



March 27, 2016

WEEKLY CONTACT

Unitarian Universalist Church of Sarasota (UUCS)

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE FROM ROGER FRITTS

Why do Unitarian Universalists celebrate Easter? Most of us do not believe that, after a horrible death, Jesus came back to life. In the northern hemisphere, we do celebrate spring. (One year I celebrated Easter with Unitarians in Auckland, N.Z. There, celebrating the harvest of kiwi fruit, wine grapes, apples, and wool was more appropriate.) Of course, the celebration of spring has special meaning for New England Unitarian Universalists who have struggled with the cold and darkness of winter.

Here in Florida some year-round residents celebrate the departure of winter visitors. They anticipate less traffic, fewer waits at restaurants and the return (on April 10) to one service at 10:30 at the Sarasota Unitarian Universalist Church. However, for many of us the departure of our winter guests is more an experience of grief instead of celebration. I love the visitors and I miss them when they go north.

Personally, I celebrate Easter because I value Jesus' message of love. I celebrate Easter with joy because in millions of people the ideals that Jesus taught continue to live on. That is the point of my sermon this Sunday.

SUNDAY EVENTS, MARCH 27

UUCS Sarasota, 3975 Fruitville Rd, Sarasota

*** 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. "Honk If You Love Jesus," an Easter Sermon by Rev. Roger Fritts**

This will be an autobiographical sermon about my own journey as a born-and-raised American Unitarian Universalist coming to grips with Jesus. This sermon will be presented via video at a later date at Lakewood Ranch.

*** Music: 9:00 a.m. Mindy Simmons; 11:00 a.m. Choir, Don Bryn, piano**

*** 10:05 Forum: "Nonviolent Communication"**

The Center for Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a global organization that supports the learning and sharing of NVC, and helps people peacefully and effectively resolve conflicts in personal, organizational, and political settings. Presenter, Mercedes Frace, Communications Coordinator, CNVC; Moderator, Marie Keeney.

Lakewood Ranch, The River Club, 6600 River Club Blvd, Bradenton 34202

* **10:00 a.m. "The Dublin Unitarians and Easter," Video Sermon by Rev. Roger Fritts**

* **Music: TLC Trio: Tony Horowitz and Claudia Holmes, Recorders; Leonard Zwilling, Keyboard**

* **10:00 a.m. In-service Childcare Provided**

* **11:00 a.m. Food and Fellowship**

We invite you to stay after the service for brunch and more fellowship.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

* We're celebrating **Easter this Sunday, March 27th**. Following our time in the service, there will be an Easter Egg Hunt for the Pk-1st graders and a Treasure Hunt for 2-5th graders and youth.

* **Sunday, April 3rd, is our UUUCS - Youth Group Video Night**. We invite anyone 6th grade through high school to join us, from 6-7:30 p.m, in the Youth room as we watch episodes from "The Simpsons." What can we learn from Homer about faith, world religions and social issues? The Youth are encouraged to bring friends - there will be pizza & snacks.

* **A Campfire Night is planned for Saturday, April 16th**, starting at 6:00 pm. Join us for a potluck dinner, fun and friendship around the campfire. Drinks and s'mores are provided. All ages welcome!

* Mark your calendar, **The RE Pancake Brunch is April 24th**. You won't want to miss this annual event! All proceeds will be donated to a charity of the children and youth's choosing. Tickets will be on sale soon.

OTHER SUNDAY EVENTS

* **Share the Plate with Prospect House**

Where would you turn to get support for mental health issues or disabling emotional problems? Where would you find a caring, encouraging environment to provide help for someone you love?

Prospect House, located on Tuttle Road south of Fruitville Road, provides information, vocational and educational programs, support groups and recreational activities for adults with mental health challenges. Professionals and volunteers work alongside adults to create programs, rebuild social connections and stabilize lives. 92% report a better quality of life thanks to this center.

Prospect House has provided services to our community for 25 years - succeeding because of gifts of time, talent and treasure from the Sarasota community. The Social Justice committee encourages you to share your gifts today.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FROM BILL PAYTON

From my perspective the past two years have passed quickly. Thank you for all the volunteer services that you have provided. You are a vital force within both our church and the Greater Sarasota community. There are so many activities that I cannot possibly list them all without some omissions, but please join me in saying "Thank you" to all volunteers. And if you haven't participated as a volunteer recently, there is a place for your time and talent. You will be hearing from us.

Our minister, Roger Fritts, continues to pack them in. Our membership now stands at approximately 470, up from 412 at the beginning of our fiscal year on April 1, 2015. Congratulations to you and Rev. Fritts for creating such a warm and inviting community.

As has been the case for the last few years, a very capable and professional staff has made the responsibilities of the Board so easy to fulfill. Roberta Druif, Director of Finance and Operations, and Judy McGrath, the Administrative Assistant, provide tremendous loyalty, advice and support. They, in turn, are supported very capably by regular office volunteers: Sara Anderson, Joanne Curtis and Dee Widder. Katherine Isabelle's pride in her work can be seen every day by simply observing the spotless conditions of our facilities. UUCS received a big boost this year when Susan Cook-Hallock agreed to join our staff as Director of Religious Education. Susan has been a long time member of UUCS and has received very popular support from our children, their parents and the RE Committee.

So many of you care so ardently for so many issues and I hope that never changes. The Social Justice committee is passionate and caring. I hope that this community and board will ever support your efforts and outreach.

You have honored me by having me as your President. Thank you. I was ably supported by a capable Board of Trustees that includes: Charles Lee, Vice President; Julie Leach, Treasurer; John Yoder, Secretary; and at-large trustees: Diane Happy, Lynda Hill, Madeline Hardie, Mary Maldonado, Ward Pallotta and Nancy Thomas. They are a fine collection of stewards and a voice of reason for all.

I look forward to joining you in serving our new Board President, Charles Lee. See you at church.

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 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. News of our congregation can also be found at Caring in the Members Corner.

* **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

* **On Sunday, March 20, we held the annual meeting of UUCS, and the budget and slate of officers were accepted as presented.** The Annual Report is posted online, www.uusarasota.org, at the Members Corner. If you do not have the password, please call the church office.

* **Get Together Dinners**

Now is the time to sign up for our Spring Get Together Dinners. The dates are April 23, May 28, and June 25. It is a great way to get to know new friends at the church and/or reacquaint with old friends. The dinners, usually 6 to 12 people, are held in people's homes. The host provides the main dish and guests bring the sides, hors d'oeuvres, and dessert. Registration forms are available at the Get Together Dinner table in the courtyard or save paper and register online www.uusarasota.org. Deadline for registering is **March 27**.

Carole Malone, John Brackett, Alice Carden, and Jeanie Craig
Get Together Dinners Committee

* **Are you interested in reading what other UU churches in the Southern District are doing?** Would you like to know which churches are installing new ministers or presenting workshops of interest? The Southern Region newsletter details information of use to church leaders. Go to SouthernRegion@uua.org to read or sign up for the news about other churches and fellowships.

UPCOMING EVENTS

* **FreeThinkers - April 1, 10 a.m.**

Control Your Life & Death Transitions

Winnie Downes, Chairperson of Compassion & Choices Activist Team for Sarasota & Manatee Counties, will speak about the very real issue of how to ensure our end of life wishes are honored. Winnie will also share heart breaking stories of people of all ages and stages of life whose preferences were ignored or overruled.

Most people find it extremely difficult to communicate about and prepare for the end of life. What kind of medical treatment do you want or don't want? What documents will protect you and enable you or your surrogate's ability to control decisions?

Come learn more about your choices, the pathway to your wishes at the inevitable end of life's journey.

* **MARK THIS DATE for the next FreeThinkers Presentation**

Friday, May 13, 10 a.m. The Soul Traveler, A Field of Poetry, Kevin Mooney

* **The UU Vegetarian Lunch Group will meet at Sweet Tomatoes, 4994 S. Tamiami Trail, on Friday, April 1, at 1:00 p.m.** Non-vegetarians are welcome; however, we ask that everyone have a "vegetarian" lunch.

For further information, or to make reservations, please contact Jean Wieloch at jeanw972@yahoo.com or via phone: 929-3845.

* **The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Venice is holding a symposium on "Awakening the Dreamer," Saturday, April 2 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Featured will be video insights from inspiring philosophers, scientists, community leaders and more discussing "Where on Earth are we going? And what can we do about it?". Suggested donation is \$15 and a vegetarian lunch will be available for \$5. Call 727 432-9494 or email PachamamaAlliance@tampabay.rr.com.

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@uusarasota.org or stop by the Social Justice table on Sunday.

* **Join The Brady Campaign Bayfront Witness** for gun background checks this Thursday from 4-5 p.m. at the Kissing Statue and next Thursday, April 1, at **Rep. Buchanan's office** downtown. Signs provided. Wear white. Bring a friend or make some new ones. For more information, contact Nancy or Dave Evans at nadaevans@comcast.net.

* **Backlash on Equality** presentation by Ken Shelin, co-chair of Equality Florida, **Tuesday, April 12 at 7 p.m.** in the Sanctuary. Update on those Florida legislators who still try to turn back the clock on so many social advances and how to keep Florida moving forward. Sponsored by Americans United for Separation of Church and State. Co-sponsored by Interweave and your Social Justice committee. Free and open to the public.

* **Whole Bean Coffee, Chocolate Bars and Fair Trade** items that are not available at the Sunday table, are available by special order. It is easy to place one. For more information talk to or email Suzie Brucklacher at justice@uusarasota.org, subject line: Fair Trade Special Order.

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, APRIL 3

UUCS Sarasota, 3975 Fruitville Rd, Sarasota

* **9:00 and 11:00 a.m. "Climateers: A Report from the Field: How to Be a Good Person on Earth in Light of Climate Change,"** Lea Hall, Diane Cirksena and friends.

Climateer - noun: (1) a person who learns about, minimizes, mitigates, and adapts to climate change; (2) a person who seeks moral ground for living with climate change, both individually and collectively.

Climateers gathered at our church this winter for the second consecutive year to support one another in responding

to climate change. Two groups met weekly, one exploring the moral challenge of climate change, one focusing on the sixth extinction of species. Members of these groups share brief reports from their personal paths, with revelations and resolutions.

* **Music: 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Thomas Koch, Guitar, Don Bryn, piano**

* **10:05 Forum: "Women Like Us Foundation: One Girl at a Time."** One Girl at a Time is the signature program of the Women Like Us Foundation. Teen girls learn the value of living purposely and are educated in life skills and the importance of leadership. Mentors empower them through workshops that target these topics and others like True Beauty, Gender in the Media, Human Trafficking, Eating Disorders, and Bullying. Through knowledge of important topics critical to their health development, these girls will be contributors to a better society and their own families. Presenter, Deb Myers, of Women Like Us Foundation, Indianapolis; Moderator, Fredric Sirasky.

Lakewood Ranch, The River Club, 6600 River Club Blvd, Bradenton 34202

* **10:00 a.m. "The Religion of the Candidates," video sermon by Rev. Roger Fritts**

* **Music: Ed Kinder, Keyboard**

* **10:00 a.m. In-Service Childcare provided**

* **11:00 a.m. Food and Fellowship**

We invite you to stay after the service for brunch and fellowship.