



# **WEEKLY CONTACT**

October 4, 2015

Unitarian Universalist Church of Sarasota (UUCS)

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

The IRS says, "churches and religious organizations are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office. . . . Public statements of position (verbal or written) made by or on behalf of the organization in favor of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office clearly violate the prohibition against political campaign activity."

A confession: In my sermon on September 20, I came close to breaking this rule when I made a joke about a candidate for President. Because all humor contains an impulse, however faint, of aggression or even malice, some people could understand this as opposition to this candidate. In my role as minister I do not endorse or oppose any candidate. The church does not endorse or oppose any candidate. We welcome members who are Republican, Democrat, or Independent.

The IRS also says, "The political campaign activity prohibition isn't intended to restrict free expression on political matters by leaders of churches or religious organizations speaking for themselves, as individuals. Nor are leaders prohibited from speaking about important issues of public policy."

I can, for example, put a bumper sticker on my car (if I own the car). I can continue to offer my thoughts on issues of public policy. However, I will restrain myself when it comes to humor about candidates (no matter how tempted I am).

## **SUNDAY EVENTS, OCTOBER 4, 2015**

### **"What Makes Us Different from Other Religions?" sermon by Rev. Roger Fritts**

A few years ago researchers conducted a nationwide study on the subject of church affiliation. The results showed that more than 626 thousand adults in this country call themselves Unitarian Universalists. Yet given that the population of this country is more than 320 million, 626 thousand is but a drop in the bucket. We are dwarfed by the Methodists, who claim more than 7 million members, and by the Southern Baptists who claim more than 15

million members. We are a mere blip on the radar screen of the Roman Catholics who claim 69 million people as members in the United States.

Because of our size, I often find myself in the situation of trying to explain my religion to people who have never heard of Unitarians or Universalists. I find myself in a conversation where someone asks me what I do for a living. I explain that I am a Unitarian Universalist minister. The people I am talking with often respond by saying that they know nothing at all about Unitarian Universalism. They ask me to explain my religion to them, in a few words. This sermon is my answer.

### **UUCS, 3975 Fruitville Rd**

**\* 10:30 a.m. Music: Choir; Don Bryn, piano.**

**\* 10:30 a.m. Religious Education for Young People**

Loving care for infants and toddlers is available, and classes for older children and Youth Group.

**\* 9:30 Forum: "School Attendance Issues: A Challenge to Educational Improvement"**

Dr. Laura Kingsley, Executive Director of Elementary Education for Sarasota County Schools, will discuss the challenge of getting students to show up for school on a regular basis. Is it a student problem, a parent problem, a school problem or a societal problem? What can be done to ensure students are present to receive the benefits of education? Moderator: John Stinespring; Presenter: Dr. Laura Kingsley.

### **LAKEWOOD RANCH, The River Club, 6600 River Club Blvd, Bradenton, 34202**

**\* 9:00 a.m. Music: Ed Kinder, keyboard; Claudia Holmes, Recorder**

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

**\* 10:00 a.m. Join us in the CaddyShak after the service for brunch and fellowship.**

### **OTHER SUNDAY EVENTS**

**\* As a green sanctuary, we like to use ceramic mugs for our coffee hour.** That entails washing them, and it is difficult to find people willing to stay after church for half an hour to do that job. Please raise your hand if you are willing to do that job once a month, or even if you are willing to be a substitute from time to time. Contact June Braggalla at [juneb22@comcast.net](mailto:juneb22@comcast.net).

**\* Bed and Breakfast Program Volunteer Request**

One of the better kept secrets at our church is the Bed and Breakfast program. It is an ongoing fundraiser and an income line item in our budget. Currently we have seven members who host guests in their homes in the manner of

the original bed and breakfast concept. We advertise in *UU World* and also in the *UU're Home* internet site, and we receive requests from around the country.

As coordinator, I ask prospective guests about allergies to pets or foods, sleeping arrangements, what they drink in the morning, and any other special needs so hosts can decide if they would be able to accommodate the guest. Guests are very interesting to talk with, and they very much appreciate being able to stay with someone for only \$70 per night/room, which is always donated to the church. We need additional hosts, and for those interested in volunteering or learning more, please contact me at 922-0883, or at [tmovers1@verizon.net](mailto:tmovers1@verizon.net). I will be in the courtyard immediately after the Sunday service.

Ron Brown, Bed and Breakfast Coordinator and Host

## **FLEA MARKET NOVEMBER 14**

\* **Bring us your clean books, housewares (no clothes) and jewelry yearning for a new home.**

Beginning Wednesday, November 11, bring your stuff to the church. Sign-up to volunteer the week of the sale. Come to the Wine & Cheese Friday (11/13) and Big Sale on Saturday (11/14). Feel great about supporting our church!

## **ADULT PROGRAMS**

\* **The French Conversation Group** will resume meeting on Mondays from 7 - 8:30 p.m. in the Library. Anyone with a working knowledge of French is welcome. If interested, call Eva Frank, 925-4643 or send an email [evita618@verizon.net](mailto:evita618@verizon.net).

\* **Spiritual Book Group** has chosen two books to enjoy for this month: *The Four Agreements* and *The Mastery of Love*, both written by Don Miguel Ruiz. The group will meet on **Monday, October 5**, 10 a.m. to noon. Call Sue Cohen at 952-3466.

\* **Local Food Co-Op?**

The church's Sustainable Food Task Force is gauging interest in a UU Food Co-Op featuring local farm fresh vegetables. If you are interested in more information, sign up at the bulletin board, or contact DeeAnna at 359-3571 or [DA@DeeAnnaDowdle.com](mailto:DA@DeeAnnaDowdle.com).

For information about Sarasota's Eat Local Week, now through October 30, visit [www.transitionsrq.org](http://www.transitionsrq.org).

\* **Religious Literacy Dialog**

Are you interested in religious literacy issues? Then join us at our Wednesday dialogs from 4:00 to 6:00 pm in the West Wing sponsored by Advocates for Religious Literacy. One item for discussion this week is *Amazing Grace in an Evidence-Requiring World*. We also discuss contributions by individuals as well as articles from Westar Institute's *Fourth R Magazine*. If you can't attend, you can participate by signing up for our email list. You can read the thoughts of others and share your own ideas if you so desire. No advanced reading is required. To sign up for the email list, or for additional information contact David Ryan at [d2mryan@verizon.net](mailto:d2mryan@verizon.net) or 365-4027.

## CARING

- \* **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.
- \* **Haven't seen someone you know?** Please give them a call and let Dee Widder know, with their permission, if there's a health problem.
- \* **The Caring Committee** offers short term help with rides, meals and companionship. If you are 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). If you can offer a ride to a doctor's appointment or to church or need a ride, please contact Marcia Ryan at 365-4027.
- \* **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

- \* **Our website, [www.uusarasota.org](http://www.uusarasota.org), has been updated** with a new church Directory dated early September. Scroll to Members Corner, click and add the password. Call the office if you don't have it. You can check out birthdays, the get together dinners, Caring and other helpful topics.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- \* **Roger Fritts will be speaking on *Darwin as a Unitarian*** at the Humanists of Sarasota Bay meeting at Roskamp Center, 1226 N. Tamiami Trail on **Monday, October 5**. The program begins at 7 p.m.
- \* **Cinema Conversations** - The next meeting will take place on **Wednesday, October 7th**. We will be discussing two movies, "Grandma" and "Learning to Drive." These Comedy/Dramas have some common threads. View them on your own and then join us in the Lexow Wing at 7 pm this Wednesday.
- \* **Together let's eat less meat.** Our Second Sunday potluck on **October 11** is sponsored by the Sustainable Eating Task Force. This event will feature vegetarian and vegan entrees. We encourage potluck participants to contribute to the potluck in keeping with our theme. For questions, contact Loni Zeichner at [gzeichner@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:gzeichner@tampabay.rr.com) or by phone at 351-7785. Stuck for ideas? Just ask and Loni will send recipe samples for you to consider. All are welcome whether or not your contribution is meatless.
- \* **Thanksgiving Potluck:** Each year we hold a potluck on Thanksgiving Day. If you would like to help plan this year's event, please come to the planning session on **Sunday, October 11**, at 11:45, in the West Wing. Contact Suzie Brucklacher with questions.

**\* See Sarasota and More**

This year's series of monthly adventures will begin on **Monday, October 12** with a visit to the Ringling Museum of Art to view their permanent and current exhibits as well as the gardens and grounds. We will gather at the church at 11:00 and leave at 11:15 in carpools to drive to Hotel Indigo for lunch. This has become a favorite lunch spot because they give us a separate room, the food is delicious and the service is excellent. After lunch we will go to the Ringling and view the art works and gardens on our own. We will be back at church by 3:30. There is no charge for the Ringling Museum on Monday. We will have options for our lunch menu with a set price of \$20.00 which includes the entree, dessert, beverage, tax, and tip. Please be prepared to pay the \$20.00 when you sign up, by cash or check made out to Kathy Cook.

Sign-up sheets will be available at a table in the courtyard before and after the service this Sunday, October 4. These outings are a great way to meet people in the church, enjoy a meal together, and have fun and educational experiences.

**Save the Date:** Our next adventure will be **Tuesday, November 10** - a day trip to St. Petersburg and the Dali Museum to see the current M. C. Escher exhibit and have lunch at the Hangar Restaurant.

**\* UU Artists Market on Sundays, November 1 and November 22 from 9 AM - 12:30 PM**

Church members and church friends with small handcrafted items such as clothing, glass items, jewelry, pottery, photography, and others, may request a table on which to display and sell their items.

Each artist/craftsperson must be responsible for their personal table set-up, security, manning and dismantling their work each Sunday.

Space is limited to the first six (6) requests. All questions and requests should be directed to Kathy Cook, [kcCook2@mac.com](mailto:kcCook2@mac.com). A donation to UUCS of \$15 for one Sunday and \$25 for two Sundays is requested.

**\* Partner Church Dinner on Friday, November 6th.**

Your Partner Church committee welcomes you to a Fund-raising dinner on November 6 from 5 to 7 PM. **Tickets are on sale this Sunday**-- \$10 per person, \$20 per family. All funds raised will enhance the Korond Education Scholarship Fund.

**\* Big musical coming to the church on November 8**

*"I'm tired of living and afraid of dying*

*"While old man river he just keeps rolling along"*

These lines from "Old Man River" keep telling us about the everlasting quandary of life. Now, this along with some of the greatest songs ever to come out of America's love affair with Broadway musicals will be presented in the church Sanctuary on **November 8** with the concert **GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY**, featuring two of Sarasota's best vocalists.

We'll provide more details as we get closer to the event but, if you're curious, check the home page of the church's website or go to [beachsun.org/concerts/](http://beachsun.org/concerts/). Buy tickets in advance online at [beachsun.org/concerts/tickets/](http://beachsun.org/concerts/tickets/). This is the 5th year of outstanding concerts at UUCS.

\* **First Presbyterian will be hosting the annual community interfaith Thanksgiving service**, which will be held in their sanctuary on Sunday evening, **November 22 at 7:00 pm**.

\* **Call to all UUCS artists!** The UUCS Arts Council will be hosting the annual "Members' Show" art exhibit in December, just in time for the holidays! Each member is invited to submit up to two of their own artworks to be hung in the Lexow Wing Gallery. Receiving of artworks will be on **Friday morning, December 4th** followed by the opening reception on **Sunday, December 6th**. So wake up your inner artist, and show us your best work! More details to come.

## **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@uuserarasota.org](mailto:justice@uuserarasota.org) or stop by the Social Justice table on Sunday.**

\* **Chocolate Prices Going Up:** Cocoa prices worldwide are going to impact our next order of Organic, Fair Trade chocolate bars. Now is the time to stock up. Still \$4 per bar at the Social Justice table.

\* **Meals on Wheels: Kitchen Call!** On Tuesday mornings, occasional substitutes are needed to volunteer in the kitchen. Come in at 8 a.m., scoop salad into cups, enjoy a coffee break and then scoop vegetables into containers. We are finished by 10:15. For more information, contact Dee Widder at [deanawidder@gmail.com](mailto:deanawidder@gmail.com) or 377-9028.

\* **Come And Get 'Em! Veg Recipes.** To encourage earth-healthy eating, the Sustainable Food Task Force is posting veg recipes on the Social Justice section of the church website. Also check out "Reasons To Try Vegan" by Shakti Marquis, link on the recipe page.

\* **Are You Volunteer No. 76?** Are you ready to join 75 members and friends who help pack food during the school year for children at Wilkinson Elementary and two other schools? Talk to Don or Sara at the Backpack table or [sdslate@comcast.net](mailto:sdslate@comcast.net).

\* **Brady Campaign Bayfront Witness** for gun background checks has resumed on Thursdays from 4-5 p.m. at the Kissing Statue. Signs provided. Wear white. Friends and leashed pets are welcome. For more information, contact Nancy or Dave Evans at [nadaevans@comcast.net](mailto:nadaevans@comcast.net).

\* **Sunday Food Favorites.** Not sure what to donate from your cupboard on Sundays? Soup, spaghetti, sauce, canned vegetables and toilet paper are always needed at Bethesda House. Look for the collection bin on the Sanctuary walkway.

\* **Invite Your Friends to Support Change.** You have probably signed one or both petitions supporting state constitutional amendments to expand voter rights and solar development. You can invite others to do the same: pick up 5 blank petitions at the Social Justice table (with a simple instruction sheet.) Return the signed petitions, and we'll submit them for you. Thank you for your advocacy for restorative justice and the climate.

\* **Help Refugees in Europe.** The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee asks for immediate help in two ways: (1) sign the online petition asking Secretary of State Kerry to raise the number of refugees allowed into the U.S. to 200,000, (2) help the UUSC raise \$250,000 for immediate, direct assistance to refugees. [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)

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

### **COMING NEXT SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11**

\* **10:30 a.m. "Are Unitarian Universalists Christians?" sermon by Rev. Roger Fritts**

Because we do not require a belief in God, or Christ's divinity, or the trinity, Orthodox Christian groups classify us as non-Christian. However, do I accept this conservative definition of Christianity? The sermon will be a summary of my answer.

\* **10:30 a.m. Music: C.Y. Hong, violin; Don Bryn, piano**

\* **9:30 Forum: "Jailhouse Nation; Criminal Justice Reform,"** The U.S.A. locks up more of its citizens than any other country. How did we get to this point and what can we do?

This discussion will be led by Adam Tebrugge, staff attorney for the ACLU of Florida. He has been a criminal defense attorney for over thirty years. He is now working full time for criminal justice reform

Tebrugge graduated New College of Florida in 1982 and the Florida State University College of Law with high honors in 1984. He was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1985 and spent 23 years at the Public Defender's Office. Adam became a Board Certified Criminal Trial attorney in 1999, a distinction held by less than 1% of all attorneys in Florida. He was also the host of the television show "Law and Sarasota" which has been aired on The Education Channel in Sarasota County since 2005. Adam serves as an adjunct professor at the Thomas Cooley Law School, where he teaches "Death Penalty Seminar."