

The UUCF CommUUnicator

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Fullerton
1600 North Acacia Avenue,
Fullerton, CA 92831



Jon Dobrer, September 2011

“Character—the willingness to accept responsibility for one’s own life—is the source from which self-respect springs.” — Joan Didion

“The challenges of labor in America today seem to have become much more spiritual than they were 133 years ago when Labor Day was first celebrated. The most pressing problem for labor today is the large number of unemployed and underemployed people who want some kind of meaningful work. Both the economic recession and the large numbers of baby boomers who are retiring are causing this. The problem is exactly opposite of that addressed by the early labor union movement, when legions of production workers were employed but overworked and underpaid.”

Acharya Mahadev-ji

Sept 4: Labor and Action, a Hindu Perspective” by Acharya Dr. Mahadev Parameswaran of the Chinmaya Mission of Los Angeles. He delivered our UUCF New Years sermon in 2010. The Bhagavad Gita offers a uniquely precise message about Action and Work. Mahadev-ji will explain its meaning for modern Americans – he will discuss the attitude and philosophy regarding work. What is the most efficient attitude regarding work? Does “Action” mean only physical action or is it more than that? Every Action must be performed as a Yoga and not as a chore. Such an attitude can help in many ways, not only those who are working, but also for those who are unemployed or underemployed and struggling to find meaningful work.

Sept 11: Our Hopes, Our Fears & Our Tears - Jon Dobrer (Water ceremony. Bring water from your Summer trips)

Sept 18: The Meaning of the Fall - Jon Dobrer ARE canceled to support attendance of Yiddish festival Orange County Yiddish would like to thank the Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Church in their support and cooperation with the up coming OC Yiddish Festival to be held at Temple Beth Tikvah on September 18, 2011. I do hope the congregation will be able to remain at the Temple and join in the festivities of the day. Jon Dobrer will be one of the speakers. Please visit "www.ocyiddish.org" for more information. Any interested parties please contact us - Ann Nanes

Sept 20: (note date change) Tuesday: Dinner/discussion: The Help - Jon Dobrer

Sept 25: Holidays, Holy Days & Changes of Heart - Jon Dobrer

Sept 27: Tuesday ARE 7:00 pm On Green - Jon Dobrer

Out of My Mind: The Homeless, the Police & the Rest of Us*

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Almost all of our religious traditions teach us that the rescuer, the Messiah, the Mahdi, the Buddha may come in the form of a beggar, a poor person or someone wretched in appearance. Our traditions teach us to give generous respect to the poor and outcasts, to look beyond the rags they wear or the dirt that covers them. Inside may be the one who will make all the difference. Whether you take these nearly universal exhortations literally or not, the lesson is the same: The least amongst us is deserving of some respect and time, our time, to consider him or her as someone with some inherent worth and dignity.

However, most of us when we walk past a homeless person don't actually see a person. We see a problem. Most of us when we see a problem we don't think we can solve we avert our eyes, refuse to engage our hearts and just move on—both physically and spiritually. Most of us feel uncomfortable around the homeless and the mentally ill. These are not identical categories, but we conflate them. We don't like their looks, their smells and their eyes. We fear, I think, we might see ourselves if we looked too deeply. We might feel our own fiscal and emotional vulnerability, and so it seems better to move on.

Some of us see the homeless at the shelter, our Fullerton Armory. Most of us see them on the streets, and what do we do? Some of us donate clothes or food, some serve food, some drop some spare change, but then we leave these people, these problem people, on the streets.

We make assumptions about them because they're on the street and often dirty, sometimes drunk or high and disoriented. We may also assume that they are dangerous. Homeless equals mad and mad equals violent. Right? Well, no, but it is all too often our assumption.

Some are violent. Some do pose dangers to society in general and us in particular. But not all, not even most. We profile and stereotype. We don't see the person.

So, why should we be surprised when the police, also made up of human beings, make the kinds of assumptions we do? Why would we be surprised when the police, who, unlike us civilians, are charged with keeping order, react when their command authority is not processed and obeyed in the way they expect from normal people? Well, we expect the police, rightfully, to act in a more professional and controlled manner than we ourselves. We hold them to a higher standard. When some police misbehave, go over the top and act, not simply unprofessionally but brutally, we have the right to demand accountability. What we don't have is the right to do is engaging in the same behavior as what we accuse them of doing. The police just like the homeless, are mostly good and want to live decent, peaceful lives and be of service to the community. And like the homeless some are violent—some, not most. When we see a uniform and we stereotype the person, we do with them what we do with the homeless and that is not look deeply enough into the eyes of a unique human being—an individual. We see a “bum” on the streets or a “pig” on patrol. These are equally unfair dehumanizing characterizations.

The Messiah or the Prophet may come in rags or a uniform, the Imam may be hidden in a disguise, and neither the Sadhu nor the Buddha will look neat. Our common challenge is to

look deeper than the disguises of uniform, power or class and see the humanity in all of us. We must judge by actions; people must be accountable for their actions—but not their circumstances. *Note: I almost never repurpose sermons or newspaper columns for our newsletter, but...This is a current event in Fullerton and the looking for and seeing the humanity, worth and dignity in the seeming "other" has resonance for all of us.

“We possess books we read, animating the waiting stillness of their language, but they possess us also, filling us with thoughts and observations, asking us to make them part of ourselves. That would certainly be a good description of [Death of Jossiline](#), still recommended post book group discussion.

Your newsletter editor recommends **Passages in Caregiving Gail Sheehy** for anyone who may be in a family or friend caretaker role or expects to be in that role in the near future. There are many resources provided but more important it helps you think about the emotions, frustrations and challenges of this role and is very concrete on some ways to handle this “new normal”.

The only negative is the author had many more resources than most of us would, her ability to network, intellectual resources, finances, etc. exceed what most of us would have available. She also seemed to have more energy than I can imagine and I do not think I am a low energy person or one whom cannot multi-task but this gal is all over the place all the time.

A Message from the President

Since I have inherited the UUCF equivalent of the Bush Financial Crisis, a lot of my listening as a Board member has circled around the events of our May 29th congregational meeting. These events were a nomination from the floor and the compounding factor of a response by our consultant minister related to interpersonal interactions. Some in our congregation have been unsettled by the events of our May 29th congregational meeting. The new Board of Trustees, who was just seated on July 1, 2011. Following 5 executive board meetings in addition to regular monthly meetings, the board has developed a six pronged approach that is being implemented to encourage discussion and to prevent such a divergent situation from occurring again. Two of the most visible approaches are having listening Sundays more frequently than once a month and the scheduling of a Good Relations seminar. This seminar will be conducted by the UUA representative, Reverend Jim Grant on Sunday, August 28th, after the service.

You may recall, several years ago our congregation developed a five year plan - writing down our mission, vision, and goals. Like the vision and goals setting seminar, the Good Relations seminar will prompt us to design a road map to make it easier to integrate the strengths of dynamic and sometimes divergent personalities in this organization. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses yet can usually work together to successfully achieve the goals that we have agreed on. I remember when this church had twenty attendees, twenty years ago. Now we are nearly ten times that size with a very robust set of activities including social action, spiritual education, and a strong social connection with each other. This Good Relations seminar on August 28th will help us all refocus and make adjustments required in transitioning to a medium size congregation and help us understand what boundaries are appropriate in working with each other within the congregation.

The other four approaches that the Board has initiated are (1) the Bylaws revision process as well as follow up Policy writing will make changes so that future congregational meetings will run smoother, (2) the Board is engaged in addressing the congregation’s reactions to the May 29th congregational meeting, (3) a personnel evaluation process is underway, and (4) a new Committee on Ministry will

promote and facilitate the relationship between the Minister and Congregation and shall receive, investigate, and respond to all matters affecting the ministerial-congregational relationship.

I am open to receiving all thoughts and constructive input to help the Board consider other initiatives or mature the initiatives already underway. During the last Board meeting, I lit a chalice not to simulate a Phoenix rising from the ashes, but to provide a center piece for our principled fellowship. Our principled fellowship includes a strong commitment to the inherent worth and dignity of all people, confronting structures of evil and promote justice and compassion, seeking wisdom from many different cultures that inspire us in making ethical choices, using humanist teachings that counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit, use spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions that celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature, and have openness to the forces which create and uphold life.

Dale Botts

Testimonial from the last Planned Giving workshop 7-31-11

When I first came to this church about 10 or 11 years ago I was newly retired, had been an empty nester for some time, and was seeking a community and spiritual stimulation. I definitely found that here. Through the years this church began to take up an increasing space in my life and over time I did what I could--served on committees, on the Board, and giving time and what talent I had. As for treasure, I increased my pledge contributions each year, but didn't think much beyond that, except for the vague sense that as a church we probably would do well to connect with my cohort of middle aged and older folks, that we were missing a possible source of eventual funds. Several years ago, still without a clue on what I could do to help in this regard, I made one of those legal appointments where you get a trust set up, do your will and a living will, appoint folks to make decisions for you later on--gloomy stuff. Nothing got earmarked for our church.

Then a new committee arose here at UUCF: Planned Giving and Endowments. Not only did they set up policies and get things rolling, but they put on an after-church presentation like this one and passed out info on just what one might do to leave or transfer assets to an endowment account here. After that meeting, the next time I visited my financial planner I asked her help in setting aside something to go to UUCF. She suggested that I not deal with having to alter the trust or will, but instead just to change the beneficiary on my IRA account. So, rather than as I'd always done it, designating one-third for each of my 3 children, it was easy to specify a percentage to go to UUCF first, with the remainder to be divided among the kids. This is not a huge sum of money (and may become even less so if the federal budget limit doesn't get stabilized) but it was something I wanted to do and could do with minimal effort, thanks to this committee's inspiration.

Mary Rhodes

Foreign Foods Friday

On September 23 we will be enjoying Armenian/Mediterranean food at Zankou Chicken (fast food), 2424 W. Ball Rd. in Anaheim. After enjoying dinner there, we'll move to Zarkis Bakery, two doors down, to select from their multitude of delicious Arabic pastries. Pastries in hand we'll drive up Euclid Street to Glad Sharp's home in Fullerton for coffee and tea to enjoy with said pastries. Directions to all places will be available at the sign-up table. You can check out the restaurant at www.zankouchicken.com. Sign up in the Social Hall beginning September 4.

And Another Worthwhile Food Event The annual Angelo and Vinci Fundraising Dinner in support of FIES, Fullerton Interfaith Emergency Services, will be September 18, 2011. The evening includes a no host bar, an Angelo and Vinci's Italian dinner, a silent auction, and a very lively live auction. You may also donate to the UUCF basket being donated to the auction, contact Doris Dressler-Clark for tickets, \$60.00 each, or to donate to basket.

To serve human need . . . Last January we began a discussion of “Immigration as a Moral issue,” starting off with the materials offered through UUA. This summer the Social Action Committee sponsored various activities around this theme. On July 24th, Dr. Daniel Stracka, of Unitarian Universalist Refugee and Immigration Services and Education (UURISE), gave a sermon on immigration concerns. Following the service he and the program manager for UURISE, Katia Hansen, provided a workshop entitled “Crossing Borders,” which offered information on how to communicate effectively with others who have differing ideas on immigration. The presentation was the same one that was offered at GA in North Carolina in June. Both the sermon and special presentation were well received, and in August, we raised money for UURISE through Share the Plate. In keeping with the theme of “Immigration as a Moral Issue,” Social Action along with ARE had a discussion of the book *Death of Josseline* which covers the many facets of immigration problems along the Arizona border. Many thanks to my co-chair of SAC, Lesley Mahaffey, for leading this discussion on August 21st. At the end of our book discussion, we considered ways that UUCF and SAC could possibly become more involved with immigration issues. Among the suggestions for further action were collaboration with other UU churches in providing assistance to refugees, sponsoring activities with the Florence Crittenden Refugee Minors program here in Fullerton, participation at GA next year in Phoenix where the focus will be on immigration, and having guest speakers on immigration concerns in our pulpit. We also discussed ways we could help people to prosper in Mexico and Central America so that they would not be compelled to face dangerous situations with immigration, including sponsoring organizations that provide microloans, or organizations such as Circulo de Amigas, which provides educational services to girls in Jinotega, Nicaragua. In the coming months, we hope to follow-up on some of these ideas through SAC.

Our next meeting will be Sunday, September 11 immediately following the service in the Sanctuary. We will be discussing our annual Halloween fundraiser, as well as projects for the holiday season. Please join us!
Debbie Langenbacher SAC, Co-chair

Religious Education NEWS

What do you know about Labor Day? For a lot of kids in the US, the only thing you might associate with it is that it marks the end of your summer vacation. Which kind of makes sense, since "labor" means work, and many kids go back to school (work) around Labor Day.



Labor Day is really about honoring workers, and the important campaigns for workers' rights that have been carried out by labor unions across the years. Matthew Maguire, a machinist from Paterson, New Jersey, and Peter J. McGuire, a carpenter from New York are credited with suggesting a day to honor working people. They started the first Labor Day parade in New York City in 1882. And it was a man called Samuel Gompers, the first president of the American Federation of Labor, who did much to make organized labor respected. He is remembered with other contemporary labor leaders, like César Chávez and Dolores Huerta on Labor Day.

Religious Education for September Our *Planet Protectors* (children in preschool through fifth grade) continue to participate in activities that address the importance of water, the inequity of access to clean water, and actions we can take as Unitarian Universalist stewards. We will be talking about our move to the new classrooms and reviewing the importance of respecting our shared space with the Temple. Parents can help by reminding

children and youth that we do not purposefully damage property, grounds, or things that belong to others, the Temple, and our church.

Topics for September are: **Chorus of Life Resounding as One** (Who Owns the Water?), **Hope, Compassion and Strength** (Reciprocity), **Gather in Thanks** (Connecting Gratitude and Generosity), and **Gather to Celebrate** (A Culmination of the Summer Program and Celebration of Children Moving to Their New Classes).

Youth will continue with discussions on magical horses and giants. They will also have a movie / discussion featuring **Back to the Future**.

Teens: Heeding the Call, the Qualities of a Justice Maker 12 week curricula from Tapestry of Faith will be part of curricula this fall. Guest speakers may include: (a) Sophia Aper to discuss “current heroes” (b) Sylvia Mendez (c) James Crippen (d) Kathey Schuster on Career Wise (e) Dennis O’Connor to talk on the economy

The proposed “teen trip” to Nicaragua summer, 2012 will be opened to the entire congregation although if enough teens are able to go special teen activities will be provided on the trip.

In August, children were introduced to water as a spiritual and physical connecting force, experienced wanting to drink water when no clean water was available, learned about the contributions plants make to the environment, and discovered how sanitation is a critical factor in community health. Muggle-born middle schoolers (sixth through eight graders) watched **Jurassic Park** and discussed just where do you draw the line. The group also revisited **Mythology for Muggles** with lessons on Fairies and Astrology.

Teens continued to discuss personal experiences or current events in conjunction with our Unitarian Universalist Principles.

REGISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Children and youth attending the religious education program must register each year. Parents are responsible for keeping all pertinent information current. RE Committee members will be available before and after service to answer questions and help complete paperwork. Please be sure to bring medical and insurance information, and your calendar. A registration fee of \$15 per child with a family maximum of \$40 is collected at the time of registration. Families in need of financial assistance should contact Liz Heaton or Jon Dobrer. When registering, you’ll also be asked to pick dates to volunteer in the RE program. Parents should plan to volunteer in the RE program at least four times per year.

Religious Education Committee

The Religious Education Committee will meet on Sunday, September 4th at 12:15 in the Youth Chapel. Childcare is provided. Please bring a sack lunch or extra snack for your child if you plan to attend. To learn how you can get involved, contact Jody Biloan.

The proposed “teen trip” to Nicaragua summer, 2012 is now open to the entire congregation, an informational meeting will be forthcoming soon, for a copy of handout with details contact Randi Hetrick.

UUCF REGULAR CALENDAR EVENTS

Interest Group/Activity	Schedule	Contact Person	Location
Lunch Bunch	Sunday 12:30PM After the service	Pat Woodhull	Marie Callender's Placentia
Fuddy Duddies	1st Monday 9:00AM	<u>Jan Lillibridge</u>	Rotating. Contact Jan for location.
Women's Wisdom Circle	1st & 3rd Monday 7PM	<u>Barbara Keller</u>	Rotating. Contact Barbara for location.
Investment Club	3rd Monday 7PM	Gwen Fyke or Brad Woodhull	Contact Gwen for location
Movie and Dinner with Rev. Jon Dobrer	1st Tuesday	Marlies Worley or Rev. Jon Dobrer	See Sunday Announcements
3 rd Tuesday Discussion Group with Rev. Jon Dobrer	3rd Tuesday 7 PM	Rev. Jon Dobrer	Church—location rotates
Men's Lunch Group	Alternating Wed. & Thurs. 11:45AM	Brad Woodhull	Contact Brad for location
Choir Practice	Every Thurs. 7PM (also Sunday 9 AM)	Judi Herz	In the music room
The Gadabouts	Once a month	Fran Doble	See Sunday Announcements
Meditation Group	2 nd Mon. 7PM	Marlies Worley	Contact Marlies for location
Circle Suppers	2nd Sat. (times vary) (Oct., Jan., Mar., May)	Jim & Gwen Fyke	Rotating. Contact the Fykes to sign up to host or attend
Family Circle Suppers	Times vary	Sangeeta Swendson	Contact Sangeeta to host or attend
Foreign Foods Friday	4th Friday	Lou Arnwine	Contact Lou for restaurant
Adult Religious Education	3 rd Sunday at 12 PM	Dale Botts/Randi Hetrick	Youth Chapel
Social Action Committee Meeting	2 nd Sunday after the service	Debbie Langenbacher or Lesley Mahaffey	Sanctuary
Board of Trustees Meeting	2 nd Tuesday of the month	Dale Botts, President	Board Room

Always check monthly church calendar (on the website) and announcements in the Order Of Service for exact time and location of events. There are occasional changes. Announcements will usually give you more details about the groups or you can ask the individuals listed above. If any of this information is incorrect please contact Donnette Guiltinan. Last update: 8/11.

Please call church phone number if you wish to be removed from our mailing list.

UUCF Board: President; Dale Botts **Vice president**-- Doris Dressler-Clark, **Secretary**--Dana Bianco, **Treasurer**- Lee Oldham Other Board members are: Laurel Estrada, Carol Kiser, Bill Lau, Lois Nettleship, Al Danzig

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Website: www.uufullerton.org

The deadline for the next issue of the CommUUnicator is NOON, October 19th, '11 Please submit all items to Randi Hetrick and put **newsletter** in the subject line - you may also request events be put on Facebook or on the web page. Send submissions to livelihood@msn.com.

The ComUUnicator is published monthly. Visitors will receive a free newsletter for five months. Annual subscriptions (paper) are \$25 or are free to members.

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