



August 21, 2016

# **WEEKLY CONTACT**

Unitarian Universalist Church of Sarasota (UUCS)

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## TOILETRY COLLECTION FOR FAMILIES IN NEED

The Religious Education Program is collecting toiletries for Harvest House Family Haven. The 'Haven' provides emergency housing and case management to families in a housing crisis. They work to get families off the streets, out of their cars and into a safe and stable environment. We can help by providing toiletries that the families need. Please donate items such as diapers, toothpaste, tooth brushes, razors, shaving cream, shampoo, body wash, soap and body lotion. A collection box will be placed outside the Sanctuary and the West Wing for the items. We will be collecting through August.

Thank you for your help.

### SATURDAY EVENTS, AUGUST 20

\* Come to the Women's Group meeting at 10 a.m. in the Lexow Wing. Share your suggestions for future meetings and make new friends. Open to all women.

\* FreeThinkers brings another special event to UUCS - FreeThinkers and WSLR will host guest speaker Medea Benjamin, author of *Kingdom of the Unjust: Behind the U.S.-Saudi Connection*, on Saturday, August 20, at 7 p.m. in our Sanctuary. Admission is free.

Medea Benjamin, co-founder of CODEPINK and the human rights group Global Exchange, has been an advocate for social justice for more than 40 years.

### SUNDAY EVENTS, AUGUST 21

\* 10:30 a.m. Pine View Jazz Quartet

Jazz is sometimes spiritual. In addition to improvisational jazz depending on inspiration, whose root word is *spirit*, many jazz musicians had childhood and later experiences in churches that rang with gospel music. Our service on August 21 will reflect some of that music.

\* 9:30 a.m. Forum: "The Hispanic Vote," presented by Lisa Ramirez

The growing Hispanic population makes the Hispanic vote important in 2016. What are Hispanic voters looking for in a candidate? What issues are important to them? What implications do the elections have for Florida? To answer these and other questions, we'll have as a speaker Lisa Ramirez, the Director of Strategic Initiatives for Unidos Now. She is a leader in the Latino community and is currently working on registering Hispanic voters. Moderator: Verna Safran.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

\* Nursery: Loving care for infants and toddlers is available during the 10:30 a.m. Service.

\* RE Classes: A religious education program is available for children & youth during the 10:30 a.m. Service.

\* We're having an Open House today!

The RE Committee is hosting a Religious Education Open House on Sunday, August 21st from 10:30am to 12:30 pm. Join us on the east lawn for games, refreshments and a giant water slide. Everyone is invited - friends, grandchildren and neighbors. Remember to bring your swimsuit.

\* Sunday, August 28th – Social Justice Project

The children and youth will be working together to make fleece blankets for the Harvest House Family Haven shelter. The shelter provides emergency housing for families who are homeless. We will give the blankets along with toiletries donated by the congregation to Family Haven.

## 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.

\* 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). 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*.

\* Lifetouch Photo Directories have gone to press, almost. We hope to be distributing them by end September, early October. Thank you for your patience.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

\* The UU Vegetarian Lunch Group will meet at Simon's Coffee House, 5900 S. Tamiami Trail, on Friday, September 2, at 1:00 pm. 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 [tjeanw972@yahoo.com](mailto:tjeanw972@yahoo.com) or via phone: [941-929-3845](tel:941-929-3845).

\* The UUCS Arts Council will meet at 1:00 PM Saturday, September 3rd in the Lexow Wing Gallery. We invite UUCS members and friends with an interest in the arts to join us. The mission of the UUCS Arts Council is to provide members and friends of the Church avenues for artistic expression and appreciation. We meet on the first Saturday of each month from September through May, share our ideas and art related experiences, and manage the art exhibits in the Lexow Wing Gallery. For more information, contact our Chair, Joan Boyce at [joanboyce321@gmail.com](mailto:joanboyce321@gmail.com) , or visit the Lexow Wing Gallery page on the UUCS website (<http://www.uucsarasota.com/art-gallery-in-lexow-wing.html> ). We hope to see a few new faces on September 3rd!

\* "Discovering UUCS" – A Newcomer Orientation in the Lexow Wing  
Saturday, September 24; 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

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!

\* Unitarian Universalists of Lakewood Ranch

After taking the summer off, UUs of Lakewood Ranch begin their new season at the River Club on Sunday, September 11, at 10 a.m. (6600 River Club Blvd, Lakewood Ranch 34202). We're inviting all members and friends of our Sarasota campus to visit us at least once during the next few months.

By visiting you'll experience the warm welcome of our new outreach ministry and be in a good position to confidently refer friends who live near us.

\* Remember the Flea on November 12!

Moving or downsizing this summer? Don't forget about our big UU Flea Market fund raiser in the fall. We can use all of your donated housewares, sporting gear, toys, hardware, very small furnishings and anything else that is clean, unbroken and usable. Dee Widder has once again kindly offered the use of the large storage sheds in her backyard to keep donated things safe and dry. Give her a call (377-9028) for directions and thanks for thinking about the Big Flea! Your donations really do make it the successful fund raiser that it is!

#### 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 noonmeeting on the second Tuesday of each month (except July), join the mailing list at [justice@uucsarasota.org](mailto:justice@uucsarasota.org) or stop by the Social Justice table on Sunday.

\* Thank You for Sharing the Plate in July to support Back to School Day (held Aug. 17) with teens from the YMCA shelter. \$1,134 funded the day of shopping and fun with church volunteers and will provide recreation incentives for teens all day long.

\* Sarasota City Park Petition. Fruitville Road Park on the NE corner of Beneva and Fruitville Roads is a non-descript park that was recently targeted for commercial development. A group of five neighborhood women were able to stop it. Now they want the city to give the park a proper name and signage to recognize this green space and to discourage future attempts at development. Sign the petition to support the effort, but only if you are a Sarasota city resident.

\* Support Solar, Vote YES on 4. Vote YES for Amendment 4 on the August 30 primary ballot to prevent property tax increases on businesses that install solar panels. More information and wallet cards at the social justice table.

\* Backpack Volunteer Signup. Backpack is our congregation's largest project to address child hunger. This school year, volunteers from our church will meet at All Faiths Food Bank on the second Thursday of the month from 9-11 a.m. We will need 24 volunteers at a time, but only once a month. The Food Bank will coordinate volunteer groups so that needy students will continue to receive a food bag every weekend. See Sara or Don at the Backpack table on Sunday or email [dsslate@comcast.net](mailto:dsslate@comcast.net).

\* Restore Voting Rights to Floridians. Florida is now one of only two states that do not restore voting rights to most felons after they have completed all terms of their sentence, parole, and probation. In Florida, former felons must wait five years, then petition the clemency board to restore their right to vote -- 11,000 are waiting for a response. Most would be eligible to vote in 48 other states. This petition to amend the Florida constitution and automatically restore voting rights is again on the Social Justice table. Registered Florida voters only.

\* Petition to Ban Fracking in Florida. Yes, this is a Florida issue. Sign the petition at the social justice table. In a related matter, last week the state Environmental Regulation Commission (with 2 unfilled seats) recommended *increasing the amounts of carcinogens* allowed in Florida's drinking water, according to *an article in the July 31st Bradenton Times*.

\* Bethesda House Pantry. Every Sunday we collect cans of food (pork-and-beans, ravioli), travel size toiletries and paper products (toilet paper and towels). Look for the donation bin outside the sanctuary.

\* Produce Shopping Guide at SJ Table. The Environmental Working Group ([www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)) tests for residual chemicals on the food we eat and recently released the 2016 Dirty Dozen and Clean 15. Pick up your 2-sided wallet card at the social justice table. Carry it when you shop. Take an extra for a friend.

\* 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. For Fair Trade special orders, contact Suzie Brucklacher at [justice@uusarasota.org](mailto:justice@uusarasota.org), subject line Fair Trade Special Order.

#### SUNDAY EVENTS, AUGUST 28

\* 10:30 a.m. What Do I Believe? - Sermon by Rev. Roger Fritts

I was talking with an Evangelical Christian. He was very certain about the truth. He believed in the Bible as the sole

source of religious authority, in salvation through conversion and in the importance of public witness of his faith. His firm convictions stimulated me to think about what I firmly believe.

\* 9:30 a.m. Forum: "Mothers Helping Mothers, Responding to the Needs of the Poorest Families in our Community." What's being done for families that have nothing and otherwise fall between the cracks? Presenter, Cheri Devries, President of the board of Mothers Helping Mothers. Moderator, DeeAnna Dowdle.