



UU Update

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

• JANUARY 2015 • Volume 59 • Issue 1 •

Sunday Services at 9:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Theme: The World To Come

JANUARY 4

"GO, AS YOU ARE!"

Service Leaders: Rev. Dr. Szabolcs Czire, Eric Fischer, Susan Panttaja

Music by The UUsual Suspects

Religious liberals are pretty much alike everywhere. We stand on the side of love, offer opposition to social oppression, and sing songs like "Come, Come, Whoever You Are." The most important things in life often meet us unprepared, and yet we still have to respond to them. Our tradition can give us the presence that often makes all the difference.

JANUARY 11

"THE LOCAL WAY"

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, David Hope, Sadie Sonntag

Music by The Choir

This month, let's imagine "the world to come." What will things be like when humanity finally gets its act together? What can we do here and now to make it so? How shall we face the global challenges before us with hope and determination? The series starts by looking at the localism movement that is so strong in Sonoma County, and the spiritual benefits of living as intimately as we can with this remarkable place we call home.

JANUARY 18

"LIFE ON A WOUNDED PLANET"

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Andrew Hidas, Ben Ford
Music by some UUsual Suspects & visiting MUUGS kids!

There is no greater crisis facing humanity than that of climate change. The scientific forecasts for what the Earth's people, creatures and plants are likely to endure during the next hundred years range from seriously troubling to downright apocalyptic. You know the bad news, so today we'll lift up some of the positive things emerging from our response to this crisis; consider our response as individuals and as a religious community, and imagine the future world where humans will be true stewards living in harmony with nature.

JANUARY 25

"EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION"

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Roger Corman, Jen Collins
Music by the Choir, and some VERY special guests.

Some have argued that human technological development has been the cause of the world's most pressing problems. (All those cars, all that plastic, all those people, all that alienation...) Yet ours is an evolutionary faith with faith in evolution, and a humanistic faith with faith in humans. Since our tools are an extension of our minds, hearts and selves, they contain as much promise as threat.

How might we ensure that our tools

serve the holy and the good?

February 1

**ONE SERVICE ONLY AT 9:15
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AT 11:00**

KNOW THYSELF! EMERSON FOR TODAY

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Susan Bartholome, Nancy Hargis, Natalie Brundred

IT NEVER RAINS BUT IT POURS



Astaire.

"It never rains, but it pours." This old saying, first found in print in a London paper in 1726 (sources claim), has never been more real for me than during these last couple of weeks. Oh, how it has rained and poured! I've never felt happier about having wet feet, though. As soon as any internal complaint starts to bubble up about the rain, I remember our drought, and I remember the winter weather in Boston or Cleveland, and I am led again to my inner Fred

The old proverb refers to the sense we have that things come in waves, both good and bad. For example, you might spill your coffee on your pants on your way out the door, and then when you turn around to head to the kitchen to clean up the big dumb adorable dog is underfoot, leading you to trip and send the mug flying onto the carpet. Your roommate says, "It never rains, but it pours."

Sometimes, too, the blessings come in waves. You might, say, graduate from college, get married, move to Colorado, adopt a child, and get pregnant within a year. That was quite a rainstorm in my own life. But like the torrential one above the roof right now, it was a most welcome one. I became a new person then.

It seems like it is raining and pouring inside the Glaser Center lately, too. That's not because I've seen any leaks, (Thank you for that, OPS Team!) but because so many interesting and profound things are happening, as you'll see throughout this month's newsletter.

Our service work is thriving. The Saturday Breakfast just keeps on truckin', and we hosted our first night of the Redwood Gospel Mission's Nomadic Shelter. It was a great success, and the next one is only days away. Given the weather lately, I couldn't be more proud of us for participating in this noble interfaith effort. Friday Family Fun Night hosted their annual Christmas party, and we're collecting food and socks for those in need. Way to go, O generous people!

Our former intern Bryan Plude passed the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and is now cleared to search for a congregation of his own. We'll likely ordain him in the Spring. In related news, the Intern Committee has selected our next intern, who will begin a two-year part-time internship in August. More on her next month.

The Religious Education program continues to thrive and expand, with new families joining us nearly every week. I will soon be proposing that we take our hard-working RE Director Deborah Mason to full-time, which will require the cooperation of Human Resources, the Board, and you, since that will take additional funds and we always need lots of volunteers to help us raise children with open minds, loving hearts and helping hands.

Of key importance right now is the Board's "Next Decade" Visioning Process, which will help us shape our congregation's programs, staffing, financial priorities, and missionary objectives for the next ten years. (Yes, missionary – as in how we will fulfill our Mission of celebrating life,

empowering people, caring for one another and helping to build a better world.)

We will be compiling the results of our current congregational survey in the first days of 2015, and using those results to shape the conversation at our upcoming neighborhood house meetings. You can find the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DGM2X9R>. Please take it today, if you haven't yet.

At our house meetings you will get to know your UU neighbors, while you talk about what matters most to you about the community. The Board and I need to learn from you. Our ancestors taught us that reasoned moral discernment through careful listening and speaking is the way to learn the mind of Providence itself. Where should we channel our social change efforts? Whom shall we serve next? What would make our building an even greater temple to freedom, reason and love? What will we do when we are bursting at the seams? What do you want to give your money toward? Where is the sacred moving among us, and how do we respond to its call? These meetings will give you the chance to discuss such questions and more, so please keep eyes and ears peeled, and plan to participate in late January and again in mid-March, when we'll also collect our annual pledges.

Indeed, you may be called upon to host or facilitate such a meeting, and I hope you will say, as Moses did to the burning bush, "Here I am!"

As you well know, all of the good works of the community take lots of people-power and real money to make happen. Collectively hundreds of people give hundreds of hours a month to make sure that the next lost and lonely person (or empowered mover-and-shaker for that matter) who comes in on a Sunday has a chance to find a spiritual home and cooperative companions. I thank you very deeply.

This is the season of giving (as my e-mailbox abundantly reminds me), so if you find inspiration on Sundays, Saturdays, or any other day; if you appreciate the spiritual growth and exploration you experience here, want to support our ministries to our less-fortunate brothers and sisters, our religious education, our caring team, our civic activism, or just the coffee and cookies on Sunday morning, a financial donation or an increase in your pledge is always a great way to express your pride and investment in this wonderful project of ours.

I thank you for everything you make possible here. As the wheel of the year takes another turn, I wish that every blessing might rain down upon you, and may they really pour, too. If you have been ready to make a change, may that change come. If you have been seeking forgiveness, may you know it to be granted. If you have been seeking direction, may it be found. May you flow in the Tao, and have trust and faith in the Universe. May you have health and prosperity and may everyday bring a chance for joy and for service to the good and true. I am here to serve the growth of your soul, and I look forward sharing 2015 with you. Happy New Year!

Greetings from Our Board President

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

As we get used to writing 2015 (how is that even possible?) I am thinking of our new year here at UUCSR. Some exciting new ideas are in the hopper. I think by the end of this congregational year, June 30, we will have developed language for our model of governance, a quiet revolution in our thinking about congregational finances will have taken place and we will have a road map for our future as an outgrowth of your input via survey and house meetings. We are growing in so many healthy ways. All of this by taking one step at a time.

2015 WINTER CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:

FEBRUARY 1, 11:00 AM

(note change in time)

You will receive your packet soon but to give you a heads up on a few items:

We will be selecting next year's board members. Alan, Joe and I retire from the board this year. It is hard to believe that I have been on the board for four years. It has been transformative for me. I found parts of myself I didn't know I had, learned much about the workings of this remarkable institution, developed a great admiration for the hard work we all put in to keep the wheels turning, and was profoundly touched by the kindness and caring of our community. UUCSR matters to us all in a very deep way and it shows.

We will be nominating delegates to DA and GA as well. District Assembly, this year, is in Chandler, Arizona, April 24-25. General Assembly is in Portland, Oregon, June 24-28. Interested?

We heard you when you told us that you want opportunity for more input. Since I have been chairing Congregational Meetings I have felt the time pressure to conclude our

meetings so that we can make room for worship. The board noodled this and came up with an idea that we are trying for this meeting. **We will worship first, at 9:15**, and then **hold our Congregational Meeting at 11:00**. We will still think in terms of an hour and a half but we (I) won't feel concerned that our discussions may become an intrusion into our worship time. Please let us know how this experiment works for you.

We will look at the draft budget for 2015-2016... this reflects the hard work of our Budget Task Force who take all our requests and turn them into a document that speaks of what we expect to accomplish in the next year.

We will ask you to change the bylaws, to rid us of that pesky idea that the President of the Board of Trustees is the CEO/General Manager of UUCSR. This will make sense when you receive your materials. **We are working to describe our model of shared governance** that weaves together the roles of Board, Congregation, Minister and Staff in language that more accurately reflects our intentions.

There will be appreciations, reports and a general celebration of us as a community bound together by our faith.

Hope to break all attendance records!

Wishes that the New Year is full and rich for us all,

~ **Jeanie Bates, President, UUCSR Board of Trustees**

Our Collective "Still, Small Voice"

... or, "Oy vey, I haven't taken the Survey!"

As a congregation we're taking a deep breath together this year to give our collective still, small voice a chance to guide us.

The Board of Trustees and Rev. Chris are leading us in the next 7 months in a process of surveys and house-meetings, to help determine how we want to shape our min-

istries and spend our money for the next ten years.

So please let's all participate! Each of our voices is so important, and needs to be heard.

The link to the NEXT DECADE SURVEY is:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DGM2X9R>

Are you UU-Curious?

... or perhaps even walking the path to membership?

The next **Getting to Know UU Class** is being held on **Saturday, January 31**, 9am to 12:30pm in the RE (religious education) wing at UUCSR.

Whether you are new to UU or a long time member, this class offers rich history and a chance to meet new friends. Learn Unitarian Universalist history, discover the roots of UUCSR (our congregation) and explore the sacred in theory and practice.

Sign up at the Visitor/Welcome table any time before the class date or contact Michele Murphy at wymurphy@att.net or (707) 479-3661.

*This class is open to all.
It is required for UUCSR membership.*

Treasurer's Report

Happy and Joyous New Year!

I've always loved the feeling of freshness I get on January 1. In my head I know it's just a day like any other day but there's something about a new beginning that makes me feel optimistic and grateful. It seems like anything might be possible.

As we move into the New Year, I hope this year we will increase the amount we give to others in need. As I detailed in a previous article, we give significant amounts to others through our share the basket and other programs. But there is room for improvement and there is always great need. I hope also that we continue to expand our programs to help our homeless neighbors and others in our community.

Generosity is a spiritual act and practicing true generosity is taking a step toward becoming the people we are called to be – the people we strive to be. Practicing generosity takes conscious effort and an examination of how we live our lives. Giving feels good and who knows what we are capable of until we try.

So I'm excited as we embark on 2015 to see what we can accomplish this year. Our remarkable community, after 60 years, has only just begun. With faith and commitment anything is possible.

What is important to you? Where would you like to see us focus our efforts in the coming year?

Make a New Year's Resolution You Can Keep!!

Set up an Electronic Funds Transfer to Pay your Pledge Payment NOW!

Last month I mentioned that we have added an extra easy way for you to set up automatic pledge payments on our website. I encourage everyone who currently writes a check monthly or quarterly to check this out and take a few minutes to set up an automatic electronic funds transfer from your checking account or credit card to pay your pledge.

It couldn't be any easier! Go to our website - www.uusantarosa.org. Click on the bright green "Donate Now" button on the left. It will take you to a page on which you can set up an automatic pledge payment weekly, semi-monthly, monthly or quarterly. It walks you through the

process and in minutes, you'll be set up. You won't know what to do with all the extra time on your hands when you don't have to remember to write a check every month!

On that webpage, you can also make a donation to UUCSR's Operating Fund, the Minister's Discretionary Fund, Saturday Breakfast, and our Endowment Fund or make a donation in someone's honor or memory. Give early and often!

There is a charge to us when you use a credit card and the process allows you to add an amount to cover those costs. We hope you will avail yourselves of that option if you use a credit card.

Improvements to the eScrip online shopping process

If you do online shopping, please check out the Online Mall on the eScrip website – www.escrip.com. If you aren't already signed up for eScrip, please consider doing so, especially if you shop online or shop at Oliver's or Safeway.

Practicing generosity takes conscious effort and an examination of how we live our lives..

The site allows you to install a program called "Forget Me Not". When you go to a merchant shopping site, this program will pop up a reminder to click in order to make sure that UUCSR receives the appropriate donation. Once the program is installed on your computer, you no longer need to go through the eScrip site for eScrip to apply to your purchase.

Please let me know if you have any questions about eScrip or need any help to get started.

~ Linda Balabanian, Treasurer

i STRIVE FOR 5 !

Looking for a New Year's Resolution? Try a 5% Tithe!

A 5% tithe to UUCSR expresses gratitude for our blessings, feels great, and makes a huge impact in the community.

When we're all tithing, there's no telling how much good we might do!

Board of Trustees (BOT) Meeting Minutes Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa Rosa 20 November 2014

Members Present -- Susan Bartholome, Jeanie Bates (President), Marilyn Beckerbauer, Joe Como, Alan Proulx, Linda Stabler, Pamela Tennant, Marge Wright
 Members Not Present -- None
 Quorum -- Six member minimum satisfied
 Non-Members Present -- Linda Balabanian (Treasurer), Reverend Chris Bell (Minister), Sibyl Day (Corporate Secretary), ReeAnn Dixon (HR Committee), Terry Graham (Recording Secretary), John Jaffray (Building Maintenance Team), Peter Wilson
 Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Board of Trustees (BOT) President, Jeanie Bates
 Opening Words & Chalice Lighting -- Reading by Reverend Chris, "Charge to the Parish Minister"
 Agenda Review -- No changes
 Timekeeper Volunteer -- Sibyl Day
 Minutes of 16 October Review -- Minutes accepted as amended.
 Open Mic -- John Jaffray, Building Maintenance Team, initiated a discussion regarding building security. John cited instances where doors were unlocked and unmonitored. He distributed the most recent but unenforced security policy statement of 22 July 2006. The Operations Committee is proposing acquiring commitments from volunteers to monitor the doors, 5:30-7:30 pm, Mon-Thurs. It may be required that we hire someone to enforce the policy if volunteers aren't sufficient. Jeanie suggested that the Board work with Operations and the Glaser Center Committee to devise a policy and a plan for enforcement for the weekend as well as for weekdays. Pam observed that security is an aspect of interest to the Facilities & Infrastructure goal group.
 Treasurer's Report -- Linda Balabanian presented the four-month, year-to-date (YTD), October report.
 Revenue -- Pledge revenue is \$15K over budget. Sunday basket revenue is \$950, 12% over budget. Donations are less than \$100 and cancel the basket revenue over-budget amount. The Service Auction grossed \$24K compared to the \$19K budget. Even after expenses, the Service Auction will exceed the entire yearly fund raising budget.
 Glaser Center (GC) financials are skewed due to the severance package payment in September. GC is still operating with negative net income but improving each month. GC performance overall is expected to match budget by year end.
 Expenses -- Total expenses are \$7K under budget.
 Net Income is \$16K over budget.
 Cash position is adequate for normal operations.
 Making the Annual Pledge Drive Obsolete -- Linda distributed a summary of the book addressing pledge revenue without implementing an annual pledge drive. FinStew has reviewed the book and approved moving forward with this methodology.
 Sharing the Basket Every Sunday -- A primary element of changing the approach to pledge revenue is expanding the mission of the congregation. Sharing the basket every Sunday is a recommendation to help expand the mission. Linda led the discussion re the protocol of expanding the list of potential local beneficiaries.
 Glaser Center Committee (GCC) -- Linda Balabanian discussed the newly proposed GCC Charter & Vision Statement. Also, the GCC 19 November Report addressed other issues for BOT's consideration, viz. a "Concert for Vinnie" and "Occupy" sponsorship by Advocates for Social Justice (A4SJ). All three of these items were tabled due to the lack of time for consideration.
 Goal Groups -- (1) Facilities & Infrastructure -- Pam Tennant and Joe Como discussed establishing a list of projects, prioritizing and projecting costs with input from the upcoming congregational survey. Some discussion continued re the facility social hour improvement options and potential funding sources. (2) Vision -- Alan discussed the effort to develop a paper & electronic questionnaire to solicit ideas from the congregation in envisioning the future of UUCSR. The survey is expected to be initiated in December; will be working with the neighborhood groups in January and February to establish the visionary model which will be presented circa March/April. (3) Communication & Governance -- Susan Bartholome and Marge Wright provided updates on the "Leadership" event to be held in Spring 2015, the CPR-training being led by Bob Anderson, the "talk to a BOT member" Sunday service table, and the archiving congregational history task. Jeanie urged the BOT to support the RE parents and children through hands-on volunteering in the classrooms.
 Minister's Letter of Agreement (LOA) -- The Minister's LOA calls for an annual Covenant of Ministry and Goals document. Reverend Chris presented a draft at the meeting. The "covenant" is to be mutually agreeable to the minister and to the congregation. It delineates the scope of the ministerial position and duties. Some discussion addressed specifics in the document but, since the document deserves closer scrutiny, Jeanie will compile refinements and, together with Reverend Chris, bring the document back to the BOT for final approval.
 Executive Session -- no report

Respectfully submitted -- Terry Graham

Adult Religious Education (ARE)

Ongoing Adult Education Classes

REV. CHRIS'S SCRIPTURE CLASS continues with the Old Testament on **January 20th** and **27th**. These are drop-in classes being offered both at 8 am and 5:30 pm. See the readings schedule posted in the lobby.

WRITE AND CONNECT - Learn to develop a deep writing practice and tap into your inner voice with Write and Connect. Meets **every Monday** at 10 am. Come and check it out! A \$10 donation is requested.

UU SEVEN PRINCIPLES IN STORY AND VERSE. This is a must for new members and old looking to learn what Unitarian Universalism truly means. Rev. Shirley Ranck teaches it in six sessions meeting on **Wednesdays, January 7, 14, 21, 28, February 4 and 11** from 5:30 to 7 pm. A \$15 fee is requested to cover the cost of the book attendees will be given.

AWAKEN THE DREAMER, CHANGING THE DREAM is a workshop presented under the auspices of the Pachamama Alliance whose focus is to help foster an environmentally sustainable, socially just, and spiritually fulfilling presence on our planet. The workshop explores the challenges and possibilities of this moment in time and the role people can play in creating a new future. It features a powerful film combined with interactive exercises. Led by Jerry Loos and Mildred Lynn McDonald from Pachamama Alliance, the class will take place on **January 27, 2015** from 12:30 to 5 pm. Suggested donation is \$20. For more information see www.pachamama.org.

... and stayed tuned for these fascinating upcoming classes:

THE HISTORY OF UU – THE LONG STRANGE TRIP: A JOURNEY THROUGH 2000 YEARS OF UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM – Six Thursday-noon showings **beginning March 5** - or check out the CD's and watch them at home for a refundable deposit.

GOSPEL OF ST. THOMAS – taught by Rev. Gaetano Salomone who offered one of our most popular classes last year. **March 27** at 7 pm. Learn how Thomas' gospel has revolutionized New Testament studies and its many parallels with eastern thought. If you are interested in lost scripture, mystical Christianity and its relationship to the perennial truths of the world's religions, this class is for you.

WOMEN IN HISTORY will be the topic for a new class in **April**, and a presentation on the **EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUE** through therapeutic tapping will be offered. **SPIRITUAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF ADULT SEXUALITY** is planned in **May**, as a four-session class.

~ Find out more at the ARE Table on Sundays, or call Kathy Norman ~

CONFESSIONS OF A FORMER PRESCHOOL TEACHER

***A Testimonial:** I have become a big fan of RE. For years I kept busy with other aspects of UUCSR, not giving much attention to Children's RE. I loved the fact that it existed and delighted in seeing the children each week but didn't think to volunteer.*

Last year I learned a bit more about the many ways to help in RE and decided to try out Children's Chapel. I have continued and I LOVE it. Sharing the children's joys and sorrows, a part of every gathering, is such an honor.

Whether it is a visit from a beloved grandmother, a birthday, a haircut, a new pet, an injury, physical or emotional, I always feel invited into the child's world...very tender.

These small folk are very thoughtful. Each week they reflect on some sort of idea presented in story. The discussions are so wise. Last week we talked about helping, following the story of the Little Red Hen which we modified a bit. This was the child sized version of UUSC, our organization that helps throughout the world. We had a lively discussion about helping each other and the many ways we care for each other.

It is really pretty wonderful to be part of these young folks'

continued on next page

Religious Education for Children and Youth

How is it possible that the new year has dawned?! We say that every year, but this year it seems more incredible than ever. Time is whizzing by so fast. It 's good to stop and take stock of last year, and look ahead to what we have in our dreams, for the year to come.

As I look back on 2014 , I am so grateful. Many new children and parents have joined us this past year, making our circle of friendship and love ever larger. It was a year of adventure for the high school youth group. We set off to Taos to serve Habitat for Humanity, which was a significant milestone in the lives of 11 of our youth. The congregation was incredibly generous in their support of this service trip.

We have welcomed many new middle school youth into our MUUGs program who are creating a rich community of learning and growing. With the many challenges that face youth today, I am so happy that we are able to provide programs that nourish their spirit.

Our elementary school program has grown by leaps and bounds . Soon we will be bursting at the seams in the RE Wing! Each child brings a special gift to our community. The brilliant energy of the kids is seen each week in worship as they listen to the story for all ages. In their classrooms they dazzle their teachers with their curiosity and creativity.

The preschool and nursery have been a joy to behold. We welcomed three new babies in 2014 and another will join us in a couple months.

The new year brings many new aspirations. We will begin a pre-school program with more activities, songs and stories, all with the theme of love and kindness. We will have a youth led service in the spring, and the MUUGs will bring what they have learned about the religions they have studied through the year to a Sunday worship service. I hope to coordinate some fun and interesting field trips for the elementary school kids and find ways for all of our children and youth to serve the congregation and the community.

Wishing everyone, young ,old , and in between, a wonderful, love filled 2015!
 ~ In faith, Deborah

“Confessions.” continued

navigation of our complicated world.

I will continue to make Children's RE a part of my life here at UUCSR. There is room for other converts—I know Deborah would be happy to talk with any of you who may be curious about ways to become part of this important part of our congregational life.

~ Jeanie Bates

Here's What's Happening in RE Classes This Month

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

Sunday Morning RE classes meet during the 11:00 service. Children grades K-8 begin in the sanctuary and are excused to their classes after a story and the recitation of the children's affirmation. First Sunday of the month is Children's Chapel with

all ages together. On the 2nd, 3rd & 4th Sundays children meet in grade groups, as described below.

Childcare for babies, toddlers and preschoolers will be provided by Fiona Mackenzie and Shawna Hoxsie.

	Grades K-2 Wisdom Stories	Grades 3-5 Bibleodeon	Grades 6-8 (MUUGs) Neighboring Faiths
Jan 4	<i>In God's Name</i> by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso	Creating a Happy New Year - Setting Goals & Making Plans	Earth-based/Paganism ~ Wrap Up ~
Jan 11	<i>Wangari's Trees of Peace</i> by Jeanette Winter	Moses part 1: Theme: Leaders	Islam ~ overview
Jan 18	<i>The Giving Tree</i> by Shel Silverstein	Moses part 2: Theme: Leaders	MUUGs Retreat here at UUCSR (No class this morning)
Jan 25	<i>The Rainbabies</i> by Laura Krauss Melmed	David Theme: Courage	Islam ~ Guest Speaker

ADVOCATES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (A4SJ)

A4SJ Meeting monthly on the 2nd Wednesday, at 12 noon

Interested in what we do? Please visit us in the teen room - this month on January 14!

New at the Advocates for Social Justice table - we're starting a collection of DVDs folk can borrow. These range from Climate Change to a history of Reproductive Rights. Stop by and have a look!

SHARE THE COLLECTION

On January 11, 2015 we share our collection with The Living Room, the only day center in Sonoma County specifically serving homeless and at-risk women and their children. These families are welcomed into a warm, safe and comfortable environment during the day when overnight shelters are closed. Caring staff and volunteers offer a lifeline during a time of crisis. We value The Living Room and support it regularly.

On January 25 half of our collection we share with our UUCSR Saturday Breakfast program. Started about 10 years ago to provide nourishing hot meals to our hungry neighbors; the number of men, women and children we serve varies, but averages about 140.

HOT TOPICS

On January 11 at 12:45 in the Board Room we will hear all about the Santa Rosa Community Health Centers, serving the underserved in our community, regardless of their ability to pay. The Health Centers believe, as we do, that equal access to health care is essential to social justice

This organization started in Roseland in 1996, and has grown into a major provider of health care services in Sonoma County, with a number of sites, including a recently developed dental facility. They provide excellent, patient-centered health care and health education. You will want to hear about this important local facility.

VALENTINE'S DAY GIVING OPPORTUNITY

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AT THE FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

The Family Support Center at 465 "A" Street is the only shelter for families in Santa Rosa. Our Friday Family Fun Night project offers weekly fun activities for children and adults. Valentine's Day is a perfect excuse for a party and gift giving this year. We hope you will join in the fun by providing books, for the children. If you wish, come to the party on February 13. We will sign you all up and make sure we have a book for each child, as well as extras. You can choose the age

and sex of the child you would like to provide a book for. Becky, Debbie, Jan, Shirley and I will be staffing a table beginning on January 18 to take your names and explain the project further. Sign up, buy your book, bring it back! No need to wrap - we plan to ask the children select their own books at the party. Thanks in advance for your generosity—please look for our table on January 18.

~ *Jeanie Bates*

Perspectives on Immigration:

A Community Forum

January 15 at 6:30 pm— League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women Healdsburg, Petaluma and Santa Rosa Chapters will host a public forum on the topic of Immigration. The event will be held at the Glaser Center-Unitarian Universalist Church, 547 Mendocino Ave. in Santa Rosa.

Join the conversation with a "dreamer," an immigration counselor, an immigration lawyer, and distinguished educators. Lisa Carreno, of 10000 Degrees, will moderate the program. Learn how dreamers, brought to this country as children but without legal status strive to claim the United States as their country.

Hear how an experienced counselor assists immigrants with the process of gathering documentation to acquire legal status. Listen to the perspective of a non-Latino immigrant.

Be informed about immigration law as it is now and how the laws may change to affect us all, immigrants, refugees and citizens alike.

Our panelists will speak briefly from their unique perspectives and areas of expertise. The program concludes with a question and answer period, followed by refreshments.

~ *Linda H.*

Support the UU Service Committee! (UUSC)

We encourage our members to support the UU Service Committee, also known as UUSC, which advances human rights and social justice in the United States and around the world. UUSC works with 48 partner organizations in 21 countries bolstering economic justice and opportunities; promoting the human right to water, defending political and civil rights and protecting rights in the midst of humanitarian crises.

Many of our members have already donated through the Guest at Your Table program, which started on Justice Sunday in November. This charitable giving will help communities both overseas and at home. Donation envelopes will be available at the A4SJ Table in the Lobby.

Faith and Fitness

Thursday, January 1, 2015 hike to ring in the New Year on the Sonoma Coast. We will hike the Kortum Trail from the Shell Beach parking lot to Wright's Beach.

A relatively easy hike, with a few short uphill/downhill stretches. Slightly over 3 miles. Fantastic coastal views all along the way. We will have lunch at the Wright's Beach picnic area.

Carpool will meet at 9:45 at Safeway on Fourth and Farmers near the Redwood Credit Union.

Non-carpool meet at 11:00 at the Shell Beach parking lot. Bring lunch, water, a warm hat and gloves, and wear good walking shoes and clothing layers. Wet weather will cancel. We would love to know if you are planning to meet at the Safeway for carpool or at the trailhead.

Happy to answer any questions! **Richard F. 503-680-5435, or pattysomlo@yahoo.com.**

Saturday, January 17 trip to Bodega Head for hiking and a chance to see migrating grey whales.

One can simply enjoy the view from the parking area or take a moderate loop hike with possible longer extensions.

Mud friendly foot wear and wind resistant layers advised, rain will cancel. Binoculars water and snacks/lunches optional.

Carpool will meet at 9:30 at Safeway on Fourth and Farmers near the Redwood Credit Union.

Non-carpool meet by 10:45 at the trail head at Bodega Head (at the end of West Shore Road). No parking pass needed. Dogs are not allowed on the trails. There are picnic tables adjacent to the parking area as well as restrooms and (hopefully) volunteers to help us spot whales.

Questions, or plan to meet at the carpool? **Contact gretchen@sonic.net or call 707-889-3007.**

Evening Book Group

The **Evening Book Group** meets on **Thursday, January 8th from 7 to 9 p.m.**, at 547 Mendocino, in the RE wing.

The **January** selection is **Americanah** by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. In **February** we read *The Girls of Atomic City* by

Denise Kiernan.

Visitors and newcomers are welcome. Questions? Please contact Judy Taylor.

Meet the Minister

Meet the Minister: January 18 & February 15

These are brief, informal meetings held once a month following the 11 A.M. Sunday Service. They provide an opportunity for visitors and guests to meet our minister, Rev. Chris Bell, 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.



Errata and Apologies

The "Earth, Our Home" item in December UU Update had its attribution omitted in error. It was from The Earth Charter Initiative, supported by our own Unitarian Universalist Association. For complete text of the Earth Charter, see [http://](http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/)

www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/.

Deepest apologies for omitting FRIDAY FAMILY FUN NIGHT HOLIDAY PARTY item in December's UU Update. It is hoped the event went well despite the omission. ~ **Editor**

Upcoming Men's Retreats

Saturday 21 February 2015 @ UUCSR
9-11 October 2015 @ St. Dorothy's Rest

UUCSR men are invited to gather for exploration our experiences, build deeper connections, and enjoy the company of other men in our congregation. Please mark your calendar for a half-day potluck retreat at UUCSR 10am to 4pm Saturday 2/21/2015. The 2015 UUCSR Men's Retreat weekend will be held again at St. Dorothy's Rest in Camp Meeker, Friday 9 October to Sunday 11 October. Please note that this is a week later than was announced at this year's retreat. All UUCSR members, friends, and friends of UUCSR men are welcome. Details to follow in future announcements. For more information see the Men's Retreat webpage or contact Ethan Foote ([footefire\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:footefire[at]gmail.com) or 707-480-8610).

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2014

E-mail Submissions

Newsletter@uusantarosa.org

Newsletter Assembly

10 a.m.— January 28, 2015

**Music Notes**

Beginning this month, there is both bad news and good news about our Music Program.

The bad news is that our wonderful pianist Richard Riccardi will no longer be playing for us. He has enjoyed playing for us very much, but he is now busier playing at Sonoma State as well as playing for shows with his wife. He feels he needs to have more time for himself and with his family. He has given suggestions for pianists to contact, which we hope will help in our search for a new pianist. We are fortunate to have members who can play for services, as well as a guest pianist. You will hear them this month.

The good news is that our marvelous Choir Director, Sadie Sonntag, no longer is temporary—we have asked her to stay, and she has agreed!

This month, the first Sunday in January will feature a lovely piece by Diana Ross, "If We Hold On Together," which will be sung by Cathy Read. She will be accompanied by a guest pianist, Paul Gilger, who will also be playing other music for those service.

On January 11, the choir will be singing for both services. You will hear a very special piece composed by Robert Howseman, who will accompany the choir on guitar. Jenny Harriman and Pat Russell will play piano duets.

Roger Corman will play piano for both services on January 18. Then, on January 25, Roger's son, Emmett Corman, along with Emmett's wife, Mary Garasa, aka "The Vivid," will perform original electronic music for the Prelude and Postlude. Jenny and Pat will play piano, and the choir will also sing for both services.

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year!

~ Jenny Harriman, Music Committee Chair

UUCSR CIRCLE DINNERS!

UUCSR CIRCLE DINNERS are re-forming in January!

WHAT are Circle Dinners? Circle Dinners are informal UU social gatherings over a pot-luck meal. They are opportunities to enjoy getting to know folks you might never have met otherwise.

We have wonderful times visiting other members' homes (large and small) and enjoy great food and conversation.

HOW do Circle Dinners work? Members and Friends (interested in membership) of UUCSR let the Circle Dinner organizers know they want to be on the list. We take all the names and shuffle them into groups of 7 or 8 (singles and couples) which become a "Circle Dinner Groups" for the 4 months of the Circle Dinner period.

WHEN do Circle Dinners Happen? In the February Newsletter we post the Spring Circle Dinner Lists. The groups then contact each other, decide on a date, time and place to gather and who will bring what. The rest takes care of itself! Before the fun is over, the group decides the who, what, where and when for the next month's gathering. You don't need dinner service for 8, a family sized dining room, linen napkins, or even a room with a view!

All you need is an enjoyment of meeting new friends, connecting with old friends, and the love of a good meal and conversation. Some groups meet for lunch and some even decide to meet at a restaurant.

(continued on next page)

UUCSR CIRCLE DINNERS (*continued*)

WHERE do we find out more? We are taking sign-ups in THE SOCIAL HALL. Look for the sign up table. We will need your name and phone number to post on the list so that your Circle can connect!

SIGN UP on Sundays - January 4 and 11 in the Social Hall or contact: Lynn Riepenhoff, lynnsplc@gmail.com, or Kitty Wells at bewellslmft@gmail.com.

Those already in the Circle Dinner program will continue unless they let us know otherwise.

... and from Starr King School for The Ministry

Our Deep and Holy Unrest

Dear Ones—

As I write, it is a Sunday night before another week of travel, and I wanted to be in touch in these days of deep and holy unrest. Events in Ferguson Missouri and New York City have been much on my mind and heart, as I know they have been for so many of you. I have been so consumed with rage and grief and fear that words that until now, words have failed me.

It's not easy to be the leader of this school and to write these words. I wish my position as a seminary president could protect me, my husband, and my two young adult sons. I wish my educational attainments or the books I've written might render me immune from fear. I wish my husband's tenderness, my older son's musical brilliance or my younger son's humor could protect them as they go about the business of living while black, two of them in cities far from my watchful eyes. I wish my brother in Boston and my brother in Chicago and my nephews in downstate Illinois and Denver could lead their lives with a certain casual indifference to their surroundings. I wish that the work and the struggle and the deaths and lives of generations of people before me had come to mean something more than they mean at this moment.

But they don't.

I am still a black woman in America, and all the men I love and mention here are black men in America, and all of us are expendable at any time, and that is the truth of our lives. And though I always believed I could write my way through anything, this sense of horror I have been carrying for the last several days has so overwhelmed me that only in the last 24 hours have I been able to catch my breath.

What has helped to breathe life back into me have been the pictures and the videos of people in the streets—my sisters and brothers who are black, and those who are not black, but who

know this is also their fight. What is breathing hope into my heart are the scholars and the researchers who are investigating everything from the neurobiology of racism to the interventions that surface white privilege so that people who care enough can begin to change themselves. What is making me proud is knowing how many of you reading this have been marching and writing and advocating and preaching and demanding a different world than the one we are living in right now.

Sometimes, when some of us are too disheartened or discouraged for speech, we need to see the faithfulness of others to regain our voice. In these heartbreaking days that may yet become a turning point, I thank God for the Starr King community into which I have been called. Thank you for your outrage and your fierce love of justice; thank you for your insight into the unrest that you have seen and for your commitment to peace in spite of justified anger. Thank you for your Facebook postings and your organizing and your vigil-keeping. Thank you for holding a space for me large enough to believe that, though the struggle continues, it is forever worthwhile. I'll be back to join you soon.

Faithfully, Rosemary

*Rosemary Bray McNatt, President
Starr King School for the Ministry
from email sent to UU Update Editor December 8, 2014*

Third Gender Human Rights in India ...

...The *Hijra* of India are probably the most well known and populous third sex type in the modern world ... The Humsafar Trust estimates there are between 5 and 6 million hijras in India... they may be born *intersex* or apparently *male*, dress in feminine clothes and generally see themselves as neither men nor women. ...*Indian* photographer *Dayanita Singh* writes about her friendship with a Hijra, Mona Ahmed, and their two different societies' beliefs about gender: "When I once asked her if she would like to go to *Singapore* for a *sex change operation*, she told me, 'You really do not understand. I am the third sex, not a man trying to be a woman. It is your society's problem that you only recognise two sexes.'^[52] Hijra *social movements* have campaigned for recognition as a third sex,^[53] and in 2005, Indian passport application forms were updated with three gender options: M, F, and E (for male,

female, and eunuch, respectively).^[54]

In November 2009, India agreed to list eunuchs and transgender people as "others", distinct from males and females, in voting rolls and voter identity cards.^[55]

On April 15, 2014, the *Supreme Court of India* recognized a third gender that is neither male nor female, and as a class entitled to reservation in education and jobs, stating "Recognition of trans-genders as a third gender is not a social or medical issue but a human rights issue." This verdict made India one of the few countries to give this landmark judgment.^{[56][57]}

From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_gender



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Fax: 707-568-5387

http://www.uusantarosa.org

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Send submissions to Announcements@uusantarosa.org
Editor: Janis Brewster
Deadline: Wednesday, Noon, prior to Sunday Service

UU Update Newsletter:

Send submissions to Newsletter@uusantarosa.org
Editor: Susan Williamson

Newsletter deadline follows the 3rd Sunday. All electronic deadlines are noon Monday. Please place hard copy submissions in Newsletter mail slot in the office by noon Sunday.

Newsletter by E-mail is available! To sign up, send your name & e-mail address to Administrator@uusantarosa.org

Minister Reverend Chris Bell, minister@uusantarosa.org

Staff

Director Religious Education Deborah Mason, *DLRE@uusantarosa.org, Ext. 131*
Administrator Janis Brewster, *Administrator@uusantarosa.org, Ext. 106*
Choir Director Sadie Sonntag, *Choir@uusantarosa.org*
Pianist Richard Riccardi
Glaser Center Business, glasermanager@uusantarosa.org

Sunday Religious Education Staff

Deborah Mason, Director
Shawna Hoxsie
Fiona Mackenzie