This month’s theme of Integrity invites us to ask ourselves if we are doing our best to be honest and authentic. What are the benefits and risks of living an honest, authentic life? And how do we know if we have one?

**Service Leaders:** Rev. Bonnie Dlott, Linda Lampson  
**Music by:** Susan Panttaja & Friends, Roger Corman  
**Share the Basket:** MLK Birthday Celebration

Rev. Bonnie Dlott is a native of the Bay Area who served the Napa congregation for eleven years, retiring in 2017 for health reasons. Before being called to the ministry she earned a doctorate in Biological Chemistry. She identifies as a nature mystic, finding the sacred in the natural world and in acts of kindness. She is a wife and mother of two adult children, and will serve as UUCSR’s Sabbatical Minister from February through May.

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**January 12th**  
THE POWER OF LANGUAGE

Today we'll explore the power of language (i.e. the power of human words) in the month-long theme that is devoted to “Integrity”. We'll ask: What is a "language of reverence"? How do our "words create worlds"?

**Service Leader:** Rev. Dara Olandt, Judy Withee  
**Music by:** Sadie Sonntag & the Choir, Paul Gilger  
**Share the Basket:** Borders and Beyond

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**January 19th**  
JUSTICE IS LOVE IN PUBLIC

It is not easy working to build the better world in the face of human selfishness, short-sightedness and willful ignorance. The only way to maintain our efforts without destroying our spirits is to adopt the spiritual approach of non-violence and universal love, as exemplified by Martin Luther King, Jr. But, boy, that ain’t easy...

**Service Leader:** Rev. Chris Bell, Bev Spears  
**Music by:** Alan Bell & Friends, Paul Gilger  
**Share the Basket:** Redwood Empire Food Bank

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**February 2nd**  
RESILIENCE IS NOT JUST BOUNCING BACK.

On Rev. Chris’s last service before his sabbatical, we’ll consider the future of our shared life in community and how to best make use of our time apart. Resilience is not just bouncing back, it’s bouncing forward!

**Service Leader:** Rev. Chris, Rev. Dara, Rev. Bonnie Dlott, Aphrodite Bellochio  
**Music by:** Robin Rogers & Friends, Roger Corman  
**Share the Basket:** The Lime Foundation
Hi Everybody!

As most of you know by now, I will be away from UUCSR from the beginning of February through the end of May. I thought I would use my space here in the newsletter this month to explain why, and what I’ll be doing while I’m away for those four months. I will have one more column in the February issue, which I will strive to have be full of life-changing insights, lovely poetry and useful advice!

The gift of a sabbatical is a fairly standard component of most full-time UU ministers’ contracts with the congregations they serve. Our agreement here in Santa Rosa grants me a month of such leave time for every year of service, up to a maximum of six accumulated months.

I took my last sabbatical in the beginning of 2014 after more than eight years of service and was away for a total of seven months (six of sabbatical leave and one of vacation). That was a bit too long to wait for a rest, and I felt I was away for much too long, too. Thus, the Board and I agreed that slightly more frequent, but shorter, leaves would be better for everybody. So, I’ll be here for the Congregational Meeting on January 26th, preach for the last time on Feb. 2nd and then head off to adventure and learning until the end of May when I return in time for the June budget season and the final congregational meeting of the year.

I have a number of goals for my time away. Foremost is simply to rest. As much as I love my calling and love this institution and everybody who is a part of it, there is an emotional toll to the all that intimacy and connectivity for an introvert like myself. It is challenging to find meaningful and useful things to say nearly every week, whilst also broadly overseeing the overall operations and the staff (both volunteer and paid), and representing us in the wider world through my work with the North Bay Organizing Project and other interfaith activities. It’s also hard to lose 8 – 12 dear friends every year. I think I’ve gone to more memorial services than anyone I know, at least who isn’t a clergy person. I’m looking forward to some space to release some of my emotions and get re-grounded. I’m also eager to read purely for pleasure for a while. I am so grateful for such a chance to recharge. I wish everyone in the world could have a sabbatical. I particularly wish that hard-working parents could have sabbaticals!

Furthermore, I hope to establish a large vegetable garden at my house, what with five raised beds yearning for my attention. The heart troubles I’ve been having (higher cholesterol and a bit of angina) are compelling a diet of less fat and more greens. I think it would be really fun to grow as much of that food myself as I can. So far, I’m doing great keeping all my flowers and decorative bushes alive at the new house, so I’m eager for this challenge.

I will also take some drum lessons, that I might yet realize my dreams of international rock-and-roll stardom. Or, if that doesn’t work out, to at least keep better time at our once-a-year Unisurfalists concerts!

There will be plenty of travel, too. I have a couple of offers to stay with friends for awhile on the big island of Hawaii. I’m going to do a little back-packing in Europe (England? Italy? Croatia?) before or after my trip to Paris in early May. My dear sister and her family now live there, including my two adorable nieces whom I have barely seen in the flesh. I’ll also spend a week or more with granddaughter Rose, daughter Cait and son-in-law Alec in North Carolina, and my son Aaron, his sweetie Alaina and I are planning a camping trip in Utah with some rock climbing attached when the weather warms up.

I have professional goals for the sabbatical too. I intend to study the traits of successful rapidly growing and large (500+) congregations and the traits of successful ministers of rapidly growing and larger congregations. I’m interested in the strategies of both UU and non-UU communities. I’m also interested in learning a lot more about cost-effective marketing and the use of social media to build vibrant community beyond the “brick and mortar” confines of the Glaser Center. I will attend at least one CityZen intensive meditation retreat, and hope to have practice time with my old teachers and sangha back East, too.

Over the next month I’ll do everything I can to get the congregation ready for my absence. We’ll kick off the Soul Matters small groups and organize neighborhood house meetings, and should be able to acquire our new congregational management software before I go.

Rev. Bonnie Dlott, a good friend and colleague, will serve as your Sabbatical Minister while I’m away, leading worship twice (or more) per month, attending Board meetings and offering pastoral care when possible. Rev. Dara Olandt, who will remain very part-time because of her other employment at Mills College, will help guide the small group facilitators, in addition to leading worship and guiding our young adult group, and will also be more available for pastoral care. The lay chaplains are well-trained and ready to serve, too. Indeed, all shall be well.

I feel so fortunate to be a UU minister, and in particularly to be called to minister to you here at UUCSR. I deeply thank you for work that continually challenges and transforms me, and for the break from it that you are providing me. I hope our partnership will continue for years to come, as long as I may benefit this unique and precious community.

Reverend Chris Bell
New Year: Trees, Time and Re-enchantment

This new year in here! It is hard for me to believe we are in 2020. It must be a good time to look backwards and forwards. I wonder: what do you want to carry with you into the new year? What are you looking to leave behind?

My mind and heart these days turn towards the earth and deepening appreciation for patterns that cause health and ones that cause harm. I am trying to “take stock” of the ecology of my own household and my “foot print” upon the earth, asking myself: what can I let go of in order to help the earth? What ways of being? What patterns of behavior am I ready to shed in order to help be part of the positive change our earth needs?

I have not always been as aware as I could be about how much waste my own family creates. I am still reeling from awareness that so much of what we chuck out thinking is recyclable is in fact... not truly recyclable.

Last year, The Atlantic featured a story sharing that China, once a very large buyer of US recyclables, is no longer purchasing much of our recycled items:

... Last year, the country restricted imports of certain recyclables, including mixed paper—magazines, office paper, junk mail—and most plastics. Waste-management companies across the country are telling towns, cities, and counties that there is no longer a market for their recycling. These municipalities have two choices: pay much higher rates to get rid of recycling, or throw it all away.

— From “Is this the end of recycling?” by Alana Semuels, March 5, 2019

This year I want to more deeply understand where the recyclables in my area and trash in my life actually go, and what I can do to be sure I am contributing what I can to the cause of mitigating climate change and moving in practical ways towards climate hope.

Among the best new books I read in 2019 was The Overstory by Richard Powers. The book centers the story of trees and the natural world of which we are apart (with plenty of human drama also thrown in for good measure). A bonus for UUs: the story also pays homage to our UU transcendentalists forebearers like Henry David Thoreau.

What I most valued in this book was the radical reorientation to life with trees and other creatures (not humans) as protagonists in the story. In The Overstory Richard Powers writes, “This is not our world with trees in it. It’s a world of trees, where humans have just arrived.”

Here is a bit more from Powers:

“People aren’t the apex species they think they are. Other creatures—bigger, smaller, slower, faster, older, younger, more powerful—call the shots, make the air, and eat sunlight. Without them, nothing.”

And this:

“... People have no idea what time is. They think it’s a line, spinning out from three seconds behind them, then vanishing just as fast into the three seconds of fog just ahead. They can’t see that time is one spreading ring wrapped around another, outward and outward until the thinnest skin of Now depends for its being on the enormous mass of everything that has already died.”

There is a way in which it is necessary to take a view of nature’s time that more accurately places us as human beings in context and diminishes our human-centered hubris. Yet, rather than foster climate guilt, what I appreciate about this book is its power to re-enchant the heart and mind with a powerful felt sense of connection and relationship with the natural world.

Like many, I simply love the outdoors. It’s one of the places my soul is renewed. For this reason alone I want to redirect my some of my personal energies this year towards climate hope: I see this as a spiritual practice.

Also: I don’t want to waste heart worrying and arguing with folks who don’t believe the science. This year I want to deeply look at how I engage the natural world by how I live, speak, and act and how we as faith communities can participate in healing the planet. There is much power unfolding among those who want to be share in the cause of mutual natural liberation (i.e. earth wellness and earth’s right to thrive).

To this end, I think about the power we human have by our choices, our language, our deeds, our imaginations.

Powers writes: “The best arguments in the world won’t change a person’s mind. The only thing that can do that is a good story.”

May this year, the year 2020 be a year of writing the stories again in different ways, placing what is healing and hopeful at the center, nurturing a human view that places the earth and natural world at the forefront. May 2020 issue forth hope in the earth-story yet unfolding.

Much care,

Rev. Dara Olandt
Assistant Minister
President’s Column

Welcome to a new year and a new decade! Usually I look at a new year as a blank slate. ANYTHING can happen. What will take place? A new decade is even more that way. Things are moving so fast now that I can’t even envision what life will be like in 2030!

But this new year is a little different. 2020 is a year that’s been talked about so much in so many different arenas for so long (I remember talking about it in 1999!) that it’s not quite a blank slate for me. 2020 comes with expectations! Many of which aren’t going to be fulfilled. So I have to remember to focus on the journey we’ve taken, on where we ARE, rather than where we “SHOULD” be.

I think on a micro level AND on a macro level, we’re in the midst of immense change. On the macro level, as I write this, I’ve been listening to House members voting for or against impeaching our President. As we all personally know, we’re in the midst of unprecedented, human-caused climate change. Gender and racial norms are transforming (thank heavens!). The very definition of work is changing. And I’m sure each of you could add at least one more macro-level change we’re experiencing.

On the more micro level, life is changing – FAST. Technology is moving at the speed of light! Our lives are always moving, changing, transforming. Babies are born, grandparents die, people move, jobs change, friends come into our lives, friends leave. Sometimes it seems every week brings a new change!

Some of these changes, we like. Some, we really, really don’t. But no matter what the change is, can we “surf the wave” of it? I talk to people all day long who have ADHD. Oftentimes, what is most challenging to them comes down to what I call being in an argument with reality. “But I don’t WANT it to be this way! I want it to be the way I WANT it to be!” Unfortunately, in an argument with reality, reality always wins. One of the things I’ve learned in all my decades of life is to be graceful in “surrendering” to reality. I get a lot farther that way, with a lot less mental and emotional damage.

I have always said that life is really about growing and developing – into my best self, my highest self, however you want to put it. If I haven’t grown in some way in the year, I count it as a wasted year. (And yes, I’ve had a few of those. I don’t recommend it!) Growth isn’t always welcomed, or pleasant, or easily embraced – in the moment. Particularly when it’s a surprise. But those surprises always bring the most growth, the most aliveness, the most challenges, the most excitement, the most energy. The most giving up who I used to be and the most embracing the new, “improved” me.

When I’m wishing people happy birthday, I often wish them a year of surprises. I want that challenge for them, that growth for them, and the magnificence of the results of that growth for them.

So for us, as we ring in a new year, I wish us all a year of surprises. Some will be deeply welcomed; some will be deeply UNwelcomed. But the opportunities each surprise brings is what gives life its spice.

May you and may we all experience the unexpected, the surprising, the unforeseen, the unpredicted. It may be easy, it may be hard – but I promise it will be extraordinary!

Much love and ALL my best wishes to you, in this year and always

-Natalie Brundred,
President, Board of Trustees
What Your Board Is Up To

The Board is creating different ways for members to discuss, ask questions, and be involved in the shaping our future. A central opportunity for all of us to engage will be through geographically-organized house meetings. The Board created a Task Force to develop a series of questions for the meetings, and proposed another team to work on logistics. We expect to schedule house meetings in late February and again in March. We are also planning to hold Forums in April to present our findings from these meetings. In addition, we may hold smaller “Koffee Klatches” on a Sunday if needed.

The Finance Committee, the Board and our staff are looking at a number of measures to close the gap between our budget and our projected actual this year, and we all remain committed to balancing our budget.

The Nominating Committee is expanding their responsibilities to include leadership development. It has found an online course put on by the Pacific Western Region for members to develop leadership skills that will also strengthen our congregation. Several Board members and others are interested in doing this program.

The Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) completed a Congregational Assessment created by the UUA. The Board is also completing this assessment. Both groups found the assessment useful in finding out about the views and needs of the congregation going forward, especially as we grow.

This month’s Board meeting will be on Thursday, January 16th, at 6:30 in the Board Room. As always, you are welcome to attend!

-Natalie Brundred,
President, Board of Trustees

The Lay Chaplains

As part of your pastoral care team, are delighted to welcome new members to the team: Mary Lil Lee and Tamara Murrell! They bring wonderful new ideas and talent to the rest of the team: Paula Hammett, Lucia Milburn, Barbara Kezur, Shirley White, Bruce Hope, Al Liner.

The Lay Chaplains are 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, fill out a Pastoral Care Request Card (located behind the pews by the hymnals) and leave it in the box at the back of the sanctuary, or you can leave a message at the UUCSR office, and they will forward it to us.
Religious Education in January:
Being True to Yourself

Jen Freese, Director of Religious Education

Our congregational theme in January is integrity, and in RE this month we will encourage children and youth to explore ways we feel integrity by being true to ourselves. Here’s a look at some of the things we will be doing:

**Chalice Children Room (ages 3-5)**
Preschool age children will explore integrity with a variety of activities like songs, finger plays and puppetry that encourage them to think about how to be true to themselves. They will think about putting beliefs into actions by reading the book *A is for Activist* and taking a sound walk around the congregation. They will also consider being true to themselves by experiencing joy, showing love to each other, and by demonstrating courage.

**Multi-Age RE (ages 6 and up)**
At the beginning of the month, elementary age children will explore “walking the talk.” We will discuss activism and practice metta meditation, also known as loving-kindness. Children will read the congregation’s mission statement and review our own covenant. We will also have the opportunity to play active games together like “A Cold Wind Blows,” “The Walk Stop Game,” and “Feather in the Air.” Arts activities include “Me/We” paintings to remind us all of the importance of community.

**Middle and High School Youth Group – now meeting together at 11:00 am!**
Youth will begin the month by attending the January 5, 11:00 am worship service together to hear Reverend Bonnie Dlott, the interim minister during Reverend Chris Bell’s upcoming sabbatical, speak. During the rest of the month, we will have some deep talks about integrity, including behavioral policing, hypocrisy, and the feeling that no matter what we do it won’t be enough. We’ll discuss the work of Greta Thunberg and think about what brings us bliss in life, creating “bliss board” collages. Finally, we will reassess our covenant (while eating pizza).

Upcoming Events in Religious Education and Family Ministry

**Sunday, January 5 - Mystery Pal Sign-ups at RE Table**
*Mystery Pals is an annual intergenerational letter exchange program at UUCSR. Sign-ups are for children/youth age 5-18 and for older adults. Participants must be present at Mystery Pal Reveal on February 9 to participate.*

**Sunday, January 12 - Mystery Pal Letter Exchange Begins**

**Friday, January 24 - Soul Matters Group for Families with Children/Youth**
*This small ministry group is for parents and caregivers to have the chance to explore spirituality while children have a movie night together. This will take place on the 4th Friday of each month from 6:30-8:30 pm at the Freese Home.*

**Sunday, February 9 - Mystery Pal Reveal after 9:15 am service**

**Wednesday, February 12 - UU Parenting**
*Parenting Group runs for 6 sessions on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month from 5:15-7:30 pm. Participants must sign up in advance.*

**Friday, February 22 - Parents Night Out (5:30-8:00 pm)**
**January 5: Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration Fund.** UUCSR has been a vital sponsor of this community event - let’s continue to stand with those who support his call for social and economic justice through strong, non-violent action!

**January 12: Borders and Beyond Family Fund** supports UUCSR's Borders & Beyond Ministry.

**January 19: The Redwood Empire Food Bank** has a wide range of programs, provides food for needy children and seniors, supplies hundreds of local agencies, including our own Saturday Breakfast.

**January 26: Breakfast For Our Neighbors** is our own Saturday Breakfast program for our neighbors in need, supported primarily by the generosity and volunteer efforts of our congregation, and also by volunteers and donors from the larger Santa Rosa community.

**February 2: The Lime Foundation** supports education in music and the arts for school children, runs an apprenticeship program for disadvantaged teens in the building trades, provides free construction services to low-income people and the elderly, and provides healthy eating and light exercise programs for the elderly to combat obesity.

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**THE DIVERSITY PROJECT OF ADVOCATES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE PRESENTS THE FILM:**

**“TRACES OF THE TRADE: A STORY FROM THE DEEP NORTH”**

*Producer/Director: Katrina Browne*

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, FOLLOWING THE 11 AM SERVICE IN THE FOUNDERS ROOM**

This powerful, important film tells the story of the forefathers of Katrina Browne, the DeWolf family, the largest slave-trading family in U.S. history. The film follows Browne and nine fellow family members on a journey which brings them face-to-face with the history and legacy of their family’s involvement in the slave trade. From 1769 to 1820, the DeWolf fathers, sons and grandsons trafficked in human beings.

From the online description of the film: “The film follows ten DeWolf descendants (ages 32-71, ranging from sisters to seventh cousins) as they retrace the steps of the Triangle Trade, visiting the DeWolf hometown of Bristol, Rhode Island, slave forts on the coast of Ghana, and the ruins of a family plantation in Cuba. Back home, the family confronts the thorny topic of what to do now. In the context of growing calls for reparations for slavery, family members struggle with the question of how to think about and contribute to ‘repair’. Meanwhile, Browne and her family come closer to the core: their love/hate relationship with their own Yankee culture ad privileges; the healing and transformation needed not only ‘out there’, but inside themselves.”

We are pleased to share this film with you and look forward to discussion following viewing of the film. You are welcome to bring your lunch, we will provide light snacks.

Bev, Carol, Cheri, Rev. Chris, Rev. Dara, Leslie, Paul, Tamara, Jeanie

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**CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SERIES**

**ADVOCATES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE PRESENTS:**

**“Think Resiliance” #5**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, FOLLOWING THE 11 AM SERVICE IN THE BOARD ROOM**

The Film Project of the Advocates for Social Justice continues the Climate Change and Environmental Justice Series. What’s it about? How do our political and economic systems keep us addicted to oil and fossil fuels? How can we free ourselves from these systems that keep us on track toward climate disruption and social and political disorganization?

Richard Heinberg’s take on “Systems of Political and Economic Management” will be supported by two excellent shorts on a real and scalable alternative to fossil-fuel dependent systems: Localization

Second, Heinberg defines Resilience, the ways in which we can respond and ‘bounce back’ from the ecological challenges ahead. In support of this idea, one we’ll pursue in future showings, we’ll learn about “Wilding” a new project of resilience by the UK’s Isabella Tree.
A Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagan’s Reflections on:  
INTEGRITY

Integrity is about the values we espouse and how well we live up to them. Integrity is a large part of my personal commitment to the Covenant of UU Pagans. As a young woman in the 1950’s, I struggled with the question, “Who am I?” and “What do I really want to do with my life—besides getting married and raising a family?” The answers would help me as a person; they would be the core of my integrity.

When I learned in an archeology course that very ancient religions imagined the divine as female, and later still as only male, I knew that my integrity would in part rest in reclaiming, for women today, those very early pagan traditions as an important part of our religious history. When I discovered in my research that those ancient religions also worshipped the earth, it seemed clear in our time of growing pollution that men as well as women would find this history meaningful.

Yes, I loved and raised my beautiful sons and daughters, but my integrity demanded that I would also always remand and advocate for reclaiming both the power of women and the precious wonders of the earth. That’s why this humanist UU enjoys supports the activities of the Covenant of UU Pagans. Please join us in these efforts!

For the Covenant Of Unitarian Universalist Pagans
--Shirley Rank
Growth. This can be a loaded word. At its simplest, it just means getting bigger. But it can also mean developing in maturity, sophistication, empathy… or any number of other attributes. Our Minister and Board say we should grow in both senses. If you attended the “Town Hall” meeting last month, you heard the practical rationale: without growth, UUCSR cannot survive as a viable, productive, spiritually energizing member of the community.

So, to survive, we grow. But how?

Marketing. Evangelism. These are also loaded words. One smacks of commercialism, the other of extreme religiosity. But basically, they just mean getting the word out. And that’s what we need to do if we are to be a truly “welcoming” congregation. After all, we know what we have here. That’s why we attend services and volunteer countless hours to the good works of UUCSR. In the video “Why Are You a U-U?” on the UUCSR home page, two members declare, “I was a UU all my life, but didn’t know it.” There are likely many out there including younger folks and families that don’t yet know they are UUs, but would be here if they knew about us.

That kind of “getting the word out” isn’t cost-free. To help us realize our goals, we encourage you to review your investment in UUCSR on a regular basis and to pledge at least 5% of your income to your spiritual home. And if you can, make it an automatic electronic deduction. Let’s enthusiastically welcome new members and future generations.

Alan Bell for the Stewardship Team

United in Kindness

United in Kindness—Sonoma County (UIK) is an initiative launched in March 2019 by the Interfaith Council of Sonoma County and Of-One-Soul. This initiative is to encourage people and organizations to come together and stand for fairness by doing tangible and sustainable acts of kindness on a daily basis.

A major target of the UIK is to work with school systems in Sonoma County to promote sustainable, self-guided discussions on inclusiveness, respect for others and daily acts of kindness with students each week.

United in Kindness has been endorsed by the Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights and UUCSR. So far, over 1,200 individuals and 36 organizations, secular and non-secular have endorsed this initiative.

Please consider joining this project by signing the United in Kindness declaration and help promote a powerful wave for change in our communities.

For more information and links to the UIK Declaration:

English: http://interfaithsonoma.org/declaration/
Spanish: http://interfaithsonoma.org/firme/

Visit the UUCSR Advocates for Social Justice table on Sunday for additional information and hard copies of the UIK Declaration ready for signatures.

Endorsed by UUCSR, Advocates for Social Justice and the Diversity Project
EcoDesk at UUCSR

“Hope is not something that you have. Hope is something that you create, with your action. Hope is something you manifest into the world. And once a person has hope, it can be contagious.”

-AOC, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

There are many who are working with intelligence and deep motivation towards realizing the changes we know we need to make in how we live and how we share. Sonoma County’s North Bay Organizing Project, of which UUCSR is an active participant, has done the deep background work to prepare a ballot initiate for next year’s election: the Rights Of Mother Earth initiative, ROME. The aim is to declare the rights of the living world, a specific feature of the natural world, to have the right to be protected under the law; defining that the living world, of which we are a part, has the right to live, to sustain itself, to recover and to thrive. This ballot initiative will first need to garner signatures to have it qualify as a ballot issue for the November 2020 elections. And then will need us to organize towards passing this issue.

EcoDesk will be back at the Sanctuary entrance in the third week of January, presenting information on:

- the Community Rights Movement and the Rights of Nature Movement, which originated in understandings and activism of indigenous communities. This combined movement has been growing across the U.S. as well as internationally at the level of creating local ordinances, country-wide declarations of the rights of nature, and the proposed U.N. Rights of Nature Declaration
- ways for you to actively participate to help our county adopt our own Rights Of Mother Earth initiative.

Meanwhile we leave you to enter the new year with the words of Natalie Diaz, Mojave poet, from The First Water is the Body:

".... Aha Makav means the river runs through the middle of our body, the same way it runs through the middle of our land...

....We carry the river, its body of water, in our body. I mean river as a verb. A happening. It is moving within me right now.

This is not a juxta position. Body and water are not two unlike things - they are more than close together or side by side. They are same – body, being, energy, prayer, current, motion, medicine. “
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.

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

WOMEN TOGETHER
Save These Dates
February 21, UU Women together will have Movie Night on Friday, starting at 6:30. By popular demand, we will show the film Harriett, a bio about Harriet Tubman, and worth seeing again and again. Bring a finger-food snack to share, if you’d like!
March 21, from 2-4pm we will have Elder Tales, with Clare Whitfield. She will present a 50 minute film on Astronauts Wives, in which she appears. She will also speak about her life, no doubt to the delight of all. As usual, finger food snack is good. Hope to see many of you at each venue!

SATURDAY SAUNTERS
A new hike for us in a new year:
January 18, Islands in the Sky Vista Loop.
Listed as a 4 mile loop, with a total elevation gain of about 900 feet, this trail is reached from Freezeout Road near Duncan’s Mills. We will carpool from Santa Rosa as usual, starting at 9:00, to start hiking the trail by 10:00. Limited roadside parking. More information closer to time, known to be very scenic. If you are interested contact Gretchen P.

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.

HUMANIST DISCUSSION GROUP
A discussion group is forming as a follow up to Rev. Chris Bell’s recent class on Humanism. A variety of Humanist books and essays will provide the basis for our discussions. If you are a Humanist or curious to learn about Humanism, this could be the group for you. Our initial organizational meeting is Tuesday January 7, 2020 from 6:30-8:00 pm in the Board Room. For more info contact Steve Sweaney.

Evening Book Group
We will meet on Thursday, January 9th from 7 to 9 P.M. at 547 Mendocino. We meet in the RE wing.
The January selection is The Overstory by Richard Powers.
Visitors and newcomers are welcome. In February we are reading Educated by Tara Westover.

Saturday Work Day
Saturday, January 4, 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.

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.
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’** class based on the UU curriculum “Faith Like a River: Themes from UU History” runs through January. **Wednesdays 6:30 - 8:30pm, 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 II, January 11th - February 15, Saturdays 2-4 pm. Fee $25 (though no one will be turned away for lack of funds).** Sign up at RE table.

**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. **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.

**Criminal Justice: John Mutz,** UU member and former candidate for Sonoma County Sheriff, will present a series on criminal justice, probably in March. Check RE table and RE announcements for more details.
Administrator’s Minute

Happy New Year! With a new year comes 2 new policies.

NEW Lock Up Policy Starting January 1, 2020

All Groups (UUCSR & rentals) Meeting at UUCSR: The front door and back gate shall remain locked. People who do not have key fobs will be admitted only by people who know them. Others must wait for someone from their group to let them in. Any person admitting someone to the building or back gate has to make sure the building or back gate is locked after admitting the person. Phone numbers for responsible people in each group should be posted on the door, so that latecomers and/or newcomers can contact someone in the building that can admit them. Violation of this policy may result in loss of visiting privileges. The only time the front door or back gate is unlocked is if there is Glaser Event staff present for a rental, if a chair to a meeting is sitting at the front door, or if a desk angel is at the front desk.

NEW Reimbursement Policy and Procedure Starting January 1, 2020

UUCSR Committee chairs, staff and individuals who purchase items with their own money for an approved UUCSR staff item, department item, committee item or worship service item can be reimbursed. Reimbursement forms are available in the workroom multi-color drawers next to the mail boxes or available from the Administrative Manager. *This form must be completed and receipt attached. *Reimbursements can be provided only if there is a receipt attached to the reimbursement form. *The reimbursement form and receipt must be completed and turned in to the bookkeeper no later than 6 weeks from the original purchase. Reimbursements will not be provided if the receipt is more than 6 weeks old or has no receipt attached.

New Year, New Committee? If you are looking for a way to be of service to your congregation, here is your chance to commit regularly to a volunteer position that is empty… Desk Angel, Saturday Breakfast, Maintenance Team, Finance Committee, Endowment Committee, New Membership Committee, Stewardship Committee, and Ushers, to name a few. Send me an email and I would be happy to connect you to the chair of the committee you are committing to.

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.

January Holidays: The staff of UUCSR have a holiday and will not be in the office on January 1, 2020 Happy New Year!

Dawn Silveira Administrative Manager

SHARE-THE-BASKET
Following are the August 2019 Recipients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends Outside</td>
<td>$420.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borders and Beyond</td>
<td>$2,328.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE Greenway Campaign (Sonoma Land Trust)</td>
<td>$361.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday Breakfast</td>
<td>$1,246.40</td>
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Treasurer’s Monthly Ledger

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

Musical Notes

"You have to take a deep breath and allow the music to flow through you. Revel in it, allow yourself to awe. When you play allow the music to break your heart with its beauty." — Kelly White, folk artist from Florida.

Music can be awe-inspiring. Music can bring tears to our eyes: tears of sadness, empathy, soaring beauty, awesome joy.

December’s theme was Awe. Our children started us off this month singing "Spinners and Weavers", a song that reaches "out beyond the stars and deep within the center of our being". Also Alan B, Cathy R, Ben F, and Carol W treated us to "Calme des Nuits" (Calm Nights) by Saint-Saens. Sadie and the choir gave us the wonderful "I Dream a World" the next Sunday, followed the Sunday after with Robin R, Ted D, Laura C, and Natalie B performing "For Her, Speak". Then came the Friday Winter Solstice service when Susan P led us in some chants and rounds. The choir was back with "Sure on This Shining Night" by Samuel Barber on the fourth Sunday, and "Ave Verum" by Mozart on Christmas Eve. As of this writing Susan P is up again for the last Sunday in December planning to present "Pick Yourself Up" with Jack R.

The theme for January will be Integrity. We’ll be challenged to musically explore the power of lyrics, justice, religion, and of course integrity. Please plan to join us and bring a friend or two who loves music as much as you do.

Email a Music Coordinator (musicians@uusantarosa.org), or our Choir Director (choir@uusantarosa.org), or look for a Music Coordinator nametag sporting a treble clef (♪) any Sunday if you’d like to plan or participate in the music.

You folks are awesome! Randy Jones
January 2020

BLACK LIVES MATTER

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.