December 1st
ELEPHANTS

Today we will celebrate and learn from the awe-inspiring elephant. (After all, there are almost always a few in the room.) Among other things, we’ll consider whether humans are the only religious creature, and what it might mean if we aren’t.

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Veronica Jordan, Jen Freese
Music by: Alan Bell & friends, Roger Corman
Share the Basket: YWCA Safe House

December 8th
THE HOLY UNIVERSE

David Christopher is an award-winning author and teacher of the “new story,” that integrates the modern science of our times with a spiritual sensibility toward the creation of the Universe. A yearning for the lyricism of the liturgy and the scriptures, led him to write The Holy Universe: A New Story of Creation for the Heart, Soul and Spirit. Come learn and be inspired!

Service Leaders: David Christopher (guest preacher), Richard Senghas, Jen Freese
Music by: Sadie Sonntag & the Choir, Roger Corman
Share the Basket: Borders and Beyond

December 15th
THE TANGLED WEB WE WEAVE

The complexity and evolution of human society and culture will utterly blow your mind, if you really stop to think about it. Today, we will.

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Rev. Dara Olandt, Eric Fischer, Linda Lampson
Music by: Robin Rogers & friends, Roger Corman
Share the Basket: Undocufund

December 22nd
WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

With Hanukkah beginning tonight, and Christmas a couple of days away, we’ll stop to really ask what miracles are, and what it means to say that they occur.

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris, Rev. Dara, Rev. Bonnie Dlott, Cathy Read, Jen Freese
Music by: Sadie Sonntag & the Choir, Roger Corman
Share the Basket: Breakfast for Our Neighbors

December 29th
MILESTONES

We'll consider the big events of 2019, and take time for private reflection on our own personal milestones. We also look ahead to the year 2020. What milestones do we hope we are celebrating one year from now? How will our faith lead us there?

Service Leaders: Rev. Chris Bell, Rose St. John, Sharon McCarty
Music by: Susan Panttaja & friends, Roger Corman
Share the Basket: KBBF-Bilingual Broadcasting Foundation

January 5th
ON INTEGRITY

Come meet Rev. Bonnie Dlott, who will serve as our sabbatical minister during Rev. Chris’s absence in the Spring, as she offers lessons on living with integrity.

Service Leaders: Rev. Bonnie Dlott, Linda Lampson
Music by: Roger Corman
Share the Basket: TBA
I'm Amazed!

One of my favorite songs on one of my favorite records is “I’m Amazed,” by My Morning Jacket, from their masterpiece, Evil Urges. It’s got everything that is right about rock music: a head-banging beat, impassioned singing, a soul-wrenching guitar solo and thoughtful lyrics, which have been popping into my head as I approach our shared theme of AWE. This song is, for me, a useful reminder that awe is not always something that comes when I am admiring my granddaughter’s perfect beauty, or savoring the view of the Sonoma coast heading west down Coleman Valley Rd.

I’m amazed at a quiet ocean, I’m amazed at your warm devotion; I’m amazed at what the people are sayin’, I’m amazed by a divided nation
Like the rhythm of the earth, I get disrupted
I’m amazed at all that has been, I’m amazed at all that will be
I’m amazed at the TV stations, I’m amazed what they want me to believe
After all is said and done, where is the justice?
I’m amazed at the lack of evolution, I’m amazed at the lack of faith
I’m amazed at the love we’re rejecting, I’m amazed at what we accept in its place
Like the rhythm of the earth and the rhythm of the ages, I get disrupted.

We usually think of awe as a positive experience, bringing the revelation of a deeper beauty, harmony or order, though that experience can be overwhelming. The direct realization of just how old the mountains are, or how far away are the stars, is frequently accompanied by awareness of just how tiny, fleeting and seemingly cosmically insignificant one’s self is. What a wonderful irony that the one of the most meaningful moments for a human self is the dissolution of the self! Who is in charge here, anyway?

“I’m Amazed” reminds me, however, that some of my experiences of awe aren’t prompted by beauty, harmony or unity, but also ugliness, chaos, and destruction. The mystery within which we live is plainly much greater than our human sense of what should or shouldn’t be, of my childlike yearning to sort the world into what is “good” and what is “evil.”

Other than awe, I’m not sure how to describe the feeling of watching the red glow of fire in the California sky, or of knowing how much disruptive power is lurking in a dry field with the winds roaring over it.

Other than awe, I’m not sure how else to describe the feeling of watching partisan politicians eagerly set down truth, reason, compassion, compromise and other democratic principles – every day, out loud, and in public – for the sake of power and money. Truly amazing! A famous Jewish reformer, who was born this month around 2019 years ago, once said the love of money was the root of all kinds of evil. I think the last three years, oh wait, I mean 400 years, of American history surely prove that this statement is true. Slavery, anyone?

Like My Morning Jacket, I am amazed at both the majesty and horror of life and of people, yet I recognize that it takes both aspects to reveal the limitless wide-open ungraspable nature of being, the source of all things. As the reading we shared in worship a couple of weeks ago affirmed: “There is a time for every season under Heaven.” The world, other people, myself – none are as clean and clear as I might wish. They all contain nearly limitless capacity to heal and to harm. Even love and music can be destructive. Donald Trump might prompt an age of wonderful reform. Who’s in charge here?

Not me. And that can be scary.

In the Hebrew Bible the writers frequently speak of having the “fear of God.” Most of us rebel against this notion. The Bible affirms that God’s mercy and justice always triumph in the end, although it’s obviously wise to stay out of God’s way when He/She/It/They is pissed off. If mercy and justice will triumph (though rarely on our terms or timetables), why would we “fear” the Divine?

The question arises because the Hebrew words yara and pahmad, which are translated as “fear,” actually convey much more subtle understanding. According to scholar Jeff Brenner, the literal concrete meaning of yara is a “flowing of the gut,” which can be applied to either “fear” or “reverence.” And pahmad means “to shake.” Dr. Michael Coogan, my Hebrew Bible professor, suggested that the best translation of the so-called “fear of God” is “to have the appropriate feeling of awe and humility before...”

As I might before a quiet ocean. Or your warm devotion. As I do when I consider everything the wondrous swirl of free energy that is existence has been and may yet be. The rhythm beats and gives shape to the world, and the rhythm is disrupted. Things get solid. Things fall apart. New years come. Old years go. I come. I go. Amazing!

For me, the only way forward through this flowing, shaking mystery is a decision, made every day, made every moment, is to love the world. To love people in all their foolishness. To love fire, when I am able. Even to love the President. (It’s strangely easy. He’s exactly like my dad. Really.) Even, standing before the mirror, to love myself, which as many of you know is often the hardest spiritual task of all.

For me, that it is possible to love the imperfect, the broken, the harmful is perhaps the most awesome quality of being. That it is possible in any given moment, with every possibility before us, for love to guide us to choose the good, the true and the beautiful, to forgive, to sacrifice, to awaken to connection or to create something, is amazing.

Let’s not reject that love, and let’s not accept anything less in its place.

Have an awesome holiday season, my dearest friends!

Reverend Chris Bell
The Gifts of Darkness and Light

From the lights of the Kwanzaa kinara, to gazing at the dancing lights on the Hanukkah menorah, from pillar candles set in green advent wreaths, to earth-kissed Yule logs, to watching votive candles flicker on personal altars; from looking at colorful electric lights winding up porches and apartment-buildings, to the simple and profound lighting of our Unitarian Universalist flaming chalice on Sunday mornings -- winter is rich with opportunities to behold the magic of darkness and light, and their interconnections.

December is a time of gathering in, drawing close. For me there is always something awe-inducing about watching lights flicker in the darkness. Wintertime is richly layered with stories, songs, foods, smells, simple joys and significant meanings. If we allow ourselves time to dive into these, I think it just may help us to reclaim December as a season of significant time, spiritual inquiry, contemplation and joy -- wresting it away from exclusive consumer trappings and distractions.

This month in worship we are lifting up the theme of awe. For me, reading the contemplative poetry of Jan Richardson is one way I prepare to enter this season, and begin to welcome the intangible gifts of this season to unfold in my own life.

Richardson’s love of Advent is inspiring, even for one who does not intrinsically gravitate to observing Advent (like myself!) Over the years, her visual art and poetry has deeply moved my heart. It’s made me sit up and pay attention! Her words always bring a sense of “awe” close at hand. She has helped me dive more deeply into appreciating winter as a time of spiritual inquiry. Richardson dips into the old Christmas stories, emerging inside of them, making them real. She weaves together the gifts of darkness, light, and celebrates the sense of awe that can linger with us in the journey of life, even in hard times. Here is her “Blessing of Magi”, reflecting upon the intrepid travelers who, as the tales go, came to greet the baby who would grow up to be a teacher of peace and a prophetic voice for justice. I hope you enjoy!

And, may you find time to linger by candle light, beholding the gifts of darkness and light, and may you seek and find experiences that call forth your own sense of awe this season!

With blessings,

Rev. Dara Olandt
Assistant Minister

Blessing of the Magi
by Jan Richardson

There is no reversing this road.
The path that bore you here
goes in one direction only,
every step drawing you
down a way
by which you will not return.
You thought arrival
was everything,
that your entire
journey
ended with kneeling
in the place

But we tell you,
you will wonder
at how the light you thought
you had left behind
goes with you,
spilling from
your empty hands,
shimmering beneath
your homeward feet,
illuminating the road
with every step
you take.
In the Board’s Town Hall presentation, I mentioned the brochure for the 2002 Capital Campaign to remodel the movie theater building we’d just bought, called “Coming Home”.

You know, what we did back then was SO risky. We had way less members than we do now, we’d been at our Todd and Stony Point location for so long...and we were looking at buying this HUGE building, for MILLIONS of dollars, DOWNTOWN?! Part of me (NOW!) goes “You’ve got to be kidding!” 2020 hindsight is great, and from today’s perspective, of course it’s what we should have done. But standing in 2002, it was REALLY risky!

What I was most struck by in reading that brochure was the energy of the members. Their excitement, their fearlessness, their seeing something possible and stepping up to meet the challenge – no matter what. They stepped INTO the risk and “wrassled” it to the ground. There’s a dynamism in this document that just shouts from the pages. My immediate reaction was “I want to be part of THAT congregation!”

There are two quotes that particularly struck me in this document. I think they apply just as much today as they did back then:

From Rev. Bruce Kennedy: “...you know in your heart, this is your legacy, our legacy. Not just a house of worship, but a spiritual home holding our highest aspirations, our deepest hopes, and our greatest loves. This is our home, offering hospitality to the stranger and reaching out in compassion and justice to our neighbors and to the world.”

And, “...We...give to the larger communities of which we are a part – those searching for access to our Unitarian Universalist message and others for whom our home will provide new inspiration for life. In short, we give to create an asset that will enhance our ability for: “Celebrating life, empowering people, caring [for] one another, helping to build a better world.”

Today, we are living in the results of that vision, realized. And, to be frank, I think we’ve gotten complacent. We have a beautiful building. We live in one of the best places on earth (I have a friend I have a running competition about who lives in “God’s Country” – and I’m clear I win!). We have amazing, wonderful people in our community. We have a dynamic, visionary minister. We have programs that nurture and support both ourselves and our community. We have fabulous music. Our spiritual connection and growth is encouraged every Sunday. Of course we’d get complacent – what’s not to love?!

Since the Board and Rev. Chris started floating this idea of radical growth, I’ve heard from a lot of people – some enthusiastically on board and some with grave concerns, questions and reservations. But what shines through every person is how much UUCSR means to you. What it provides for you. You are PASSIONATE about it! And because our congregation and community and all it means are so deeply important to you, it’s risky to think about changing it. Will we lose what we so value? Will we morph into something we don’t recognize or like? AAUUGGHH!! Let’s just not go there!

If we’re being complacent, yes, that’s the proper response. But if we’re people of energy and vision and enthusiasm and gumption, then NO, it’s not the proper response! Because we each and all have something to say about the way the future goes. This whole “radical growth thing” is much more in our hands and our “say-so” than we think.

I invite you to examine for yourself the risk of growing – and the risk of not growing. I invite you to invite the risk in – because of who you’ll become. I want THAT – for you personally, and for us all.

C’mon in – the water’s fine!

- Natalie Brundred, President, Board of Trustees
What Your Board Is Up To  In reviewing what was said at the Town Hall, the Board concluded that there isn’t a consensus on a way forward yet. We drafted a high-level timeline for a variety of meetings between now and next June for people to question, reflect and communicate. Possibilities include neighborhood meetings, small “coffee klatch”-type meetings after services, additional Forums, and presentations at the January Congregational Meeting. We will solidify plans at December’s Board meeting, and will be sure to publicize the process.

Based on people’s comments at the Town Hall about taking care of new members, and Michael Randolph’s report that we tend to not lose our new members but we aren’t doing as well with visitors, the Board is considering various ideas for connecting with very new people and giving them a way to ask questions and explore how to become connected and supported here. We are giving it more thought, as we want to make sure whatever we do will be effective.

December’s Board meeting will be on Thursday, December 17th, at 6:30 in the Board Room. As always, you are welcome to attend!

-Natalie Brundred, President, Board of Trustees

A Message From The Committee on Shared Ministry

We are COSM, the Committee on Shared Ministry. The current committee consists of Bob Anderson (chair), Alan Bell, Susan Bartholome, Frances Corman, Kitty Wells and Rev. Chris. COSM is charged with ensuring the health of the congregation by encouraging communication within the congregation, providing conflict resolution when needed as well as supporting the minister.

This committee is also tasked with the yearly evaluation of the minister that is submitted to the Board of Trustees. To conduct the evaluation process COSM members interview staff, Board members, some committee chiefs, a randomly selected sample of the congregation AND whomever wants to submit input to any of us. Any such additional input would have to be received by one of the COSM members by Nov 7, 2019 in order to be considered in this year’s evaluation process. Of course, all communications with COSM are confidential.

Remember, COSM is here for both the minister and YOU, the congregation.

The Lay Chaplains

As part of your pastoral care team, we have a beautiful white stole to help identify ourselves to the Congregation on Sundays. Look for the person wearing the dove and heart: Paula Hammett, Lucia Milburn, Barbara Kezur, Susan Bartholome, Shirley White, Bruce Hope, Al Liner or Gretchen Paradis.

We’re here to listen to the important things going on in your life—your joys, your sorrows, the things for which we light the candles. Talk to us before or after the service, or you can leave a message at the UUCSR office, and they will forward it to us.
There are so many ways to experience awe in our daily lives, but somehow, the intensity of the holiday season often makes me feel like I can’t slow down enough to connect with that feeling as much as I’d like.

Last year, I was sitting next to a sixth grader during our Christmas Eve worship service when we all lit our candles and turned the lights out in the Sanctuary. We were near the front of the room, and she and I turned around to look behind us at over a hundred glowing candles. We both sighed in wonder and whispered, “Whoa.” And there it was – awe!

The truth is that awe doesn’t need to be elaborate or complicated, but can be as simple as lighting a single candle at home, telling your child the story of their birth, blowing bubbles together or playing in the rain (hopefully we will have more of that by the time you read this!).

Our congregational theme in December is awe, and I’m hoping to cultivate it in both RE and at home with my own family this month. Soulful Home, a resource packet for families to take faith home with all of us during the week, encourages the following mantra, adapted from a quote from 20th century Indian guru and philosopher Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, to help us remember that sense of awe:

“The same force that guides the stars, guides me.”

Here’s a look at what children and youth will be doing during Religious Education this month:

**Chalice Children Room (ages 3-5)**
Preschool age children will explore awe this month through the lens of goosebumps. They will think about goosebumps we get when we see love in action (good deeds), when we slow down, when we think about stars and when we celebrate new life with babies.

**Multi-Age RE (ages 6 and up)**
Elementary age children will explore the amazement of change for social justice with the story of Rosa Parks. They will also make peace doves, chalice snowflakes and galaxy slime to think about awe and wonder in playful ways. All of the children will decorate chalice cookies for Chalica on December 8.

**Middle and High School Youth Groups**
Youth will enjoy a lot of baking at the beginning of the month! They will work together to create cinnamon tree ornaments that will be sold at the UUCSR Craft Fair on December 8, as well as bake cookies on December 6 for the children to decorate. Youth will think about how to welcome more awe into their lives with discussion and games, and as always, there will be pizza.

---

**Important Dates in RE**

**December 2, 9:15 am:** Visit the RE Wing this morning to receive your Chalica Holiday felt kit to help you celebrate Chalica, a UU holiday, with your family from Dec 2-8.

**December 6, 6:30 pm:** MUUGs and HUUGs youth will bake chalice cookies together this evening.

**December 7, 5:30 pm:** UU Parents Night Out

**December 8, 12:30 pm:** UUCSR Craft Fair – youth will sell their cinnamon tree ornaments and children will sell chalice cookies at the craft fair.

**December 24, 4:30 pm:** Christmas Eve Multigenerational Worship Service, Pageant and Potluck
Mid-Winter is upon us. Each year Winter Solstice comes around December 19th, 20th, or 21st. In this modern age, with our ability to flip a switch and see in the dark, we sometimes forget that the dark is also important. With dark comes a slowing down, it is the way of nature to drop-down, go-in, pause. Even if your day-to-day life may be revving up with more events, Winter Solstice invites us to pause and remember the natural flow of coming inside to find warmth and watch the leaves fall and the frost come. Although the trees are not as flashy and spectacular as they were just a few short weeks ago, what do these beautiful bare branches and evergreens teach us about living within the cycles and acknowledging our place in the larger circle of life, and rhythm of nature? Come, add one more event to your calendar; one that invites you to join us and sit in the dark and remember the wisdom that can be found there. Come and celebrate the light that is slowly returning after this time of the darkest night.

This year UUCSR will join with the CUUP’s members to celebrate this dark time of the year on Friday December 20th. We hope you will join us for drumming, potluck, ceremony and welcoming back the light. Dinner starts at 5:30 p.m.
Occidental Community Choir
Andrew DelMonte, Guest Music Director

Within Us All

Friday, Dec 6 - 8 pm
COMMUNITY FIRST NIGHT • TICKETS $10
Occidental Center for the Arts
3850 Doris Murphy Court, Occidental
Saturday, Dec 7 - 8 pm - OCA
Sunday, Dec 8 - 3 pm - OCA

Saturday, Dec 14 - 8 pm - OCA
Sunday, Dec 15 - 3 pm - Glaser Center
547 Mendocino Ave, Santa Rosa

TICKETS AT
OccidentalChoir.org/tickets

$15 Adults
Kids 12 & under free
Advance tickets recommended

Photo by Rishi Bandopadhay
We are pleased to offer a second Diversity Dialogue on December 1.

Our first Diversity Dialogue engaged all involved, audience and panelists, in thoughtful, reflective processing. We expect that this second Diversity Dialogue, with a different panel, will offer another important experience for us all. These dialogues give us an opportunity to explore material which is often not shared, discussed. Panelists will participate in a structured, facilitated exploration of the impacts they have felt as a consequence of how they have been seen by others, how they have been categorized. Following this listening experience we will reflect, in small groups, on what we have heard from this panel.

We offer this experience as part of our congregation’s conversation about inclusion. We will have snacks for you. We look forward to sharing this with you as we work in our community to live out our Mission and Vision.

**DIVERSITY PROJECT MISSION AND VISION**

The Mission of the Diversity Project is to offer programs, activities and communications to the UU Congregation, Santa Rosa that:

- Celebrate UUCSR’s diversity, and educate its members and friends about the diverse experiences of all people;
- Compassionately face and actively transform the unjust privilege and unjust marginalization that our society imposes on us;
- Encourage changes of culture and behavior as necessary to realize the vision of a truly welcoming, diverse, and ever-growing UUCSR.

The Vision of the Diversity Project is of a truly welcoming, diverse, and ever-growing congregation:

- Whose multi-cultural membership mirrors the demographics of our city and county;
- Where all people feel able and willing to express themselves authentically;
- Which is actively engaged in the pursuit of a just and equal society within and beyond its walls;
- Which faces the emotional and spiritual costs of oppression and inequality with open minds, loving hearts and helping hands.

We invite anyone interested to join us in our work. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month, 10—noon, in the Green Room. Feel free to check in with any of us if you have suggestions, questions, comments of any sort.

**Bev, Carol, Cheri, Rev. Chris, Rev. Dara, Leslie, Paul, Tamara, Jeanie**
**Drumming Circle**  
CUUPs 3rd Friday Drum Circle  
Founders Room 6:30-8:30 PM.  
Come join us even if you do NOT own a drum. We have extras for you to use. We welcome beginning and more experienced drummers alike. Put it on your calendar: Dec 20th which is also the Winter Solstice celebration.

**Old Age is not for Sissies**  
This group for women who have already reached their 80th birthday continues in the Green Room on the 2nd and 4th Monday morning of each month. We usually have an attendance of about 16, which should be too many, but we are all good listeners! Phyllis Clement.

**WOMEN TOGETHER’S HOLIDAY PARTY**  
**Saturday, December 14 12 Noon—2:30 pm**  
at Helga Lemke’s  
All female-identified members and friends (and guests) are invited to our wonderful Holiday Party on Saturday, December 14th from 12 noon to 2:30 at Helga Lemke’s lovely home, 1983 Grosse Avenue, Santa Rosa. This warm and relaxed annual event is a delightful break from the holiday frantically! Please bring a lunch dish to share. We hope to see you there! Questions? Info? Contact Linda Balabanian.

**SUNDAY SAUNTER DECEMBER 21**  
Come celebrate the turn of the year in nature with the UU Saunterers on Saturday, December 21, when we’ll welcome the solstice with a favorite hike at Sonoma Valley Regional Park. Carpool from Safeway Parking lot at 9:30, or meet at the park on Highway 12 at 10:00. Dogs welcome, main trail is paved, side trails more challenging. Bring lunches and water. Get more information and sign up with Gretchen P.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Annual Women’s Retreat**  
Saint Dorothy’s Rest from Friday May 1 to Sunday May 3, 2020. More details to come.

**GETTING TO KNOW UU CLASS**  
Are you considering membership at UUCSR, or maybe you’re just curious about UU history? If so, you are welcome to attend the next Getting to Know UU class on Saturday, January 11th, from 9:30am to 12:30pm in the Founders Room (formerly 545). Rev. Chris Bell will present an overview of Unitarian Universalist history and the roots of our congregation. This class is open to everyone and is required for UUCSR membership. Sign up at the Visitor/Welcome table before the class date. Our next New Member Ceremony will be held on February 2nd during the 11am service; if you are interested in joining, you can complete your application at the class or pick one up at the Welcome Table.

**Holiday Crafts Fair**  
Monday, December 8th from 12:30-3:30  
The administration team is putting on a Holiday Crafts Fair in the Founders Room on December 8th from 12:30-3:30. If you are crafty and would like a table to sell from please see Bertha Jean on Tuesday or Wednesday morning in the main office. You may also call her or I at 568-5381. 25% of your sales go to UUCSR. If you would like to see what we have and purchase a hand made item, please stop by!

**Saturday Work Day**  
Saturday, December 12, 9 am to Noon, volunteers will come together to help keep our grounds, garden, and building looking good and working well. Please come help for part or all of the time. All skill levels are needed and appreciated.

**Evening Book Group**  
Thursday, December 12th from 7 to 9 P.M. at 547 Mendocino in the R.E. wing  
The December selection is, Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine by Gail Honeyman. Visitors and newcomers are welcome. In January we are reading The Overstory by Richard Powers.  
**Note:** (This was rescheduled from October since we were unable to meet then.)
From Your Stewardship Team

I have to admit that I had mixed emotions when Chris first outlined his 5-year plan for congregational growth. In my mind, ‘bigger’ meant a less-intimate and more institutional-feeling “us”. But it can also mean greater capacity to fulfill our mission, which I interpret as providing for the greater good of us all; “all” being more than who we are now. I’ve concluded that growth can indeed extend our reach and deepen our purpose. Rather than diminishing our sense of community, it can enrich it.

Growing our ministry and outreach requires more and better resources and money to sustain them: new staff positions (full-time Assistant Minister, Communications and Music Directors), better use of our building (build-out of the second floor), outreach (campus ministry, program sponsorship on KRCB), etc. While some funding for these goals will come from pledges by new members, each of us committed to this mission should ask ourselves how we can give and do more to help make this future happen.

A thoughtful consideration of whether we can increase our pledges can be very fulfilling for ourselves and life changing for our community. As American writer and theologian Frederick Buechner wrote, “The kind of work God usually calls you to is the kind of work that you most need to do and the world most needs to have done. The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”

With best wishes for the holidays,

Robert Howseman
UPCOMING ADULT R.E.:” RELIGIOUS EDUCATION” SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

Click [https://tinyurl.com/UUCSR-ARE](https://tinyurl.com/UUCSR-ARE) For More Info

Adult RE is guided by UU Principles and rooted in Unitarian Universalism sources, and our Congregation’s mission and vision. The Adult RE Team strengthens community and facilitates spiritual growth by offering classes, activities, and programs. **Members of the A.R.E. Committee: Nadine Carroll, Carol Daeley, Helga Lemke, Phil Harriman, Sarita Hazen, John Speck, Clare Whitfield and Rev. Chris Bell.**

**West County Theology Class: Rev. Chris** begins Part II of his class based on the UU curriculum “Faith Like a River: Themes from UU History. **Wednesdays 6:30 - 8:30pm, 12/4, 12/11 12/18, 1/8, 1/15, 1/22, 1/29.** No sign up required; come for one class or for all.

**Cakes for the Queen of Heaven:** This series examines pre Judeo - Christian cultures that may have worshiped the female as divine. The concepts of equality and reverence for the female in a religious setting are eye-opening to many participants. **Part I is finished. Stay tuned for Part II, January 11th - February 15, Saturdays 2-4 pm. Fee $25 (though no one will be turned away for lack of funds).**

**Seniors in Transition:** It’s human nature to put off or even ignore life’s difficult decisions and the challenges of aging may intimidate us. To help prepare for the important transitions that aging demands of us, Adult RE is again sponsoring an eight-week program presented by our own Linda Proulx. This class offers a supportive environment where you can explore options for independent living and alternatives when living on your own is no longer safe or desirable. Topics covered will be participants’ current status, hopes and dreams with regard to independent living, stereotypes of aging, in-home care, aging in place, alternative living situations and downsizing. Linda will discuss local senior communities, arrange site visits, and discuss how to share your plan with friends and family. The field trips may be held on days other than the class date as they are arranged at the convenience of the places you will visit. **$25 (though no one will be turned away for lack of funds). 8 weeks, April 16 - June 4th, 2:00-4:00. Class size limited; sign up at RE table.**

**Linda Proulx** is an experienced facilitator who was trained by the Seniors in Transition program and has taught this class before.
Administrator’s Minute

The cold nights have arrived and if you have winter clothing, socks and winter shoes to donate please bring them to our 2 clothing closets located at the back of the Founders Room. If you bring items PLEASE fold them and place them on the shelves as there is no one to take them from the bags and put them on the shelf. Providing dignity to our neighbors without homes is priority so a clean orderly clothing closet is part of providing dignity. UUCSR is currently having a sock drive. There is a basket in the front lobby to donate new/clean socks for our neighbors who have no shelter.

Members and Pledging Friends, the printed version of the directory is here for you. There are paper copies available in the office. Come pick up your copy today.

Do you love greeting people, answering the phone, and doing “odd and ends” projects? If so, you might be perfect for the Desk Angel openings in the office. We have two slots open: Mondays 9:30-1:00 and the 2nd and 4th Thursdays from 9:30-1:00. Please apply in the main office Monday-Thursday between 10am and 4pm.

December 8th there will be a Craft Fair in the Founders Room from 12:30-3:30. UUCSR will receive 25% of each table’s sales so come on over and shop! We have jewelry, books, fresh bread, ceramics, art, soap, cards, scarves, hats, essential oils, photos and our youth are selling chalice cookies and cinnamon scented ornaments!

December has 1 staff holiday – December 25th and the office will be closed.

This is a friendly reminder to be sure and building lock up if you are the last person to leave for the night.

There are 2 wonderful events at the Glaser Center this month!

Santa Rosa Children’s Chorus December 1st at 4:00
Occidental Community Choir December 15th at 3:00

Dawn Silveira Administrative Manager

SHARE-THE-BASKET
Following are the July 2019 Recipients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MLK Jr. Day on NOT a Day Off</td>
<td>$424.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Advocates for Youth</td>
<td>$486.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance Medical Clinic</td>
<td>$318.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday Breakfast</td>
<td>$827.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We don’t have October financials fully completed as of this date.

Last Sunday there was a good turnout for the Town Hall and I thank everyone who came forward with excellent questions. Below is an excerpt of my commentary on growing the Congregations. This is by no means the only advantage to growth.

Growing the Congregation will eventually require a detailed financial forecast, but before we engage in that process, it was the intention of the Board to have many conversations with the Congregation. This is going to involve careful forethought and measured uses of resources.

Overall, going forward I and the finance committee look forward to robust conversations about the ramifications of growth. Here are a few observations to-date:

1. UUCSR has much capacity to grow without a major expenditure of expenses. A part-time communications/marketing person will cost some money, but those costs could be lower than originally estimated. Also, we have time to work out details and plan ahead; there is no pressure to move quickly.

2. Increased membership will obviously afford more revenue. How we carefully use those resources is the responsibility ultimately with the Board after much conversation with the Finance Committee and importantly, the Congregation.

3. Volunteerism is recognized as problematic, as the Congregation ages. If we currently don’t have the volunteers to effectively administer our needs; we can use additional pledge income.

4. We can eventually move away from fundraising, which is labor-intensive and a burden for many volunteers. UUCSR shouldn’t be dependent upon fundraising to stay afloat. That is not so say we won’t have fundraisers, it is to say they might not be used for operations. Think about that.

5. Expanded membership offers opportunity for a capital campaign to fully utilize our building and provide for more space for a growing fellowship.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let the Finance Committee know of your concerns.

Fiscally yours, Michael Randolph, Treasurer

The next Sunday Karen, with the help of Susan, Ted, Al and Roger, brought us "I Can See Clearly Now" by Johnny Nash. Lastly, the choir, as of this writing, returns and presents "Verdant Meadows" by G F Handel, an aria from Handel’s opera "Alcina".

The theme for December will be Awe, with thoughts on elephants (yes, elephants!), the universe, mind and matter, and more. Also, several holidays occur, Christmas, and Winter Solstice among them. There'll be TWO Christmas Eve services! Round out the year with our traditional Milestones service. It promises to be a totally awe-inspiring month of music you won't want to miss.

Would you like to be a part of the planning or performing of music? Talk to a Music Coordinator (musicians@uusantarosa.org), or our Choir Director Sadie Sonntag (choir@uusantarosa.org) - or look for a person with a Music Coordinator nametag with a treble clef (♩) on it any Sunday.

Attentively, Randy Jones

"Music produces a kind of pleasure which human nature cannot do without."
— Confucius

Do you ever have background music on at work or at home? If so, what kind of music works best for you? Vocal or instrumental, classical or pop? Studies have shown that background music with lyrics negatively affects concentration and attention, but background music without lyrics seems to aid concentration and attention.

November’s theme was Attention, and as musicians we aimed to pay special attention to the things music can teach us. First off last month, Sally, Alan, Randy, and Susan sang "Show Us How to Love" by Mark Miller. Then Sadie and the choir performed "In Flander's Fields" by Dr John McCrae and Roger Emerson in honor of Veterans, living and dead, who served our country and the cause of peace worldwide.
December 2019

**UUCSR Members abide by this Covenant**

We pledge to seek unity in our diversity, to welcome and respect divergent opinions and beliefs, to listen to one another with open hearts and minds, to acknowledge our shortcomings and be quick to forgive them in others, and to keep our focus on our Mission. Our Mission is celebrating life, empowering people, caring for one another, and helping to build a better world.