words over 150 years ago and they have continued to provide hope in the midst of social struggle ever since. What we know is that we are a part of that arc of the universe. All of us play a part, through large or small but always significant acts, in bending that arc toward justice.

In November we (Sibyl Day & Deborah Mason) attended the Gamaliel National Leadership Training in Sacramento. We were able to attend due to the generous support of a matching grant from the Unitarian Universalist Funding Program and the congregation. The training was an intensive week of self-reflection and learning about the structures of power that are at play in our institutions and our political structures. The community organizing that we engage in places great emphasis on the development of relational power and the inspiration of self interest in getting things done. Knowing what is in it for us, individually and collectively will strengthen our motivation toward working for change. Knowing each other will strengthen our ability to work together toward common goals. This is true whether we are talking about working toward a better and more just transportation system or improving our ability to welcome newcomers at UUCSR.

UUCAN has two important events coming in the next two months:

Sunday, February 2, 2014 after the 11:00 Worship Service, sponsored by the Advocates for Social Justice: North Bay Organizing Project Lead Organizer, Davin Cardenas, and Sibyl Day and Deborah Mason will present a Hot Topic on community organizing. The program will be participatory and informative. We hope you will come to learn more about what NBOP is up to!

Friday, March 7, 2014 from 7 to 8:30 pm: The Arc of the Universe Bends Toward Justice: an evening of exploration of the ways in which we work to bend the arc. We will break into small groups for facilitated conversation and hear from Davin and other leaders of NBOP about the work we are doing and the work we would like to see done.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

Peace,
Sibyl and Deborah

---

UUCAN/NBOP

Writers, Screenwriters, Poets, Film enthusiasts...Focus: provide atmosphere where serious writers improve and hone their writing skills.

Meetings: open to the novice, the more experienced, and the published author.

UUCAN Membership not required.

Meet 1-4 pm, first Monday of the month.
1-2 pm Instructional (Courses on DVD), 2-4 pm Regular monthly meeting.

Film enthusiasts: "UUCSR Writers Presents" special events. Details TBA.

Visit: [http://uucsrwriters.blogspot.com](http://uucsrwriters.blogspot.com)

Subscribe: [http://lists.sonic.net/mailman/listinfo/uucsrwriters](http://lists.sonic.net/mailman/listinfo/uucsrwriters)

Info: Georgette G. deBlois - ggdeb@sonic.net or call Glaser Center at 707-568-5381.

Thursday Morning Coffee, 11 am - 12:30 noon at Warm Puppy Cafe, Charles Schulz Ice Arena on West Steel Lane and Hardies Lane, Santa Rosa. Buy the beverage/food of your choice. We meet once a week for lighthearted conversation about who’s doing what in our literary community. Table is not reserved.

Look for us. Parking is free.

Join our UUCSR Writers e-mail Community. Send an e-mail to: ggdeb@sonic.net and write, "add me to your Writers e-mail list" in the Subject line.

Please give us your "Reactions" to this blog (See below).

Thank You.

Information: UUCSR Writers • Glaser Center • 707-568-5381

Unitarian Universalist Congregation • 547 Mendocino Ave • Santa Rosa

[http://www.uusantarosa.org](http://www.uusantarosa.org) • [http://uucsrwriters.blogspot.com](http://uucsrwriters.blogspot.com)

Georgette G. deBlois • ggdeb@sonic.net and/or

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UUCSR web: [http://www.uusantarosa.org](http://www.uusantarosa.org)
Hot Topic

There’s an old saying: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” That’s what UUCSR is doing as a member organization of the North Bay Organizing Project. On Sunday, February 2nd, UUCAN, the Core team in our congregation, and other leaders in NBOP, will explain what the Project is doing and how each of us can participate in a meaningful way. We will meet in the RE Common Room from 12:30 to 2 pm. A light lunch will be available for a donation.

Advocates for Social Justice

Share the Offering:

On Sunday, February 9th, half of the collection will go to fund our annual Adrienne Swenson Award. Adrienne was a long-time member of the Congregation whose work for social justice and the environment was recognized throughout the County and State. In her memory, every year UUCSR awards a $1,000 scholarship to a young person graduating from High School and planning to continue her/his education who has done outstanding work for social justice. You can learn more about Adrienne and see the names of the past winners on plaques in the Social Hall. This will be our second year of partnering with Elsie Allen High School whose enthusiasm is a delight. As we know, education is becoming increasingly expensive so when the ushers come your way, please be as generous as you can!

On Sunday, February 23rd, half the collection will go to fund our Saturday Breakfast program. The need is great as we did not get a grant this year and our delicious breakfast and warm hospitality are much appreciated. Thank you!

Aesthetics Committee

The Aesthetics Committee is re-forming. Those colorful banners that hung in the Sanctuary during December really improved the ambience, didn’t they? Do you want to be part of the effort to make our spaces more attractive, useful and safe?

Bring your ideas on Thursday, Feb. 13 @ 5 pm. Join us as we begin to re-organize. Contacts: Mary Lil Lee or Elizabeth Marrs.

Evening Book Group

The Evening Book Group will meet on Thursday, February 13th from 7 to 9 p.m. at 547 Mendocino. We meet in the RE wing.

The February selection is The Art Forger by B.A. Shapiro. Visitors and newcomers are welcome.

In March we are reading A Constellation of Vital Phenomena by Anthony Marra. If you have questions, please contact Linda Lampson.

Breath—Mobility—Balance

Monica Anderson won’t be able to offer her class on February 16th but it will resume at 10:15 on Sunday, March 16th in the Board Room. This is an easy and fun way to improve these three vital functions! No special clothes necessary.
Welcome to our Spring Circle Dinner Groups! If your name is in bold at the top of a dinner group, please contact the others in your “circle” to arrange for your first gathering. You get to decide on the time and place with your group. Also you get to decide who brings what (ie: appetizer, salad, main dish, dessert, beverages/bread)! Please try to contact everyone within two weeks so no one feels forgotten!! As part of your after dessert conversation, don’t forget to decide where and when you all will meet for the next month’s gathering.

We are no longer printing phone numbers in the newsletter, just the group members names. We have e-mailed the names and phone numbers for each group to the organizer of the first dinner for that group along with the names and phone numbers on the substitute list. If, for some reason, you are not contacted by the person(s) at the top of your “circle” group by the middle of February please call them. If they don’t respond or another problem arises, please contact Lynn Riepenhoff at 525-8424 or Kitty Wells at 952-0620. We’ll do our best!

**If you cannot make a dinner, have to cancel, or (as the host) need or want to fill in an empty seat or two, please consider calling someone from the “Substitute List”. They will be glad to hear from you. Enjoy your time together in food, fellowship, and fun!

**Day Groups:**
Susan Williamson  susanrabbit@comcast.net
Joan Thatcher
Peggy Hulse
Dorris Lee
Phyllis Fitzgerald
Donnah Judah
Dan Nuebel

**Evening Groups:**
Debbie & David Hope  dcartehope@yahoo.com
Jim and Mary Wolfe
Richard Gauthier & Debbie Hight
Skipper & John Taylor  cotaylors@gmail.com
Betty and Sid Gordon
Betsy Thagard
Maggie Morley
Judy Elliot

Gretchen & Gene Vap  gvap@att.net
Robin and Elizabeth Marrs
Jen and Ralph Murray

Bruce & Judy Taylor  judytaylor@sonic.net
Linda Balabanian and Tim Kennedy
Phyllis Metalis
Russ Powell
Reen Kennedy-Williams

Carolyn Mcleese & Charles Rettke  mccleesec@aol.com
Mark Meierding & Linda Lampson
Kitty and Brian Wells
Robin Trimble
Chris Wildlake

**Leonard & Lynn Riepenhoff**
Cathie Wiese and Robert Lunceford
Sharon and Joe McCarty
Dave Tauck
Anne Bandy

**Janice & Olga Lee Mayberry**  freesia31@earthlink.net
Roger and Luida DeBeers
Maureen Rumford & Art Rosenblum
Jenny Sebastian
Robin Rogers

**Natalie Brundred**  natalie@thesparksite.com
Nathan and Susan Miron
Jessica Blome and Scott Marsh
Jere & Jenine Giblin

**Jo & Jim Katon**  jokaton64@gmail.com
Patty Somlo and Richard Fung
Dee and John Ray
Michelene Justman
Maggi Koren

**Marilyn Holmes**  marilyn@sonic.net
Nancy Fitzpatrick
Gail Alford
Carol Weisker
Margaret Bregger Costan
JoAnn Robson
I am very pleased to introduce you to our new Choir Director, Sadie Sonntag and our new Pianist, Richard Riccardi. We are very excited to have been able to hire such outstanding musicians, even if only temporarily until Rev. Chris returns from his sabbatical. I’m sure you have already been enjoying hearing Richard play for us beginning near the end of December, and some of you may have heard Sadie sing a beautiful song that she composed for Rev. Chris’s farewell service. The choir sang a rousing song, “Rejuvenation,” for the last two Sundays in January, first at 9:15 and later at 11:00, so if you attended either of those services, you have had the opportunity to see her conduct the choir.

Sadie Sonntag has been singing, composing, teaching, and performing (flute and piano) since she was 12 years old. She is classically trained with a B.A. in Music Education from Sonoma State University. She has performed as mezzo-soprano soloist as well as choir singer with the Sonoma Bach Society. Sadie has been the winner of several singing awards and scholarships. She is a professional music director in Sonoma County. Sadie has served as board member with the Santa Rosa Concert Association. She has also released several CDs in both rock and classical genres, performing works of classical composers and her own original music. She and her partner, Jesus Contreras, have formed the Vespertine Orchestra, which is a classically trained electronic and acoustic duo based out of Petaluma California. Their music ranges from experimental to electronic dance, with a massive touch of Minimalism. The Vespertine Orchestra is also the resident music ensemble for The Vespertine Circus, a circus troupe based out of Oakland California. You can find out more about them and their orchestra at their Website: http://thevespertineorchestra.com

Richard is currently employed as an accompanist at Sonoma State University, and he also plays for shows at the Cinnabar Theater. In the past, he has accompanied Joel Grey, Tom Jones, Mel Torme, Diahann Carroll, Janet Baker, Seiji Ozawa, Pinchas Zukerman, and John Dalley of the Guarneri Quartet, as well as many other well-known musicians. He was the Assistant Conductor for the Broadway National Tour of "Annie" from 1981 to 1982. He frequently plays with the "Skywalker" Symphony (as they call it), for major motion picture soundtracks and major video game productions such as Disney K’nex, and StarCraft. He has also played with the San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Ballet, and The Lamplighters. He received his Bachelor of Music degree in piano performance from Oberlin College, and his Master of Musical Arts degree in piano performance from Yale University School of Music. Richard and his wife, Sandy, have put together a cabaret show, consisting mostly of their own compositions, which they have performed at the Cinnabar Theater and many other venues in Sonoma County. They will be taking their show on tour in June. You can find out more about them, as well as watch videos and read reviews of their show, on their Website: www.partyriccardi.com

Jenny Harriman, Music Committee Chair
On January 29, Wednesday: 3:00 PM and in the Glaser Center, we will have several knowledgeable experts from the County Mental Health system and others presenting (and in the audience as resources). Come & bring your questions or concerns and any actual events that caused you concern. There will be a presentation on "Defusing" difficult situations, assessing fears, safety, community resources, and any issues you bring. Open to anyone in or out of the congregation who is interested. Especially valuable for ANYONE who interacts with (or fears, but might want to help) our neighbors who live on the streets. Especially planned for those interested in a useful policy around this issue @ UUCSR, Sat. Breakfast volunteers, Officers of the day and UUCSR staff and office volunteers.

It’s not too early to start thinking about your summer plans! The All-UU Summer Camp this year will be the weekend of August 15-17 at Enchanted Hills Retreat, just 45 minutes from Santa Rosa, in the mountains between the Sonoma and Napa Valleys. This is an opportunity to relax with other UUCSR members of all ages in a rustic, but comfortable setting. Enchanted Hills Retreat was built by the Lighthouse for the Blind, so many of it’s hiking trails and all of its facilities are very accessible. Watch this newsletter for more information this spring or contact Carol Kraemer (uucamp@uusantarosa.org) if you have questions.

The All-Fellowship Retreat, the All-Congregation Retreat, and UU Family Camp are all names that have been used over the years to describe the summer weekend getaway that the UUCSR sponsors. This year, the Planning Committee has chosen All-UU Summer Camp as the name that best describes what we do. All UUCSR members, whether singles, childless, or families with children can enjoy this time together. There's a campfire on Friday night, workshops and hiking on Saturday, a Talent Show, and plenty of spontaneous, informal music. Crafts, swimming, and softball add to the amusement for all ages. On Sunday we have an outdoor worship service, made up of UU readings, music, and reflections from those who are there. Cabins and beds are rustic, but comfortable. Meals are prepared by the camp staff and served in a dining hall. Whether or not you have fond memories of summer camp as a child, please consider joining us for the All-UU Summer Camp, August 15-17. Contact Carol Kraemer (uucamp@uusantarosa.org) for more information.

Currently we are in need of a Pledge Secretary. This position needs someone who is detail oriented and likes to work with numbers. The position requires entering all the pledge contributions into our database and generating monthly reports. This person would also be responsible for generating quarterly statements for all our members. Generally the job entails about 2-3 hours per week. Ideally, we would like to have more then one volunteer so we could share the various responsibilities and limit the time needed for the volunteers. Barrie Noe has been doing this job for several years and would like to utilize her time and talents elsewhere. She and our Administrator, Janis, are available to train and answer any questions you might have.

If you are interested, please contact Janis Brewster, our Administrator at 707/568-5381, x106.
Helpful Tips on the Care & Feeding of a Meeting Room

It’s the Gaia Hypothesis. Sometimes also known as the Gaia Principle, it is the provocative notion that all organisms on Earth—please stay with me here—all organisms interact with their surroundings to form a complex, self-regulating system which exists in order to maintain the necessary conditions for life on the planet to continue. Put simply, the Gaia Hypothesis suggests that the Earth is itself a living organism, like a big giant animal, and everything alive on it is a vital part of the Earth Animal.

I have come to think of the Glaser Center in a similar way.

Call it the Glaser Center Hypothesis.

Our building is alive, in a way, and each meeting room inside is a part of the living organism that is the Glaser Center. As such, every time one of us meets here for a TIE Group, a committee meeting, a music rehearsal, an adult religious education workshop, or a youth group pizza party, we are interacting with the building in ways that are either good for the animal or bad for the animal—and by extension, either helpful or not for all the rest of us who, in our own way, are also a part of the life of the building.

As many of you know, we are currently without a full-time sexton. The sexton acts much like the guy who feeds and waters the animals at the zoo. We’ve assembled a team to carry us through the necessary tasks of keeping the building fed and watered (and cleaned and vacuumed), but we will all need to step up and do our part to keep the organism thriving and happy.

In truth, a lot of us have been letting things slide lately, and this is a good time to remind ourselves of the basic rules that keep the place functioning, looking (and smelling) good. In fact, the basic Care and Feeding rules listed below are guidelines that should be followed by every one of us who leads a group, chairs a committee, or teaches a class.

ONE. Leave the room in better condition than when you entered it.

If your group fills the trashcans to half-full or more, please make sure that it is emptied after your event. If food was spilled or crumbs scattered, there is a vacuum in the closet in the Social Hall (the one with the big map of the building on the door). Last week, a renter of the Board Room asked to borrow the vacuum to clean the carpet before their event, when, technically, if it were left unkempt by the previous group, it should have been vacuumed then. Put simply—if you make a mess, clean it up.

Please, let’s all do our part to leave the rooms we use in better condition than when we arrived.

TWO. Update the “Room Tags”

Each week, we work hard to put accurate “room tags” in the windows of each room, with the date, and a list of all events taking place in that room. If you arrive for a meeting, and the room tag is for a previous date (it’s Tuesday, for example, but the room tag says Monday), PLEASE HELP UPDATE by removing the outdated tag. In most cases, we put a whole weeks worth of tags in the plastic holder, and at the end of the night, we remove that day’s tag. If you do remove an old tag, the new one should be right underneath it. If there are no new tags, then let it be empty. But please do not hold a meeting with the wrong information posted on the window.

THREE. Wash your dishes.

Yep. If your group serves coffee or other snack items, and you use coffee cups or plates from the kitchen, then please wash them afterwards and replace them in the cupboard. At the very least, rinse them thoroughly and place them in the dish rack in the kitchen.

FOUR. Remember that taking care of your room is taking care of each other.

We tend to assume that the Sexton will be along shortly to clean up after our meetings, but in most cases, it will be another committee or class that uses the room before the Sexton’s next scheduled day to clean that room. Our sexton works only 25 hours a week, and it might be a few days before their next visit.

So let’s all observe the Glaser Hypothesis. Let’s all care for the entire organism, and keep the facility looking beautiful, tidy, and alive.

David Templeton
Glaser Center Manager
Members Present -- Susan Bartholome, Jeanie Bates (President), Reverend Chris Bell (Minister, ex officio member), Lois Bell, Joe Como, John Farison, Laura Jean Hagemen (Vice President), Alan Proulx, Linda Stabler, Cathie Wiese, Marge Wright

Members Not Present -- None

Non-Members Present -- Linda Balabanian (Treasurer), Sibyl Day (Secretary), Terry Graham (Recording Secretary)

Meeting called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Board of Trustees (BOT) President, Jeanie Bates

Opening Words & Chalice Lighting – Readings by Reverend Chris Bell: From Welcome, A UU Primer; “All are Welcome” by Editor Patricia Frevert and “We light this chalice…” by Mary Ann Moore

Agenda Review – No additional items added to the agenda

Timekeeper Volunteer – Sibyl Day

Minutes of 21 November 2013 Review -- Draft minutes corrected in situ -- Minutes accepted as corrected

Open Microphone – Jeanie requested that BOT members consider a mid-year refresher retreat

Treasurer’s Report – Linda Balabanian, Treasurer

Treasurer’s Report handout highlights for the first fiscal 5-months, July-November, included (1) Pledge Revenue is 15% & $23K over budget, partly due to a few major pledgers having already paid their whole year pledge, (2) Sunday Basket is 24% & $2.8K under budget, (3) Glaser Center net income is on budget, (4) Total Expenses are 5% & $12K under budget and (5) outside of “Other Income”, Net Income is $21K. Financially, the congregation is doing very well.

A miscommunication with the Islamic society concerning the new lease conditions temporarily put their utilities payments slightly in arrears but catch-up payments are in process.

Emergency Fund Investment – The Financial Stewardship (FinStew) Team requested approval of an Emergency Fund investment plan that is 100% low risk mutual fund(s). Alan Proulx motioned and Laura Jean seconded the Motion that the BOT accept FinStew’s request that the Emergency Fund investment plan is 100% low risk mutual fund(s). The current investments are 100% CDs although the BOT had previously approved the investments to be 50% CDs and 50% low risk mutual fund(s). FinStew has taken the position that CDs are currently a poor investment choice. The Motion passed unanimously, 9-0; John Farison had not yet arrived to vote.

BOT input to the upcoming Annual Pledge Drive -- Linda requested BOT input toward determining (1) the message statement of the campaign, (2) the logistics of supporting a “high donor” event and (3) the specific project beneficiary of the potential Endowment Fund budget distribution for FY2014/15. Member inputs to be directed to Linda. BOT Financial Task Force to take the lead.

Music Director Status – Reverend Chris

A third strong candidate for the choir director position is with the choir this evening. An accompanist will have a second audition Friday morning. Selection will be difficult due to the high quality of the candidates.

Group Goals

Facilities – John Farison; group co-member Joe Como

· The “On Bill Financing” no-interest plan from PG&E to finance the LED lighting transformation may not be approved by PG&E. If not, the effort will be funded with a low-interest rate loan.

· John Jaffray and Bud Willis are preparing a RFQ for social hall sound reduction suppliers. A phased approach toward installing ceiling and wall panels will be considered.

· A microphone upgrade is being investigated.

· The electrical panel installation will slip about 2-weeks to mid-January; requiring 3-days to install.

· In response to Jeanie’s query concerning adding blinds to common RE room, John stated that there is some degree of bouncing from project to project. He reiterated his appeal for staffing a facilities planning team. John and Joe Como to grow a dedicated operations team to analyze tasks and develop a task force plan.

Financial – Alan Proulx; group co-members Laura Jean Hageman & Linda Stabler -- No activity since last BOT meeting.

Cont. on page 15
Community Support & Communications – Susan Bartholome; group co-members, Jeanie Bates, Lois Bell, Cathie Weise, Marge Wright

Group is establishing priorities. Need commitments from BOT members to staff the Meet a Board Member Table on Sundays. The table has been a “measure” of success but will possibly not have the table every Sunday in the future. A sign-up sheet was distributed. BOT members were encouraged to unilaterally engage with congregational committees/teams. A February/March meeting of leaders of committees/teams is tentatively planned to foster inter-team communications.

BOT Budget – Laura Jean Hageman

Laura Jean proposed a candidate FY2013/14 BOT budget. Discussion touched upon several historical data including (1) BOT members most recently paid $1,860 out-of-pocket of $2,300 retreat costs, (2) $660 retreat costs and $329 for supplies expended in FY2012/13, (3) $433 of budgeted $1K retreat cost have been expended in FY 2013/14, (4) $118 of budgeted $200 supplies expended in FY2103/14 and (5) zero of a $900 training budget has been expended for FY2013/14. The budget for FY2013/14 was adjusted to the sum of (1) $1,500 for Board retreat, (2) $250 for supplies and (3) $500 for leadership training.

HR request for approval of changes to policies – Sibyl Day and Linda Stabler (HR Committee)

Sibyl led the discussion relative to the HR Committee (Sibyl, Linda & Joann Cleckner) proposal per a 6 December 2013 memo to change several sections of the UUCSR Personnel Policy Manual and the Staff Handbook.

- Vacation leave accrual – Accrual will no longer be use-or-lose at the discretion of the employee’s supervisor. Accrual will be limited to 2-years’ worth of vacation. Currently accrued hours are not subject to the 2-years’ worth constraint.
- Holidays & personal days – the number of holidays will be expanded from 6 to 8 and the 2 personal days will be retained.
- Personal/sick leave – “Personal” terminology will be deleted; restricting leave to employee’s injury, illness or other medical condition. Paid sick leave may be used for the illness of immediate family members.
- Bereavement leave – Bereavement leave added to allow for leave of absence of 3 days in the event of death of an immediate family member.

Motion: Cathie moved and Lois seconded a motion to accept the recommended changes to the UUCSR Personnel Policy Manual and the Staff Handbook per the HR Committee’s 6 December 2013 memo. Motion passed unanimously, 10-0.

Proposal to sponsor forum to discuss energy options – Alan Proulx

Alan requested that the BOT sponsor an “Energy Forum” of presentations intended for Sonoma County businesses and residents, addressing future energy source choices between PG&E and Sonoma Clean Power. Speakers from each organization will be present. The forum will be hosted by the Congregation Shomrei Torah from 7-8:30 on Tuesday, 4 March 2014. Joe Como can share information regarding the pros and cons of the pending Sonoma Clean Power proposals. Invitations will be offered to members of Congregation Shomrei Torah, UUCSR and other interested congregational and business members in Sonoma County. BOT sponsorship will consist of UUCSR member volunteer support. Marge motioned and Linda seconded a motion that UUCSR be a coordinating entity in support of the Energy Forum at Congregation Shomrei Torah on 4 March 2014. Motion passed unanimously, 10-0.

Request of Nominating Committee – Jeanie Bates

Four BOT members will be leaving the Board next year. The Nominating Committee requests that the BOT determine its preferred size. The bylaws prescribe 8 to 12 members; current membership totals 10. The members decided to request 3 or 4 nominees of the Nominating Committee.

Final Reflections – The members expressed mixed emotions between happiness for Chris and anticipation of missing Chris during the sabbatical. Chris expressed thanks and appreciation for his 7-years at UUCSR. Jeanie reminded the members that there is a draft budget to be approved in January.

Closing Words – Lois Bell: Reading “Song of the Builders” by Mary Oliver

Meeting Adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted – Terry Graham
**February 2014**
CHOOSE YOUR ELECTRICITY SUPPLIER

Tuesday • March 4, 2014 • 7:00–9:00 pm
At Congregation Shomrei Torah • 2600 Bennett Valley Road • Santa Rosa, CA

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Geof Syphers
CEO, Sonoma Clean Power

Tom Bottorff
PG&E Senior VP and Petaluma resident

Get Beyond The Marketing Slogans

Come hear a balanced discussion aimed at providing information to help both commercial and residential customers make the choice between PG&E and Sonoma Clean Power as their electricity supplier.

Who Should Attend

• **PG&E commercial & residential customers** in the target areas* who will be choosing an energy provider by May 1, 2014 will want to attend this presentation.

• **All other PG&E customers** who will be making that choice in the future (within the next 1–2 years).

*Unincorporated Sonoma County, and the cities of Cotati, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Sonoma and Windsor

RSVP Necessary

Seating is limited. Email ElectricityForumSoCo@gmail.com to reserve your seat. Include your name(s) and an email address. You may also include prepared questions for our speakers.

HOSTED BY

Congregation Shomrei Torah Environmental Action Committee. **Co-Organizers include** Unitarian Universalist Church of Santa Rosa, Redwood Forest Friends Meeting (Quaker), Congregation Beth Ami, Net101.com, Congregation Shomrei Torah Social Action Committee, Presbyterian Church of the Roses, Christ Church United Methodist.
Events at the Glaser Center

Saturday, February 1, 7:30 p.m.
SHOWCASE CONCERT
Blacktop Moon and
Jaclyn Steele & Michael Capella
Tickets $15 in advance, $18 at the door

Sunday, February 2, 6:30 p.m.
Annual Celebration of Spoken Word
Poetry Out Loud
County-wide Poetry recitation Contest
Free to the public

Saturday, February 8, 7:00 p.m.
Benefit for Climate Protection Campaign
Rumi’s Caravan
plus Eliyahu & the Qadim Ensemble
Tickets $25 in advance

Saturday, March 3, 7:30 p.m.
Two pianos—Two master pianists
Kirk Whipple & Marilyn Morales
Tickets $20 general, $15 seniors and students

Saturday, March 15, 7:30 p.m.
SHOWCASE CONCERT
Billie Sue Fischer & Nancy Hayashibara
plus Sarah Baker & Jan Martinelli
Tickets $15 in advance, $18 at the door

Saturday, March 22, 7:30 p.m.
Off the Page
All Seats $15

Saturday, April 4, 7:30 p.m.
Showcase Concert
TBA

547 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa 707-568-5381