



# **WEEKLY CONTACT**

January 17, 2016

Unitarian Universalist Church of Sarasota (UUCS)

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

This Sunday after the second service, we will hold a special congregational meeting to consider the ordination of Katie Culbert to the Unitarian Universalist ministry. Ordination is a ritual that confers on an individual the authority to be a minister. As our intern student minister, Katie participated in our services nearly every Sunday for two years, September 2013 to May 2015. In May she graduated from Meadville-Lombard Theological School in Chicago.

Congregational polity governs our church, as it does all Unitarian Universalist congregations. Congregational polity means that all power arises from congregation. In contrast, in episcopal polity, the bishops control the church, and in Presbyterian polity, a council of elders is in charge.

Like other Unitarian Universalist churches, our own church has a modified form of congregational polity. We have a board that acts for the congregation in the monthly management of the church. However, we reserve certain powers only for the congregation, such as the vote to ordain someone,.

As you see, ordination recognizes not just one person's abilities, but the power, sovereignty and tradition of the congregation as well. I invite all members who are able to participate in our congregational meeting after the second service this Sunday.

## **SATURDAY EVENT, JANUARY 16**

**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 potluck meeting will be held at the home of the UUCOV minister and his wife, Linda & Khlebar Van Zandt. Contact Wilda at 924-0706 for questions and directions.

## **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**

**Mezzo Soprano, Amy Jo Connours.** Ms. Connours is a prominent soloist and is active in many of Sarasota's finest organizations. She is currently serving as the alto section leader for Sarasota's premiere professional ensemble, Gloria Musicae, in addition to adding her voice to Key Chorale, Sarasota's symphonic choir, as a frequent soloist. She also spent several years singing with the ensemble, Three Divas and the Dons, where she performed with four other musicians, arranged music and choreography. She is a frequent guest artist for the Sarasota Artist Series Concerts, has been the guest soloist for Soloisti D'Oneco, and has toured through Europe in Spain, Ireland and Scotland. She holds a B.A. in Music from Florida State University and also plays viola.

\* **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.**

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

\* **"Operation 100 Sandwiches" is happening this Sunday.** We will need the help of all the children and youth as we make 100 lunches for the homeless served at Resurrection House. We will start in the Sanctuary with a "Story of All Ages" to inspire us and then move into the West Wing for our sandwich project.

\* **Camp Out - January 23rd, 4:30 pm - ???** Join us for a night under the stars in the UUCS 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. Need camping equipment? E-mail Susan at: [dre@uusarasota.com](mailto:dre@uusarasota.com).

## **OTHER SUNDAY EVENTS**

\* **A Special Meeting of members will be held this Sunday, January 17 immediately following the second service.** The purpose of the meeting is to determine whether this congregation will approve the recommendation of the Board of Trustees to offer ordination to **Katie Culbert**, our former intern minister. Please plan to attend.

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

\* **PHOTO DIRECTORY - for all Members and Friends.** Please sign up to have your picture taken so we'll know who you are. A free 8x10 colored photo is given to every participant. You may purchase more pictures for a fee. Go to our website, scroll down the middle of the page and sign up. The dates are January 25-29. Bring your dog or cat, bring your grandkids.

\* **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 few 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 Bragalla at: [juneb22@comcast.net](mailto:juneb22@comcast.net). The book is also available via Amazon.

## **ADULT PROGRAMS**

\* **EXERCISE WITH DR. BOB** - Would you like to improve your mobility, posture, and balance? Come join Robert Downie, MD. Tuesdays, from now to February 16, 10:30 a.m. - 12 noon. \$5 for semester. Please bring an exercise mat with you. Questions? Contact Dr. Downie [rdownie@comcast.net](mailto:rdownie@comcast.net) 609-417-2460.

## **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**

\* **UUs ate less meat together this past Sunday** at our second successful veg-centric potluck. Fifty or more contributions were brought to the event. Of particular note was the gender-balance of the setup and cleanup teams. Many thanks to all.

\* **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.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

\* **The UUCS Board of Trustees will be holding its monthly meeting on Tuesday, January 19, at 7:00 p.m. in the Lexow Wing.** This meeting is open to our church community.

\* **Congratulations to our January 8th Freethinkers speaker, Adam Tebrugge,** who accurately predicted to our audience that the Supreme Court would overturn Florida's Death Penalty Law. Just one of the many good reasons to attend FreeThinkers!

\* **SAVE THE DATES, FreeThinkers Series - Fridays at 10 a.m.:**

January 22 - An Act of Civil Disobedience, Douglas Hughes

February 5 - Shade in the Sunshine State, Liz Coursen

March 4 - Daughters of Susan B Anthony, Gayle Williams

March 18 - She-Roes of Africa, Debi Frock

April 1 - Compassion & Choices, Winnie Downes

May 6 - Topic Pending, Dr. Robin Shapiro

June 3 - Pending

\*Speakers and/or Topics Subject to Change

\* **Church Life 5.5 - In Celebration of our Free Religion.** You are invited to the West Central Cluster day of workshops at the UU Church of Tampa on **Saturday, February 6**, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Five workshops will be led by experts in congregational life. The Keynote Address will be presented by the Rev. Kenn Hurto, "Our Name Should Have Been: The Free Church in America." Find details and the registration form in the office. Jeff Harper,

President of the West Central Cluster of UU Congregations says, "This promises to be a good day for area UUs to get together."

**\* HONORING THE COURAGE OF PROGRESSIVE PASTORS**

**On February 12 and 13, the Church will host a special Rose Frank lecture series led by the Right Reverend John Shelby Spong, the retired Episcopal Bishop of Newark and one of the world's leading progressive theologians.** He sharply opposes biblical literalism and much of traditional Christian dogma. He rails against racism and discrimination against women, supports gay marriage and the LGBT communities, and advocates separation of church and state. He lectures widely and his books have sold well over one million copies. His online columns reach thousands worldwide.

Appearing with Bishop Spong will be his friend, Rev. Dr. Roger Ray, the pastor of the Community Christian Church of Springfield, MO, a very unusual non-denominational progressive church that he founded almost a decade ago after departing a Disciples of Christ ministry. Rev. Dr. Ray holds a doctorate from Vanderbilt Divinity School, was a 2004 Merrill Fellow at Harvard Divinity School, has authored two highly-regarded books, and has recently delivered seminars on progressive faith in the U.S., Scotland and England. He has thousands of followers who watch and hear his weekly sermons on YouTube and iTunes.

Rev. Ray's church earns kudos for its radical compassion, care and advocacy for the poor, sick, and vulnerable. In his book, *Progressive Faith and Practice*, he argues that "a spiritual sense of connection to the poor, war refugees, the uninsured, the uneducated, and the hopeless is the best response we can give" to economic systems that favor the elite.

Some of the fine musicians who brilliantly perform the music that makes Rev. Ray's Sunday services so unique will also appear in our lecture series. They are led by Sean Spyles, the CCC's director of music, who is a seasoned opera vocalist with degrees in music and opera, who knows how to make the sanctuary "rock!"

Curious? Mark your calendar for Friday and Saturday, February 12-13, and make your reservations. For details, schedule, fee, and registration information see the UUCS website. **Registrations before January 18 receive a reduced fee.**

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- \* **MLK Unity Walk.** UUs and justice partners, Move to Amend and PEACenter, will join in the "Stride Toward Freedom" Unity Walk on MLK Day, January 18. Step off at 11 a.m. from the Robert L. Taylor Community Center (Myrtle St. & Rt. 301). Arrive MLK Park, next to Ringling College (1.5 miles). Enjoy tributes, performances, vendors and food until 6 p.m.
- \* **Move to Amend Co-Founder, David Cobb will be speaking at Fogartyville on Tuesday, January 19** at 7 p.m. on corporate personhood and reclaiming democracy. 525 Kumquat Ct, Sarasota. Free.
- \* **Americans United, Barry Lynn, Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State will speak at both services on January 24th** and the following day at Temple Sinai. "Separation Anxiety: How Safe Is True Religious Freedom?" Book signing after. For more information visit the Social Justice table or [www.ausarasota.org](http://www.ausarasota.org)
- \* **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](http://UUJusticeFL.org).
- \* **Influence Florida's Legislature.** Learn how at the annual UU Justice Florida Legislative Day February 8-9 in Tallahassee. Learn about Florida's legislative process and how our UU values can influence it -- an educational and fun day. Training by League of Women Voters. Register at [UUJusticeFL.org](http://UUJusticeFL.org).

## DOING JUSTICE

- \* **Habitat for Humanity** may be restarting in the area. Work crews and snack crews will be needed. Watch this space for more information.
- \* **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. Bring your donations Sunday to the table just outside the Sanctuary.
- \* **Bethesda House Food Donations.** 14-oz. canned food (pork-and-beans, ravioli are favorites), travel size toiletries, paper products (toilet paper and towels). Bring your donations on Sunday. Thank you!
- \* **Easier to Eat Healthy When Eating Out.** Here are two guides for finding healthy restaurants. Both are local and one has a free phone app that is perfect when traveling, even out of the country. Also find them on the church website under Social Justice/Climate Change.

\* **French Roast and Midnight Sun** coffees are back in stock now at the Sunday table!

**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 24**

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

\* **9 a.m. & 11 a.m. "Separation Anxiety: God and Government in 2016," Sermon by: Rev Barry Lynn, Americans United for Separation of Church and State**

Rev. Barry W. Lynn has served for over two decades as Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, a Washington, D.C. based national organization dedicated to preserving the Constitution's religious liberty provisions.

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

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

\* **10:05 Forum: "Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis,"** Income disparity and its effect on our children. A discussion of the book by Robert Putnam. Presenter, Verna Safran, Moderator, DeeAnna Dowdle.

### **Lakewood Ranch**

\* **10:00 a.m. "Insights Drawn from Creation Spirituality," sermon by Rev. Charles J. Stevens**

\* **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.**