

the Outlook

Welcome to the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Verdugo Hills,
Where all are accepted;
Where we cherish the process of developing our own spiritual path;
Where we respectfully support the paths of others.

November 2011
Volume 16
Issue 11

MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

By the time you read this column, we will be looking ahead to the celebration of Thanksgiving. We may be thinking about the many blessings that we have and looking forward to Thanksgiving dinner with our families and friends. And we will probably be planning to donate some money or food to those who are less fortunate than we are.

But wait! Have we forgotten something? Now, don't misunderstand me. There is nothing wrong with any of the things in the previous paragraph. We certainly have much for which to be thankful, and gratitude is a very important asset. However, gratefulness should not be practiced only at Thanksgiving. It is something that we need to remember all year. And there are many ways that we can do that.

Of course, one way to show our care and concern for others is to continue our Sunday donations to The Burbank Temporary Aid Center and other worthy causes. But people don't just need to eat or have their other needs met at Thanksgiving. They need food, shelter, clothing, medical attention, and other necessities long after the holiday season has come and gone. We can also contribute our time and talents at one of the many volunteer agencies in our community.

However, there is an area of thanks that we may have forgotten in all of our efforts. That is the simple power of a "Thank you" or "Well done" spoken with sincerity to another person. It is a simple thing, really, but one that we often forget. Now, I am not talking here just about good manners. I am talking about the recognition of the positive contributions that other people make to our lives every day.

And happily we can begin right within our own UUCVH community. We can thank those people who set up our worship space every Sunday and who prepare the coffee and provide refreshments every week. We can thank the Board members and other volunteers who take responsibility for the administrative and financial needs of the congregation. We can thank the worship leaders for providing us with inspiring Sunday services. We can thank many people for their supportive efforts for those in our church who need a helping hand and our office administrator for her many contributions. We can thank the Membership Committee for organizing exciting activities throughout the year and the many things they do to make people feel welcome. We can thank the Social Action Circle for their efforts with us in the larger community.

Now, I know that I have only begun to name all the many people and groups that contribute to the positive atmosphere at UUCVH. So let me urge you to continue the job of spreading the thanks. I must warn you, however, that this effort could become contagious. I think I'd like to take that risk. How about you?

Blessings,
Rev. Betty

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Verdugo Hills

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Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford

Ann Miller-Rillo, *Board President*
Howard Richman, *Vice-President*
Cleo Rogers, *Secretary*
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Jeanne Akerley, *Office Manager*
and *Newsletter Editor*

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Office Hours:
Tuesday and Friday
11:00 am to 3:00 pm



Our Mission Statement

"UUCVH is a growing and welcoming community, offering a diverse spiritual landscape for an informed search for truth and meaning. We promote social justice, work to affirm the dignity of all people, and respect the interdependent web of all existence."

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

November. Shorter days. Longer nights. Sweater weather. Changes in the night sky.

Some of us are making plans for Thursday, November 24th . . . Thinking back on Thanksgivings in the past, I will never forget the year the bird was still frozen. My husband cut it up with his saber saw, I put it in the oven, and we all went for a long walk. And then there was the year, just the two of us, when we ate hot dogs and red Jello . . . and laughed. Last year, the creamed onions were a disaster. My Aunt Barbara always cooked a turkey, drove to Pasadena for the community feast for street people. She said it nourished her.

I'll let you know later if this year is “memorable” or just a really nice gathering.

A few days ago I got an email from Kate Wallace at UUSC. Her message was to remind me about the annual Guest at Your Table collection. I know that Jeanne Akerley, our office manager, has already sent in our order for the envelopes . . . I think the envelopes are new this year.

Here are a few ideas Kate included in her email. Some might strike a chord with you. Some may not be feasible for our congregation.

- The Kittitas Valley UU Congregation in Ellensburg, WA, held a Thanksgiving dinner for those with no family in the area and during the event accepted contributions toward Guest at Your Table.
- Children at Mountain Light UU in Elligay, GA, created a thankfulness art project with 100 things that members are thankful for. They unveiled it at the Guest at Your Table opening service to contrast their blessings with those who benefit from UUSC's work.
- UUSC Volunteer Regional Coordinator, Tracey Howe-Koch of Missouri, keeps a Guest at Your Table box by her washing machine to collect spare change she finds in the laundry, and then contributes that amount annually.
- Rev. Amy Zucker Morgenstern of the UU Church of Palo Alto created a "hope calendar" (similar to an advent calendar) for participants to read daily suggested questions, conversation starters, and activities based on *Stories of Hope* as they put money in their Guest at Your Table box.

I call your attention to #3. I used that plan a year or so ago when I wanted to save a particular amount of money. It worked! I shall re-instate it for the Guest at Your Table drive.

However you decide to put money aside for Guest at Your Table, you can be certain in your mind and in your heart that the money you donate will be used to continue UUSC's human rights work.

Many thanks to Bruce Kates for his time and effort securing pianists every week. These musicians are in fact auditioning for our position as pianist at UUCVH.

I send you my heartfelt wishes for a healthy and rewarding month.
Ann Miller Rillo

This Month in UU History

1785: Henry Wheaton was born. While in Denmark he wrote *History of the Northmen*, in which he maintained that the Scandinavians discovered America before Christopher Columbus.

1809: Frances Kemble was born. She married a prominent Philadelphian who owned cotton and rice plantations in Georgia and had nearly 1,000 slaves. Kemble was appalled when she saw slavery at first hand and divorced her husband in 1849. She published *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation* during the Civil War in order to gain sympathy for the cause of abolition.

1826: Joseph Tuckerman began his work with the poor of Boston. He made sure that children went to school, had shoes and clothes and he helped to establish Sunday schools.

1909: Lotta Hitschmanova was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia. She was anti-Nazi and went into exile in Canada. Called “Mother of a Thousand Orphans” and “Auntie Codfish”, she founded the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada in order to help the refugee children of Europe.

All material presented here is from Frank Shulman’s “This Day in Unitarian Universalist History”, now available for browsing in the UUCVH office – take a look!

UUCVH BOARD MEETING MINUTES DRAFT

October 19, 2011

Present: President Ann Rillo, Vice President Howard Richman, Secretary Cleo Rogers, Treasurer Deane Phinney, Trustees Gary Clark, Pat Berberian, Paula Hallowell, Minister Rev. Betty Stapleford.

President Ann Rillo called the meeting to order at 6:10pm. Members checked in and the chalice was lit.

Minutes: Minutes for the meetings of Aug 17, Aug 28, Sept 4, Sept 18 and Oct 16 were approved.

Minister Report: Rev. Betty reported on her recent activities. She noted that she will participate in the Burbank Ministerial Association Thanksgiving service to be held in a Burbank church on November 20 at 7:00pm. Her discussions on World Religions will continue for the next four weeks. Cluster ministers are considering the possibility of a Cluster workshop next March and have extended an invitation to Rev. Tom Owen-Towle to participate as speaker.

Treasurer: Deane Phinney distributed the financial statements dated October 19, 2011. They were discussed and filed for review.

The financial records for the 2010-2011 year will be reviewed with bookkeeper Florence Chase on Sunday, October 30. Finance Committee members will participate.

Plans for Vesper Service: A review of the Membership Committee report showed that plans for the Vesper service to be held at our church on October 26 are complete.

Aesthetics Committee & Facilities Committee: Paula reported on the Aesthetics Committee visit to the Gamble House. She also reported on the proposal to have a railing installed on the parking lot side of the two steps leading to the kitchen and Fellowship Hall. This is considered a safety issue. It was MSC that we accept the bid to modify and install the iron railing that was donated for this purpose.

Canvass Committee: The committee has not yet met. More committee members are needed.

Secretary: It was MSC that Cleo Rogers be officially appointed as board secretary to fill the term until the next election.

Boy Scout/Pergola Project: Forest Hunt plans to begin building the pergola outside the double doors to the hallway this weekend.

Guest at Your Table: It was decided that Guest at Your Table envelopes should be passed out on Sunday, November 6 and should be returned on Sunday, December 4.

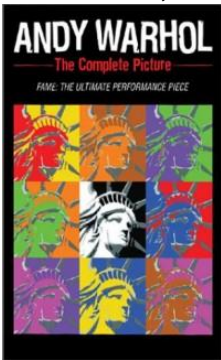
Christmas Day Church Service: A discussion was held on whether to have a church service on the Sunday of Christmas Day since we will have a Christmas Eve service the evening before. It was decided to have a service and Howard agreed to take responsibility. Various informal formats were suggested.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cleo Rogers, Secretary

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Movie Night
Paula Hallowell, Director



NEW DAYS!
Fri., November 11, 2011, 7 PM
"Andy Warhol: The Complete Picture"

2001 Not Rated 104 min. Andy Warhol, one of the most influential artists of the 20th century (who also coined the immortal catchphrase "In the future, everyone will be famous for 15 minutes"), gets the definitive treatment. This film includes a look into his inner circle and examines both his artistic and personal impact on society. From day-glo Marilyns and Elvises to Campbell's soup cans to the groovy 1960s and '70s, step into the limelight of the Warhol world.



HI EVERYONE,
No movie in December. We'll be starting our 4th season of Movie Night this coming 2012 season. If anyone has any movies they would like to suggest, please let me know and I will try to dig them up. See you in January with some fresh, hot popcorn. Thank you, Your Movie Night Maestro, Paula

SOCIAL ACTION CIRCLE

The Christmas gift celebration is well underway. I hope you have received your email from the office and have gone to your friends, co-workers, and associates in other organizations to expand our ability to honor more kids with gifts this year.

You will be receiving information on the child(ren) to buy for very soon. Please bring the gifts, in a gift bag, to church on or before November 27. That's the Sunday after Thanksgiving, so if you're planning on being away that weekend, be sure to deliver the gifts on November 20.

I will need help in transporting the gifts this year. My new car doesn't have as much cargo space as my older one. The gifts will be delivered on November 29 or 30 in the early afternoon. If you have some spare time and a car and are willing to help, see Jerry.

Two or three years ago, we had a service on the genocide and recovery in Rwanda. Much of the recovery was facilitated by the making and selling "Friendship baskets." We recently found out about a particular school in Rwanda whose students are in dire need of uniforms. Without uniforms, Rwanda's street children can easily be perceived as troublemakers or criminals and be taken to jail while walking to school or searching for food at lunch time. A uniform is literally a safety net for these vulnerable children.

Of course, these children usually can't afford the \$12 to buy their own uniforms. Rwanda Partners (at http://rwandapartners.org/uniforms_transform.html) has organized an effort to receive donations for these uniforms. At our last meeting, the members of the Social Action Circle agreed to donate \$120 for ten uniforms for this cause. Check out the website and see if you can help more.

As you read this, another fifth Monday has passed. Several of us celebrated the fifth Monday (and Halloween) by preparing and serving a meal at Ascencia, formerly PATH Achieve Glendale. If past results are any indicator, it was a great success and greatly appreciated by those it was prepared for.

Gratitude is what this season is all about. When we have the opportunity to show our gratitude by helping others, that gratitude is magnified. I know I'm grateful for my church and the many wonderful things that happen here.

Jerry Buchanan, *Chair, Social Action Circle*



**HOLIDAY POTLUCK
FAMILY NIGHT
Saturday, Dec. 10, 2011
6:00 pm**

The holidays are fast approaching. Let's celebrate them with feasting and song! Be sure to mark your calendars for this evening of fun for the whole family.



Can anyone recommend a cleaning lady for Hajira Ahmed after her heart surgery? If so, please let Jeanne Akerley know.



**WORLD RELIGIONS CLASS
Tuesdays, November 1st, 8th
and 15th, 2011
7:00 to 9:00 pm**

Don't miss the opportunity to continue exploring the major world religions with other UUCVH members and friends in a class facilitated by Rev. Betty. So far Judaism and Christianity have been covered. Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism will be next. If you would like to register or get further information, please contact Rev. Betty at bstaple4d@aol.com or 805-630-8117.



HEY, GET BACK TO WORK!

Juliana Korsborn and Noah Miller take a break during the de Benneville Pines Work Week, September 19 to 22, in front of one of the cabins they helped sand and paint from reddish brown to the new regulation Forest Service dark brown to better blend in with the trees.



VALLEY VESPERS AT UU VERDUGO HILLS

We had a nice turnout as we hosted the Valley Vespers Wednesday evening, October 26, 2011. Members attended from the four other churches in our Valley Cluster: Sepulveda, Emerson, Santa Clarita and Studio City. After a beautiful service and a rousing Postlude of "Glory, Glory Hallelujah" that everyone accompanied with kazoos that were distributed, the various congregations renewed their friendships with each other over refreshments in the Fellowship Hall.



NOTES FROM PAULA

WANTED: Set of headphones with stereo plug for our new recorder. Maybe an old pair is hiding in your Hi Fi cabinet? We can use it. Thank you.

And, Jesse Silver, thank you for your wonderful gift of understanding the manual for our new sound recorder and hooking it up.

A Month of Sundays

November 6

“A Time to be Silent”

Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford

It seems that we spend so much time surrounded by the noise of our lives that we forget about the importance of silence. Perhaps if we had the patience to be in silence, we would discover what is truly meaningful. On this Sunday we will spend some of our time investigating and experiencing the gift of silence as a way of tapping into a deeper wisdom and peace that can transform and renew our lives.

November 13

“Astronomical Musings”

John Dobson, *Guest Speaker*

The Wall Street Journal has referred to John Dobson as "one of history's greatest popularizers of science." He almost single-handedly revolutionized backyard astronomy by inventing low-cost telescopes and taking them to city streets. A former Vedantan monk, he has dedicated most of his 96 years to making the wonders of the skies accessible to the public. Weather permitting, he and Donna Smith, a colleague from Sidewalk Astronomers, will set up solar telescopes immediately after the meeting, giving us a chance to make what Mr. Dobson refers to as "a personal connection to the universe." Bring your family and friends!

November 20

“Home Is Where the Home Is – Thanksgiving in the Pulpit”

Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford

What does it mean to have a home? It is not just a bed to sleep in but also a place where we feel safe and welcome. On this Sunday before Thanksgiving, we will express our gratitude for our homes and our compassion for those who do not have homes – the homeless in our community. In this service we will look at some of the ways we can expand our dreams of service with and for others.

November 27

“The Armenian Experience in America”

Osheen Keshishian, *Guest Speaker*

Osheen was born in Jerusalem and came to America in 1956. He has been on faculty of Glendale Community College for 27 years. He has been the founding editor of Zartonk Sport, editor of Nor Or Armenian language semi-weekly in Los Angeles and has been the publisher/editor of the Armenian Observer English language weekly, since 1969.



FLOWERS FOR SUNDAY MORNINGS

Thanks everybody, for your appreciation of the flowers that arrive on the little shelf next to the podium on Sunday mornings. Choosing them and arranging them are happy tasks.

We have Paula Hallowell to thank (yet again!) for relieving anyone from the absolute responsibility of bringing a bouquet every Sunday. Paula has created three arrangements of artificial or dried flowers, each very attractive and quite different from the others, that can be used whenever needed. Paula’s arrangements fit neatly into the space just outside the door to the Minister’s office.

Anyone who finds herself or himself in possession of a perfect bouquet for a Sunday morning is welcome to bring it, and Charlotte and I will bring flowers sometimes, but on the Sundays when neither of those things happen, the master of mistress of ceremonies for the day can choose one of Paula’s arrangements.

Edith Young



Save the date!

- Every Friday Watercolor Class at Manon's -- 10 am
- Tuesday, Nov. 1 **World Religions Class - Islam** -- 7:00 pm
- Sunday, Nov. 6 Salad Luncheon -- noon
- Monday, Nov. 7 Knitting Circle -- 7:00 pm
- Tuesday, Nov. 8 **World Religions Class - Hinduism** -- 7:00 pm
- Wed., Nov. 9 Women's Potluck Luncheon -- 11:30 am
- Friday, Nov. 11 **Movie Night** – Andy Warhol: The Complete Picture-- 7:00 pm
- Monday, Nov. 14 Membership Committee -- 7:30 pm
- Tuesday, Nov. 15 Outlook Deadline
- World Religions Class - Buddhism** -- 7:00 pm
- Wed., Nov. 16 Board Meeting -- 6:00 pm
- Monday, Nov. 17 Committee on Ministry -- 7:30 pm (tentative)
- Sunday, Nov. 20 Early Coffee and Goodies -- 9:30 am
- Social Action Circle** -- noon
- Burbank Clergy Assoc. Interfaith Thanksgiving Service -- 7:00 pm Location to be announced
- Thurs., Nov. 24 Thanksgiving

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