



January 10, 2016

# **WEEKLY CONTACT**

Unitarian Universalist Church of Sarasota (UUCS)

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## **MINISTER'S MESSAGE FROM ROGER FRITTS**

Between Christmas and New Year's, I was near Washington, D.C., visiting family. On the metro to and from the airport, I could see the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, the Jefferson Memorial and the Capitol. As I looked at these beautiful symbols of our nation, I reflected on the fact that a year from now, January 20, 2017, our country will have a new President.

I wonder who it will be. The first woman? The first socialist? The first neurosurgeon? The first billionaire real estate developer? Whoever it is, personally, I will miss President Obama.

None of the current candidates are Unitarian Universalists. However, we have had our share of presidents. Perhaps because I find comfort in the perspective of history, Sunday I will recall the Unitarians who have served as President of the United States, and see if they provide any guidance in the current political season.

## **SUNDAY EVENTS, JANUARY 10**

### **UUCS, 3975 Fruitville Road**

**\* 9 a.m. & 11 a.m. "The Unitarian Presidents," sermon by Rev. Roger Fritts**

On January 20, 2017, a new President will take office. While currently there are no Unitarian Universalists in the running, that has not always been the case. Sunday's sermon will explore the Unitarian love affair with Presidential politics.

**\* Music: 9 a.m. Mindy Simmons, Guitar and Vocals & 11 a.m. Choir; Don Bryn, piano**

**\* 11 a.m. Religious Education (RE):**

**\*\*\* OPERATION 100 SANDWICHES \*\*\***

### **Religious Education Helping Hands & Loving Hearts Project**

On Sunday, January 17th, the RE children and youth will be making sandwiches which will be served to the homeless at Resurrection House. Our goal is to make 100 bag lunches for feeding those less fortunate in our community. We will be making the sandwiches in the West Wing during our RE program time.

To accomplish our mission, we need sandwich making supplies - bread, cold cuts, cheese, plastic bags, etc. You can

help. **Stop by our "Operation 100 Sandwiches" table on Sunday, January 10th and sign on as a "Sandwich Sponsor."** A small donation towards the purchase of the needed items will help us make our goal of 100 lunches. Thank you for helping our RE children and youth show that we care for those in need.

\* **10:05 Forum: "War Is a Racket."** Based on a 1935 book by retired US Marine Corps Major General and two time Medal of Honor recipient Smedley D. Butler, a discussion of how business interests commercially benefit (including war profiteering) from warfare. Presenter, Bill Payton, Moderator, Marie Keeney.

### **Lakewood Ranch**

\* **10:00 a.m. "What Are We Doing Here? What Is It that Calls Us to Be Together?" Sermon by Rev. Margaret Beard**

We will explore the many reasons for joining together in religious community - as individuals, as a group, as someone young or older, as a new person and as someone who has attended many times. Some of the reasons are shared by other religious groups but Unitarian Universalist congregations are unique in a number of ways. Come and find out!

\* **10:00 a.m. Music: Ed Kinder, Keyboard**

\* **We have volunteers on hand to make sure your children are supervised and happy while you enjoy the service.**

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)**

\* **RE Family Meeting - January 10th**

Grab some potluck lunch and join us in the West Wing following the 11 a.m. Service. We will be discussing our plans for the RE program and looking for your input and ideas. Child care will be available.

\* **Martin Luther King Day of Service is Sunday, January 17th.** We will start in the Sanctuary and then begin our MLK Day of Service project: **"Operation 100 Sandwiches."** We will need everyone's help as we make 100 lunches for the homeless served at Resurrection House.

\* **Camp Out - January 23rd, 4:30 pm - ???** Join us for a night under the stars in our East Parking Lot. Pitch a tent and stay the night or just come for the campfire fun. This is a potluck so bring food to share. There will be a fire pit for grilling and marshmallow roasting. Save the date - you don't want to miss the fun.

### **OTHER SUNDAY EVENTS**

\* **Together let's eat less meat. Our Second Sunday potluck on January 10 is sponsored by the Sustainable Eating Task Force.** Bring your favorite vegan or vegetarian dish and help promote a healthier and more viable world. Veggie Nests? Vegan Chili? Spinach Lasagna? Delightful salads? Join us on Sunday after the second service. Meat items will be accepted, but are not encouraged. All are welcome.

\* **The Writing Your Life Story classes are proud to present the publication of their shared stories.**

The book is called "UU Musings" and represents fourteen of our members and friends. Books will be on sale for the next three Sundays for \$12, and all profits will go to the church Transition House Project. If you wish to buy a copy at other times, you may contact June Braggalla at: [juneb22@comcast.net](mailto:juneb22@comcast.net). The book is also available via Amazon.

\* **SERENDIPITY AUCTION TICKETS ON SALE SUNDAY, JANUARY 10.** Be sure to stop by the Auction Information Table and buy your ticket at the bargain price of \$5.00. This ticket covers your admission to the spectacular buffet, and provides you with a bid number. We'll be there also happily taking your donations and renewals for the Auction. We have copies of last year's catalog, and would love to sit with you and help think up new ideas. And what better way is there to both mingle and serve your community at the same time, than signing up as a volunteer? Don't forget to mark your calendar for that special event - THE SERENDIPITY AUCTION - on January 31, right after the second service. In the meanwhile, if you have any questions, contact Anne McFarlane at [Auction@uusarasota.org](mailto:Auction@uusarasota.org).

## **ADULT PROGRAMS**

\* **Adult Programs for Winter: Ring in the New Year with these programs which start very early in January:**

All Things Computer with DeeAnna Dowdle: Smart Phone starts 1/5, Computers and You starts 1/6, and I-Phone and I-Pad starts 1/7.

Getting in shape: Exercise with Dr. Bob, starts 1/12; Tai Chi for Health, starts 1/12; Qigong starts 1/18 (Monday class) and 1/21 (Thursday class). Climate Information and Discussions: Sixth Extinction Book Discussion, starts 1/6, Moral Ground in the Changing Climate, starts 1/10.

Questions about a class? Do you have a class you'd like to offer? Call or email:

DeeAnna Dowdle, 941-350-3571 [DA@DeeAnnaDowdle.com](mailto:DA@DeeAnnaDowdle.com)

Nancy Saum, 703-297-1749 [nancy.saum@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.saum@gmail.com).

\* **Religious Literacy Dialog**

**Exploring Select Books by John Shelby Spong** will be the theme of our dialogs from January 6 through February 10 in preparation for Bishop Spong's program on **February 12 and 13** as described at [uucarasota.com/spong](http://uucarasota.com/spong). *Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism: A Bishop Rethinks the Meaning of Scripture* will be our book for Wednesday, January 6, from 3:30-5:00 pm in the West Wing followed by *Liberating the Gospels: Reading the Bible with Jewish Eyes* on January 13. You do not need to read the books to share in our dialog. To sign up for our Advocates email list, or for additional information, contact David Ryan at [d2mryan@verizon.net](mailto:d2mryan@verizon.net) or 365-4027.

\* **Ever read a book you could not put down?** Once you pick up Elizabeth Kolbert's "The Sixth Extinction," you may just stay up all night and forget to register for the discussion group starting in January. But don't miss the discussion, which happens every **Wednesday afternoon, 4:00-5:00 pm, in January** here at the church. Sign

up by calling the discussion leader Diane Cirksena at 651-253-0552, or at the adult programs bulletin board. Come on Wednesday, January 6 with your copy of the book ... and the first three chapters complete.

**\* Moral Ground in the Changing Climate, an adult education class at Unitarian Universalist Church of Sarasota Sundays 9-10 a.m., West Wing, January 10-February 28, Co-leaders: Lea Hall and Roy Lauridsen**

We know about the fires, floods, and famines, climate injustice, the sixth extinction. Knowing this, what kind of people do we want to be? What virtues do we cultivate? Registration, limited to 25, is now open at the new Adult Programs bulletin board and by email to [climate@uusarasota.org](mailto:climate@uusarasota.org).

For more information, look for the announcement on our website's home page at [www.uusarasota.com](http://www.uusarasota.com) or go directly to the class's page at <http://www.uucarasota.com/moral>

**\* The Writing Your Life Story Groups** are hoping to form a new class in January, if there is enough interest. Class membership is limited to ten. Members are asked to write a story each time and read it to the class. John Yoder will be facilitator and the group will meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at 1:30 p.m. Please contact June Brasgalla, 379-6071, to put your name on the waiting list.

## CARING

**\* If you live alone, become injured or ill and have a pet**, be sure to have a notification card in your wallet letting emergency personnel know whom to contact to care for your pet.

**\* Does the Minister have your Memorial Form on file?** Has your emergency contact information changed since you filled out the form? Update and submit your form for a memorial service and have peace of mind knowing you've made choices easier for your loved ones. The form can be found online at [www.uusarasota.org](http://www.uusarasota.org) or in the church office.

**\* The Caring Committee** offers short term help with rides, meals and companionship. If you are ill or having surgery and would like us to be in touch, please contact Dee Widder at 377-9028 or [DeanaWidder@gmail.com](mailto:DeanaWidder@gmail.com).

**\* Would you like to honor a friend** who passed away or someone who made your day a little brighter or celebrate a birthday, anniversary or your grandchild's accomplishment? Make a Tribute donation today and send your check, with a Tribute form, to the office. Forms are available in the office and online. The Tribute will be acknowledged in the Contact.

## OUR COMMUNITY

**\* Some members have expressed an interest in establishing another Chalice Group** in the late afternoon (4 p.m. or so) on Monday through Friday. If you would be interested in helping to launch this additional group, contact Kim Roden at [kroden356@gmail.com](mailto:kroden356@gmail.com) or 966-5097. Six to eight members and friends are needed to start another Chalice group, and we already have a volunteer to be the facilitator. Chalice groups provide an

opportunity for our congregation's members and friends to discuss issues of their choice in a confidential setting focused on listening. You can also sign up at the Adult Programs table in the courtyard before or after the service.

\* **2016 is here and we need volunteers for Sunday service ushering.** When making your New Year's resolutions, please include signing up to usher. Consider committing for one Sunday each month or even just once. Please let Gail Colella or myself know which service and date you wish to assist and we'll confirm with you.

Early service: 9:00 AM

Regular service: 11:00 AM

Gail Colella, 941-924-2848, email: [Slightlymad1@verizon.net](mailto:Slightlymad1@verizon.net)

Bill Geller, 941-374-4530, email: [Wageller@gmail.com](mailto:Wageller@gmail.com)

\* **Interweave Sun Coast**, a consortium of the Manatee, Sarasota, and Venice UU Congregations, will hold its next meeting on **Saturday January 16, at noon**. Among other topics, we will discuss our new project: determining which long-term care facilities on the Sun Coast are welcoming to the LGBT community and raising awareness of the issues involved. The meeting will be held at the home of the UUCOV minister. Contact Wilda at 924-0706 for questions and directions.

\* **Free 8 x 10 picture and a free Directory** are yours when you participate in our photo sessions beginning January 25. Sign up online at our website. You may purchase additional pictures. Email [DeanaWidder@gmail.com](mailto:DeanaWidder@gmail.com)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

\* **Correction: The Arts Council artist's reception for the Donald Diddams exhibit "Layers" will be held at 12 Noon, immediately following the second service, on Sunday, January 24th** - not on January 17th as previously announced.

\* **Interweave Film:** "Gen Silent" will be shown at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Venice (UUCOV) on **Monday, January 11 at 2:00 PM**. Filmed in Boston over a one-year period, this documentary follows six LGBT seniors as they decide whether to stay open about their sexuality or return to the closet so they can survive in long-term care facilities. Regardless of your age, sexuality, or degree of "outness," this film will resonate with you. After all, each of us loves someone who is, has been, or will be in this situation at some point.

\* **Religious Literacy Dialog: Exploring Select Books by John Shelby Spong** will be the theme of our dialogs through February 10 in preparation for Bishop Spong's program on February 12 and 13 as described at [uucarasota.com/spong](http://uucarasota.com/spong). *Liberating the Gospels: Reading the Bible with Jewish Eyes* will be our book for **Wednesday, January 13**, from 3:30-5:00 p.m. in the West Wing followed by *Why Christianity Must Change or Die: A Bishop Speaks to Believers in Exile* on January 20. You do not need to read the books to share in our dialog. To sign up for our Advocates email list, or for additional information, contact David Ryan at [d2mryan@verizon.net](mailto:d2mryan@verizon.net) or 365-4027.

**\* "Discovering UUCS" - A Newcomer Orientation**

**Saturday, January 16, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

**UUCS - Lexow Wing**

If you are considering membership, this workshop is for you. Reverend Fritts will discuss our history and explore with you what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist and a member of this church. Some of our church leaders will join us for lunch to talk about the many activities here and to get acquainted with you. The Membership Committee provides lunch. Be sure to sign up at the Welcome Center!

**\* Our Sanctuary Concert Series presents "Grande Piano: Chopin & Friends," with pianist Eleonora**

**Lvov on Sunday, January 17, at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary.** The celebrated Russian piano virtuoso will perform works by Chopin, Liszt, Debussy, Ravel, and Gershwin. She has achieved acclaim as a performer and popular recording artist. She will play a broad spectrum of music from the Romantic and Impressionistic eras, offering personal impressions and historical remarks about each piece. Tickets are \$15 and are available at [www.uucsarasota.com/LVOV.html](http://www.uucsarasota.com/LVOV.html) or at the door.

**\* See Sarasota and More**

**January 20**

The January "See Sarasota and More" adventure is a docent tour of the Phillippi Estate on S. Tamiami Trail on Wednesday, January 20. In addition to the tour, we will eat lunch at Sweet Tomatoes in the Landings Shopping Center and visit the large Farmer's Market at the Phillippi Estate. Join us as we learn about the owners of the mansion who were clothiers from the Chicago area, and the mansion which is on the National Register of Historic Places. We will be able to see both floors of the mansion, but there is no elevator. Registration for the trip will take place in the courtyard after both services on **Sunday, January 3 and 10.**

**\* EPISCOPAL BISHOP JOHN SHELBY SPONG WILL SPEAK AT UUCS ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12 & 13! You should attend!**

Bishop Spong is among the most celebrated and influential living theologians.

His career has been marked by his sharp criticism of biblical literalism and much of traditional Christian dogma. He has supported ordination of gay clergy, gay marriage, and election of women to leadership of national churches. And he has been a tireless advocate of separation of church and state, for which he won the AUSCS "Person of the Year award" at its 2015 annual meeting.

After retiring in 2000 after 24 years as the Bishop of Newark, he lectured and taught at Harvard, Drew, the University of the Pacific, and the Berkeley Graduate Theological Union. His books have sold well over one million copies. His online columns reach thousands worldwide. His latest book, *Biblical Literalism: A Gentile Heresy*, will go on sale in the week following his UUCS appearance.

He laments that, during the explosion of human knowledge in the 500 years since Martin Luther initiated the Reformation by posting his 95 theses, Christian churches have largely continued to pretend that the Bible, the creeds, the doctrines and dogmas remain inviolate, unchanged, and unchallenged. But Bishop Spong challenges them with his own 12 theses, which he has restated and sharpened in his online columns in the last four weeks.

To illustrate: He deplores "atonement theology" for presenting a barbaric God and a victimized Jesus, and for turning humans into guilt-filled creatures. He asserts that the phrase "Jesus died for my sins" is not just dangerous, but "absurd." And he condemns appeals to ancient codes like the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount to define and separate good from evil; instead insisting, "contemporary moral standards must be hammered out in the juxtaposition between life-affirming moral principles and external situations."

Want to learn more? Bishop Spong delivers many public lectures each year, but only once years ago did he lecture in Sarasota. Now we can hear and speak to him in person! Don't miss the chance. For details, schedule, fee, and registration information see the UUCS website - <http://www.uucsarasota.com/spong.html>. **Those who register before January 16 get a discount!**

#### **OUR COMMITMENTS - SOCIAL JUSTICE**

**The UUCS Social Justice Committee addresses issues of homelessness and hunger, economic justice, human rights and the health of our planet. To learn more, attend our noon meeting on the second Tuesday of the month, join the mailing list at [justice@uucarasota.org](mailto:justice@uucarasota.org) or stop by the Social Justice table on Sunday.**

\* **Social Justice Meeting, Tuesday, January 12th in the Lexow Wing at noon.** All are welcome.

\* **Americans United Lynn Here January 24th** Barry Lynn, Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State will speak at both services and the following day at Temple Sinai. "Separation Anxiety: How Safe Is True Religious Freedom?" Book signing afterwards. For more information visit the Social Justice table or [www.aucarasota.org](http://www.aucarasota.org)

\* **Backpack Volunteers** sign up now for February and March packing at the church. See Sara or Don Slate in the courtyard or email [dsslate@comcast.net](mailto:dsslate@comcast.net).

\* **Single-Person Blankets**, backpacks, zippered bags, and men's pants waist 32 and 34 are still needed at Resurrection House. For pick up, contact Sarah Risher at [sarahrisher@mac.com](mailto:sarahrisher@mac.com) or 781-367-8515 or bring your donations to church. The drop off table is just outside the sanctuary. "I would like to say 'thank you' to the many thoughtful people who have already brought items. They are so appreciated by the recipients." - Sarah

\***Bethesda House Food Donations.** Canned food (pork-and-beans, ravioli are favorites), travel size toiletries, paper products (toilet paper and towels). Bring your donations on Sunday. Thank you!

\* **Eating Healthy When Eating Out.** Here are two guides for finding healthy restaurants. Both are local and one is perfect when traveling, even out of the country. Also find them on the church website under Social Justice/Climate Change.

\* **Attend Interfaith Climate Conference** January 28-30 at Northland Church in Longwood, Florida. The Paris Climate Talks challenged local communities to take the lead in mitigation, adaptation and compassion. More at UUJusticeFL.org.

\* **Influence Florida's Legislature?** Learn how at UU Justice Florida Legislative Day February 8-9 in Tallahassee. Learn about Florida's legislative process and how your UU values can influence it. Training by League of Women Voters. Register at UUJusticeFL.org.

**Also at our courtyard table today:** Organic, Fair Trade coffees, teas, cocoa, olive oil; collection box for school points labels from food boxes; collection jug for non-recyclable plastic caps to benefit a local school.

## **SUNDAY EVENTS, JANUARY 17**

### **UUCS, 3975 Fruitville Road**

\* **9 a.m. & 11 a.m. "Black Lives and Police Lives Matter," by Rev. Roger Fritts**

\* **Music: 9 a.m. & 11 a.m. Amy Connours, singer; Don Bryn, piano**

\* **11 a.m. Religious Education (RE):** Classes are offered during the service for children and youth.

\* **10:05 Forum: "What are Gun Rights Advocates Thinking?"** Quotes from speeches by Charlton Heston, the former President of the National Rifle Association. An attempt to enable those in support of gun safety regulations to understand the point of view of gun rights advocates. Presenter Fredric Sirasky; Moderator, John Stinespring.

### **Lakewood Ranch**

\* **10:00 a.m. "The Unitarian Presidents," video sermon by Roger Fritts**

On January 20, 2017, a new President will take office. While currently there are no Unitarian Universalists in the running, that has not always been the case. Sunday's sermon will explore the Unitarian love affair with Presidential politics.

\* **10:00 a.m. Music: Ed Kinder, Keyboard; Claudia Holmes, Recorders**

\* **We have volunteers on hand to make sure your children are supervised and happy while you enjoy the service.**

