

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

*The Newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Salem, Oregon
February 20, 2008*



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The Canvass begins *this week!*

The Canvass actually begins this Saturday evening. You have been reading about it in your newsletter, and hearing about it in Stewardship Moments on Sunday mornings, so it's time. We hope you are coming to the Gala Celebration this Saturday evening; it will be quite an event. If you haven't yet made reservations for the dinner, you still can, by phoning Jim or Claudia Koch.

The Gala on Saturday evening will be your first opportunity to make your pledge. Some of the people who aren't there will be canvassed by mail; most can expect a phone call from a canvasser. We are trying to finish the canvass in two weeks, by March 9. After that, the Budget Committee, then the Board develop a budget for the coming year (July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009), to be voted on by the congregation in May.

This canvass is vital to UUCS. We need not only to pay salaries, mortgage payments, utilities, UUA and PNWD assessments, but the expenses of our teams and programs that add the richness of the experience in our Congregation. Inflation has been about 3% this year (some think it's more), and it may be higher next year. So we must make provision for that. In addition, we want to give a notable salary increment to our superb and hard-working minister, add hours to the RE program, help fulfill the visions of the Performance Team and other teams, and make sure that we are paying the rest of our staff fairly. These are not small items, but we have shown repeatedly that the hopes in our hearts are not small either; *we can do this!*

This canvass is important to *you* too. It is your opportunity to affirm that you are a generous person who does your part to make our Congregation a joyous and deeply satisfying place for all of us.

So how much should you contribute? Ours is not one of those churches whose elders visit you and *tell* you that they have you down for \$4000 this year. We can give you some pieces of guidance. (1) The average pledge this year is \$1338; should you be higher than the average?

(Continued on page 4)

This issue was edited by Lois Nodland. NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: 11:30 a.m. Sunday, March 2. Send news to editors@uusalem.org (or to Lois Nodland AND Kathleen Ehli— please put "UUCS" in the subject line), put it in workroom newsletter "mailbox," or mail it (marked "newsletter") to church.

Reverential Ramblings

Here is a two step spiritual exercise to help you orient yourself in day to day living (recommended by the Buddhist teacher Jack Kornfield): First, think back over your entire life and call to mind a couple of good deeds you have done – nothing grandiose or superhuman, just some basic, simple good deeds. When I did this I remembered two times when I stopped to comfort some children in distress - a young boy who had broken his arm and a young girl who thought she had been abandoned. Try this yourself. What memories come to your mind?

The next step in this exercise is to consider the quality of your mind as you remember these simple good deeds. The feeling I get when I remember my good deeds is one of deep gratification. Knowing that you have made a positive difference and that your presence was a blessing to others is a good feeling. The quality of the feeling you get from remembering reveals the quality of the deed itself and reminds you of what your heart can truly treasure.

Imagine if we all gathered together and shared the stories of our good deeds – not in a boastful way, but simply and honestly describing the good we have done. One common overarching theme to these stories would be the practice of giving - giving the gifts of our time, our energy, our attention, our compassion, our love, and our resources to others.

Giving is one of the essential building blocks to a fulfilling life. When you give you build a bridge between yourself and the world - you walk the bridge that leads out of the isolated self into commonwealth of being, and you offer what you are uniquely qualified to give. It's a creative act that strengthens the connections between us all.

We give because we really do care for others, for all beings, for all of life. It is a natural expression of our goodness. A small example: a while back my car broke down at a busy intersection. I was stuck in a dangerous place. Suddenly a group of able-bodied souls materialized around my car and began pushing me to safety. After I was in a safe place they quickly disappeared before I could even say thanks. Par for the course in my experience. People are naturally inclined to give, to share, to help, to bless others.

Yet there are powerful forces that counteract this natural inclination. The message spun out by skillful marketers, purveying an inexhaustible array of goods and services, is not to give but to get. Getting, they seductively imply, is the real path to happiness and fulfillment. Yes, it is important to have food, shelter and other basic necessities, but this message is a false lead. This mindset of acquisitiveness never leads you to true satisfaction or creates the kind of memories the heart can truly treasure.

The path we take is up to each one of us – the path of getting or the path of giving. Every year in our Every Member Canvass we trust that you will choose the path of giving. Thank you for your past giving. It has been a blessing to many. This year each one of us, myself and my family included, is called to pause and give serious consideration to our pledges of financial support to our chosen religious community. Does our level of giving feel right? It's important that we pose this question. As a UU minister and stewardship consultant notes: "Money is the medium through which we carry out some of our most important responsibilities and extend some of our most practical help to others. If religion is to mean anything, it has to influence the way we manage money choices."

Love, Rick

The Canvass (*Continued from page 1*)

(2) UUA and PNWD assessments per member are \$74, so a couple pledging under \$150 actually costs us money. (3) Some guidelines suggest pledges of 3% to 5% of your income, and we definitely have members who significantly exceed 5%. (4) New members often start with modest pledges, but as their connection with the church deepens, their pledges should follow. So if you are a relatively new member and your pledge has been less than 3% of your income, this would be a good time to raise it a notch.

As our consultant John Gibson told us almost fifteen years ago, we should “give until it feels good!”

The Canvass Team

Thoughts from the Board Chair

What are you doing on March 15th?

As the Chair of the UUCS Board I sometimes feel like I become sucked into some pretty serious institutional *introspection*. My attention is focused on *our* building, *our* teams, *our* services, *our* leadership and *our* finances. Occasionally something reminds me to look “up and out” a bit so that I notice the ways that our congregation is connected to the broader community.

Rick Davis’s recent report to the board reminded us of the special relationship that UUCS has with the Confluence: Willamette Valley LGBT Chorus. On their Website they describe themselves this way: “We are a very diverse group of fun loving people who meet in Salem, OR on Sunday afternoons to sing together. We have been meeting like this since 2000.” I will add that for the most part these weekly gatherings to create wonderful music have been happening in our building. From its inception members and leaders at UUCS have felt called to give Confluence special consideration in using our space as a reflection of our own denominational commitment to the support and affirmation of gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans-gendered people. As a congregational member and leader myself, I just want to say that there is nothing more fun AND uplifting than a concert presented by Confluence!

You too will soon have the opportunity to attend one of these wonderful concerts. Confluence will be presenting “Generations of Peace” on Saturday, March 15 at 7:30 p.m. at Chemeketa Community College. I’ll be there. I hope that you will be too.

I also hope that if you are a member of our congregation who has an appreciation for our relationship with Confluence that you will consider helping to maintain this special connection as a liaison. The UUCS Board is hoping to identify a few church members who would be able to meet periodically with representatives from Confluence in order to deepen our relationship and discern how to best plan and work together. Please let Rick Davis or me know if you would like to be considered for this liaison role.

Diana Nicholson-Nelson

* * * * *

UUCS Board Note

There is no action to report from the February 14 board meeting. Unfortunately, illness on top of unavoidable scheduling conflicts resulted in the lack of a quorum. The remainder of the board met to discuss current church concerns, following two meetings in January.

The next meeting of the Board will be at 7 p.m. **Thursday, March 13**. All congregation members are welcome.

Respectfully submitted,
Phil Cogswell, Secretary

Questions Answered by the Community Ministry Endorsement Committee

As many of you know, the Rev. Connie Yost, an ordained UU Community Minister, joined our congregation last fall. For the last few months, Connie has been working with the Community Ministry Endorsement Committee to outline a process by which her ministry will be officially endorsed by a congregational vote at the annual meeting in May.

Question: Are we hiring or calling the Rev. Connie Yost as a new minister to our congregation?

No. Connie is not being hired or called to the ministry of this congregation. Her ministry takes place primarily in the community, yet needs to be connected to a UU congregation. The Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) of the UUA requires that all community ministers be endorsed by a UU congregation. This endorsement is the formal recognition that the congregation supports the work Connie does in the community, recognizes it as ministry, and acknowledges that her ministry in the community strengthens and enlarges our faith.

Question: What is Connie's ministry?

Connie spent several years in the Los Angeles area where she was the founder, executive director and board co-chair of EarthWorks Community Farm, a job training and leadership development program for at-risk youth employed to help grow and sell organic produce to the low-income community. Her ministry there won several prestigious awards and was supported by a number of our UU churches in the area. Today, EarthWorks lives on in the community under the management of the Los Angeles Conservation Corps.

Connie's current ministry is multi-dimensional. She is employed as a hospice chaplain for Signature Hospice, is on the board of Congregations Helping People, has a private Spiritual Direction practice, and facilitates spirituality groups. She was recently asked to serve as a national board member for the UU Society for Community Ministry. She preaches at various churches in the PNWD and provides backup for Rick for weddings, memorials and other rites of passage. She is a member of the UUCS Green Sanctuary Committee, working on the community garden project.

Question: Is Community Ministry new? How many Community Ministers are there?

Community Ministry has deep roots in our tradition. Joseph Tuckerman began ministering to Boston seamen in 1812. Early on, our ministers taught at Harvard and Meadville, founded cooperative farms, visited the sick and advocated for the poor. Today we have many wonderful UU ministries happening right here in our own district serving in various capacities: as Executive Director of the NE Coalition of Neighborhoods in Portland; as the coordinator of the UU Ministry for Earth; as chaplains in hospitals, hospices and prisons. Kate Lore is social justice minister for First Unitarian Church of Portland. Another serves as coordinator of the UU Legislative Ministry of Washington State; another as a director for Catholic Community Services in Tacoma, WA. There are many more gifted UU lay and ordained ministers throughout the country.

Question; Who is on the UUCS Community Ministry Endorsement Committee?

Hudson Schweikert, Kate Walker, Louise Meyers, and the Rev. Rick Davis. Contact any of them if you have questions or concerns.

Spiritual Practices for a UU Lent

February 27, March 12, March 26 7-9 p.m.

Come explore new connections with Spirit and each other as we learn new ways to deepen our connection to what we hold as holy. Please note the change in dates from what was previously published. For more information, contact the Rev. Connie Yost (More info can be found in the February 6

newsletter.)

The Salon

The next "Salon," a gathering of UUs active in the arts (visual artists, actors, writers, musicians, etc.) for conversation and entertainment, is planned for Monday, **February 25**, at the Blue Pepper Café, mezzanine level from 5:30 – 7 p.m. For information, contact Kristen Hunt or Adele Birnbaum. .

Membership Class on Sunday

If you are interested in joining or just learning about membership in the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem, we invite you to a "Path to Membership" class this coming **Sunday, February 24**. Rev. Rick Davis, along with other congregational representatives and the Membership Team, will host a session on the "Seven Steps to Meaningful Membership." The class, which will last about an hour and a quarter, will meet in the Minister's office immediately following the service. Following the class, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a light luncheon. Child care will be available. All who are considering membership are welcome.

Membership Team

SCUUPS

The next SCUUPS (Salem Coven of UU Pagans) will meet on Wednesday, **February 20** at 8 p.m. at Julia's house. Drumming and experiencing the lunar eclipse are planned. There will also be light refreshments and a wealth ritual.

Kate Walker

Heretical Readers' Forum Starting March 2

The simplest, and most difficult, question in an election year is, "What is the best course for our country?" Only once we have decided that, can we begin to consider which candidates to choose.

Davidson Loehr, a Unitarian minister from Austin, Texas, may help lead us to some answers through the back door, by answering the question, "What is wrong with our country? What is holding us back?"

For Loehr that answer is clear. In *America, Fascism, and God: Sermons from a Heretical Preacher*, a collection of his sermons, Loehr clearly argues that an unholy alliance of corporate money, political power, and religious fundamentalism has hijacked and debased religion, and threatens our political and economic democracy.

Heresy comes from a Greek word meaning "to choose," and Loehr invites us all to join him in heresy—to choose to no longer turn a blind eye, but to look clearly at what has happened to America, and to choose to take religion and our country back from those who have stolen it.

Join the Reader's Forum for a discussion of Loehr's sermons, beginning **Sunday, March 2**, 9:15 to 10:15 (before church). Copies of the book are available from Chelsea Green Press (www.chelseagreen.com), or new and used copies are available from Powell's (www.powellsbooks.com) or Amazon (www.amazon.com). For more information contact me.

Don Wolf

Marion-Polk Food Share & HOAP* Contribution Report

YEAR	2005	2006	2007
FOOD	2,152 lb	2,012 lb	2,379 lb.
CASH	\$802	\$761	\$1,138
HOAP*	\$314	\$760	\$1,492

Thank you very much for your generous contributions.

*Homeless Outreach Advocacy Project: Cash equivalent for clothes and toiletries donations.

*Dick Boyle, Co-Chair
Social Action Team*

Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network

We will be hosting our families from **February 24 through March 2**. Call Loraine Stuart at or Rose Barton to volunteer.

PNWD Annual General Meeting

It isn't too late to sign up for the 2008 Annual General Meeting, to be held in Tacoma at the Hotel Murano, **Friday, February 29-Sunday, March 2**. You are cordially invited to spend the Leap Year weekend with hundreds of Unitarian Universalists and friends from throughout the Pacific Northwest. Cozy up to open minds by listening to compelling speakers, discover new ways to employ your helping hands in workshop presentations, and expand your loving heart by socializing among like-minded folks. We want to see your smiling face in the crowd! Registration information can be found at <http://www.pnwd.org/>.

Performing Arts Team

The UUCS Performing Arts Team monthly meeting is held the first Monday of the month, 7:00 p.m. The next meeting will be **March 3**. Play readings, and acting, vocal, and movement exercises will be offered in addition to the team's business meeting.

All are invited to attend. Ages 9 to 99, you are all welcome!

For information contact me.

Dennis Ehrp

Women's Alliance

The next meeting of the Women's Alliance is on **Thursday, March 6** at 7 p.m. at the church.

Catherine Carlson will be the speaker in the ongoing "Getting to Know You" programs.

All church women are welcome.

Women's Retreat

This year's gathering of UUCS women will be **March 14-16** at The Cedars retreat

center near Oregon City. Registration forms and more information are available on the credenza in Hanneman Fellowship Hall. You can find more information in the February 6 UUCS newsletter or by calling Beth Malouf.

Recordings Available

We always hope you can make the Sunday service, but if you can't and want to hear what went on, a CD audio recording can be made for you through the efforts of John Prohodskey. Just ask John or Phil Cogswell of the communications team. If you can't find them, a member of the Lifelines Lay Ministry can pass the request on. There's no charge, but if you have CD rewritable blanks available, they would be useful.

Proposed Auburn Elementary School Support Committee

We are inviting persons interested in participating to call Rick regarding his proposal for the formation of an Auburn Elementary Support Committee. This committee would have as its purpose the establishment of a special relationship with the school to mentor, tutor and help out in general. Administrators at Auburn School are very receptive to this idea.

*Erin Zysett and Dick Boyle
Social Action Team Co-Chairs*

News of the UUCS Community

Rights of domestic partners are alive and well in Oregon, reflecting our common aspirations for equal justice/equal opportunity without discrimination. Based upon the Court's most recent ruling UUCS' homosexual members and friends have begun the legal process of registering as partners. We would like to recognize and celebrate those of you who have done so. Please contact me with your news!

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Lifelines Team members utilized a weekend retreat at Silver Falls Conference Center to catch their collective breaths, step

back from the press of day-to-day care giving, re-energize and rededicate themselves to the challenges ahead. They were inspired by the Reverend Marcia Schekel, a community minister at Portland's First UU Church.

The baton of facilitating our team's work was passed from Ellen Howard to Jim Koch. Jim presented Ellen with a bouquet of flowers on Sunday to show appreciation for her work. New team members included Janice Carrier, Adele Birnbaum, Kristen Hunt, and Judith VanOsdol.

UUCS member Angela Herrera, living in Boston with her family and attending Harvard Divinity School, has now moved to another level in her progression toward UU ministry, and is formally a "ministerial candidate." She deserves our congratulations!

Luella Wood has left us to return to the familiar turf of eastern Massachusetts, allowing her to live close to her family. Her new address is 4 Hartford Avenue, D-2, Upton, MA 01568.

Condolences: to Don Fries, whose mother died January 31 in Colorado, and to Roger Gillette, whose cousin, Pauline Gillette Hays, died February 7 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Bill and Rhea Devery are the proud grandparents of Violet Trachtenberg, who was called to the Torah as Bat Mitzvah last Saturday at her Portland temple, Havaruh Shalom. Following the service the extended family gathered for the Kiddush and Hamotzi, blessings over wine and bread. Violet is the younger daughter of Loree Devery and Robert Trachtenberg.

Congratulations to George Struble who once again had an award-winning exhibit at a stamp show in North Carolina!

Bill Sea expressed his appreciation to UUCS members for their cards during his bout with cancer. He said that his last chemo treatment is February 18.

Sharing your news, both gloriously happy and sad, allows us to draw closer to one another as a loving and caring community. Please call me or e-mail.

Joan Erickson

Fire Drill

A church-wide fire drill was held in May last year. It was an exercise aimed at identifying any unexpected problems before an actual emergency situation.

1. If you have a child in RE, please do not go to the RE room to find him or her. That would just cause confusion. The RE staff has an evacuation plan and will escort children to the far end of the parking lot, where you can meet them.

2. When you evacuate the building in an actual emergency, please make your way to the Cordon Road side of the parking lot. Stay clear of the area around the front door, as this is where emergency equipment will be arriving.

3. Greeters and celebrants should be prepared to help guide people to the appropriate exits and give whatever other instruction/advice necessary. Also, in an actual emergency, a greeter should stand by the front door to show emergency workers where to go.

4. People who have trouble exiting should proceed to an exit and stand alongside it (but not blocking it) to await assistance. Others, please give them whatever help necessary so everyone can exit as quickly as possible. Note: The sanctuary exit nearest the pulpit has less of a step-down than the one nearest the main entrance.

Phil Cogswell

Turn in your Emergency Info

Remember Ellen Howard's and Kim Wilaman's serio-comic "You are going to die" dialogue some months ago? After this Lifelines Lay Ministry presentation, many people picked up copies of the booklet "Getting Your Affairs in Order" and the sheet "In Case of Emergency." If you haven't turned in at least the sheet, please get it to the office soon. More copies are available in the workroom next to the office.

Thanks to Lifelines and to the seminar sponsored by Portland First Church for making this important information available to us.

UUCS Team Leaders

February 2008

- Communications-* Phil Cogswell
- Fellowship-* Lydia Gutierrez
- Finance-* George Struble
- Green Sanctuary-* Alma Marianos
- Lifespan Religious Education –*
Christine Deblock
Beth Malouf
- Membership-* Anne Alexander
- Operations-* Paul Parmley
De Ann Rathbun
- Performing Arts-* Dennis Ehrp
- Sunday Services -*
Jeff Geissler
Phil Carver
- Social Action-*
Dick Boyle
Erin Zysett
- UU Connections*
Team Council Facilitator

Vicki Cunningham- Board Vice-Chair

* * * * *

SUNDAY SERVICE AND CHURCH SCHOOL

10:30 a.m. (Child Care Available)

Sunday, February 24 **“The Paradox of Surrender”** **The Rev. Richard R. Davis**

Surrendering is not an appealing concept in our society or in our liberal religious movement, so full of self-reliant types. Before surrendering the concept altogether, perhaps it’s helpful to consider it from some different angles. Maybe there’s something more than meets the eye.

Sunday, March 2 **“Immigrant Experience”** **Alma Marianos**

Alma will share her personal experience coming from Egypt to the US and its relevance to today’s political arena.

Sunday, March 9 **“Fascist Use of Religion in America”** **The Rev. Richard R. Davis**

Frankly, I don’t lose a lot of sleep worrying about any kind of fascist takeover in our country. Yet, it may be more of a threat than most of us realize. A highly respected theologian in our movement warned against this threat before his death.

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THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

February 20, 2008

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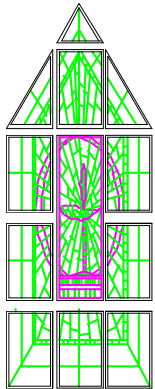
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UUCS Calendar



- Wednesday, February 20 UU Meditation (Compassionate Mind UU Sangha),
7 p.m. (every Wednesday)
Chat & Craft, 7 p.m. (1st & 3rd Wednesdays)
SCUUPS, 8 p.m.
- Thursday, February 21
Canvasser Training, 6:30 p.m.
Dances of Universal Peace, 7 p.m.
- Friday, February 22
Canvass Kickoff setup
- Saturday, February 23**
Canvass Celebration, 6 p.m.
- Sunday, February 24
Readers' Forum, 9:15 a.m. (every Sunday)
Membership Orientation, after the service
SIHN, Sunday through March 2
- Monday, February 25
ARMS Support Group, 7 p.m.
Salon, 5:30 p.m., Blue Pepper Cafe
- Wednesday, February 27
UU Meditation, 7 p.m.
Spiritual Practices, 7 – 9 p.m.
- Friday, February 29
PNWD Annual General Meeting
- Sunday, March 2
Readers' Forum, 9:15 a.m.
NEXT **Newsletter Deadline**, 11:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, March 5
Spiritual Practices Class, 7 - 9 p.m.
UU Meditation, 7 p.m.
Chat & Craft, 7 p.m.