

Unitarian Universalist Congregation



Ormond Beach

A NOTE FROM OUR MINISTER— December, The Month of Hope

A light in the dark is a typical metaphor for hope. Indeed, the tiniest flicker can help one find their way in the pitch dark. At times, we as a congregation and religious institution are a beacon of hope for those wandering in the dark of disconnection which marks our society. Thus, it is important to keep our beacon always shining brightly.

In worship, discussion, and small groups, we as a congregation are going to be exploring the spiritual value of hope which has many subtle meanings and metaphors. Vaclav Havel in *Disturbing the Peace* (1986) says this:



“Hope is a state of mind, not of the world. Either we have hope, or we don’t; it is a dimension of the soul, and it’s not essentially dependent on some particular observation of the world or estimate of the situation. Hope is not prognostication. It is an orientation of the spirit, an orientation of the heart; it transcends the world that is immediately experienced, and is anchored somewhere beyond its horizon. . . Hope, in this deep and powerful sense, is not the same as joy that things are going well, or willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously heading for success, but rather an ability to work for something because it is good, not just because it stands a chance to succeed. The more propitious the situation in which we demonstrate hope, the deeper the hope is. Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the faith that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.”

I resonate with this view of hope— that what’s hoped for is not the engineering of some future outcome but a yearning for a greater good which will not be realized in our lifetime. In this way, I always have hope for the realization of a beloved world community. What that looks like is fuzzy for me, like an out-of-focus photo. I don’t know exactly what it will look like, nor will I ever know. But my hope is, as Havel says, somewhere beyond the horizons of the world as I know it now.

What is your hope beyond the horizons of this life? What will you orient your heart to in this season which celebrates light, birth, and hope? When the frenzy of the winter holidays distracts us, and the shortness of days leave us cold, I invite you to light a candle and contemplate the world you most hope for.



Yours in faith,

Rev. Kathy

PRESIDENT’S COLUMN— When the Backdrop Becomes the Drama

2017: What a year this has been!

In some of the high schools for which I directed plays as part of my teaching job, the “stages” available for our performances were often far from ideal, with designations like “cafetorium” or “stagenasium,” so our productions, by necessity, were simple, usually including only one static backdrop that quietly set the scene for the drama or comedy that played out in front of it. The backdrop was a constant that never stole the spotlight.

Just so, in most of the luckier years in our lives, the events that happen around our country and, indeed, the world at large, paint a rather constant backdrop: the variations so similar, predictable, and subtle that they do not detract from the downstage tragicomedies of the lives in which we are always the central character.

For me, and, from what I hear and read, for many, this year has defied most conventional production techniques. I find I am approaching the news of the nation and the world every morning and evening with a combination of dread and fascination that would be appropriate for a Stephen King movie. The normal foreseeable background has evolved into a speeded-up, amped up video of wildly shifting weirdness— investigations, a motley assortment of scandals, seeping secrets, suspect conspiracy theories, fake news, name calling, angry divisiveness, verbal ugliness. Throw in a hurricane, and you have a perfect storm of stuff to distract from what is real and important in the theater of daily life.

It can be hard to close the curtain on the hypnotizing swirl of spectacles, but I am hoping that we can find some respite doing that as our year winds down to the holiday season. I think we can choose to do that with some meditative effort. I am writing this Thanksgiving morning. This morning I choose to be thankful. This morning I choose to look away from the mesmerizing unseemliness “out there” and let myself experience my real gratitude for the loveliness of what we have here at UU: a community of friends who share some deep wants and needs—to seek the truth and to gently help each other through unsettling times.

—Joan Thate

Upcoming Pulpit Presentations—

November 26—Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey, “When Abundance Means Having Enough”

How much do we need in this life to be well and happy? How much do we deserve? How much will this earth yield? When does abundance mean too much? When does it mean having enough?

Service Leader: Bill Ternent

December 3—Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey, “Candle in the Wind”

Every era has its anxious times; ours is no exception. Poverty, gun violence, global warming, the sand seeming to shift under our feet socially . . . these conditions, which seem to be reinforced every day in the media, can cause us despair. How do we keep our candles lit in the fitful winds of this chaotic world?

Service Leader: Patty Alsobrook

December 10—Howard Simon, “Defending Democracy & Human Rights in the Age of Trump”

As Executive Director of the Florida affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union, Simon oversees its legal, public education, legislative lobbying, and membership and fund-raising programs. Current ACLU litigation has blocked enforcement of two efforts by the Legislature to restrict women’s access to abortion and is working to end Florida’s Civil War-era lifetime voting ban of former felons. On issues of the Muslim travel ban, the transgender military ban, rules to allow employers to deny coverage for contraceptives, discrimination against America’s immigrant communities and many others, as the *Washington Post* reported this Spring, “ACLU is leading {the...} resistance effort against Trump’s policies.”

Service Leader: Rita Scheeler

December 17—Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey, “Beware the Market God”

The organization behind our local F.A.I.T.H. chapter describes consumerism as the “market god.” We are all susceptible to its chant of BUY! BUY! BUY! and you will be HAPPY! HAPPY! HAPPY! How can we be vaccinated against this culturally ingrained imperative?

Service Leader: Chris Gruner

December 24— Morning Service: Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey, “The Return to Light”

The Winter Solstice is behind us. The nights will continue to be long, but each day will be a little bit longer going forward. How might we use this time of lingering darkness to prepare us for the return to light?

Service Leader—Gaia Davies

December 24— Evening Service (5 - 6 p.m.): Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey, “Yule, Carols, and Candlelight”

We’ll light a yule log that Rev Kathy has used to celebrate many Christmas Eves. We’ll sing familiar carols and finish the service with “Silent Night” in candlelight. The Alliance will serve a light supper after the service!

December 31—Ellen Nielsen and the Congregation, "Concerns and Joys of 2017”

On the last day of 2017, we will look back at this eventful year and re-visit our most serious personal concerns and our greatest personal joys. This service will include audience participation and brief periods of silent meditation as well as music of consolation and celebration.

OUR CHOIR

Our choir members are keeping up the good work with Sunday morning practice and then singing for us during some of our Sunday services.

If you are interested in joining them, speak to any of the members. Dan Kerr, our choir director, will be returning to Florida after the holidays.



THE ALLIANCE—Christmas is Coming!

When school started this year, all the teenagers living in two group homes in DeLand were wearing new sneakers and socks, thanks to Joyce Nelson and the generous donations made to Shoes-that-Fit program, our Share-the-Plate offering recipient last May. (These teens have been removed from their families for their own safety.) Over the summer, Joyce and her Santa's helpers were busy selecting the shoes, socks and other school needs. The gifts were colorfully wrapped for each youngster--a great day for the teens and our UU!



At the successful soup lunch at UU on November 12, we collected \$320 towards buying Christmas gifts for these teens living in the DeLand group homes. In order to raise additional money for this Christmas project, **we will be hosting a Christmas craft table on December 3 and 10 as well as a Christmas Cookie Sale on December 17.** We hope our UU members and friends will do some Christmas shopping at our UU craft and cookie tables to support this Christmas giving project.

Our Christmas tree will soon be up, and we will continue the enjoyable tradition of decorating it with new colorful socks for children, teens, and adults. In January, we donate all those socks to needy people in our area. Let's see if we can donate as many pairs of socks as we did last year—270 pairs. All our UU member can donate new pairs of socks and help decorate the tree.



The Alliance will be hosting a light supper right after the special evening service on Christmas Eve. We will be serving vegetarian and meat lasagna, salad, and garlic bread, as well as wine and beer, with a traditional Christmas trifle for dessert. The cost is \$15 per person, with no charge for children's meals. All proceeds will be donated to our UU to help fulfill a pledge the Alliance made to the church. Please sign up for the dinner on the list on the back table — you won't want to miss this wonderful holiday event!

--Jeanne Young

AT LAST! — First Step Shelter for Volusia Homeless

Persistence and support pay off. After five years of diligent work, the F.A.I.T.H. organization, with the support of our Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ormond Beach, has achieved a major Social Justice goal—building a shelter for Volusia County's homeless. You helped make this happen. Join the official ground-breaking ceremony for First Step Shelter (Volusia Safe Harbor) **on December 13th at 10:00 a.m.** The shelter address is 3889 West International Speedway Blvd, directly across from Red John Road.

And don't forget that the rescheduled **FAITH Community Problems Assembly** will take place **on December 4th at 6:30 p.m.** at Deliverance Church of God, 601 George Engram Highway, Daytona Beach. Please plan to attend with our UU delegation and cast your vote on issues that affect our community.

-- Harry White

Got Talent?

If you enjoy performing, have a talent to share, or if you have ideas about entertainment at UU, consider joining us on **Saturday, December 9th** at UU at 10 a.m. Contact Rita Scheeler for more information.



LIFE LONG LEARNING— Program for December

The Life Long Learning programs for 2017-2018 will be varied and include topics related to philosophy, history, spirituality, archaeology, science and education. Each program includes time for audience questions and comments. December will feature only one LLL program because of the Christmas holidays. This program is scheduled for the 2nd Wednesday, from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Gödel - Philosophy, Logic, and Mathematics—Wednesday, December 13th

Tom Hilburn will present aspects of philosophy, logic, and mathematics, concentrating on the relationship between the philosophical concept of “truth” and its use in logic and mathematics. The talk will demonstrate how mathematicians use deductive logic to prove the truth (or falseness) of mathematical statements. Finally, we will discuss the remarkable life of the mathematician Kurt Gödel, and how he shattered the conventional view of establishing truth in a mathematical system.

Dr. Hilburn is a Professor Emeritus of Software Engineering and a Distinguished Engineering Professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and was a Visiting Scientist at the Software Engineering Institute, Carnegie-Mellon from 1997-2009. In addition to teaching mathematics, computer science and software engineering, he has worked on software engineering education and research projects with the FAA, the MITRE Corporation, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Defense, and the IEEE Computer Society.

--Tom Hilburn

RESTORATION OF RIGHTS— Give Floridians a Second Chance

Less than a month remains for collecting signatures on a petition to add a proposed restoration-of-civil-rights amendment to the Florida Constitution on the 2018 ballot. The amendment would allow former felons who have paid their debt to society to earn back their right to vote. Restoring a person’s right to vote, once they’ve fulfilled their obligations to society, gives them an opportunity for redemption and a chance to be full members of their community.

- Florida is one of only three states with a **lifetime** ban on voting. This amendment would **modernize** Florida’s criminal justice rules by bringing our state in line with others nationwide.
- People **must fully complete** all terms of their sentence, including probation and parole, before they earn back their right to vote.
- The Amendment **doesn’t apply** to people who’ve committed murder or sexual offenses

Law enforcement, faith leaders, employers, and a large majority of Floridians from all walks of life support people being able to earn back their right to vote because it gives them a stake in the community and makes it less likely they will end up back in prison.

--Kindra Muntz, UU Justice Florida Action Network

EDITOR’S NOTE: **The deadline for submitting petitions to the Florida Department of Elections is January 1, 2018.** Please contact Carolyn West if you have not had the opportunity to sign the petition or if you signed it more than two years ago. While citizen initiative petitions like this do not expire, voter signatures are only valid for two years.

TAKING CARE OF OUR UU—Join Us for a Saturday Workday



Another Saturday workday is coming up on **December 16**. As we prepare for the coming holidays, we have some outdoor work and some indoor work to do on our building and grounds. Please RSVP to me, so that I will know how many people will be coming. Your efforts help to keep our building and grounds in wonderful condition. You all can be proud that you are helping to care for our UU.

Thank you all and I hope to see you on Saturday, December 16th at 9 a.m.

--Rita Scheeler

BRAVO! A Successful Marketplace!

Thank you to all who contributed events and to all of you who have “purchased” those events with your donations. Invoices for your purchases have been distributed and/or mailed. When all funds are collected, the Marketplace will have generated about \$6,500 for our UUCOB budget.

If you have a question about the event or invoices you have received, please call Susan Garrison at 386-265-1715. Keeping track of it all requires a lot of data management and things do not always work out perfectly. We had over 30 events donated and over 40 buyers so thanks again for all your support of our UU.

Events like these will help us connect with one another as well as support our church programs. Together, we are strong.

--Preston & Susan Garrison

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks to Preston and Susan for all their hard work!

GENEROUS GIVING— About Those End-of-the-Year Solicitations



In December, we receive those welcome Christmas cards from family and friends, but our mailboxes are also stuffed with letters from charities begging for money. The pressure is on to beat the IRS tax deduction deadline. But how can we judge the worthiness of these causes? How do we know that our contribution will actually help? Maybe a lot of it will go to pay for “administrative expenses”— maybe even to pay some Fat Cat CEO a big salary?

To find out, we can check with **Charity Navigator**, a website that ranks a charity, comparing it with other similar ones. For example, the **Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)**, which works for human rights and social justice in the U.S and around the world, scored a **96%** in terms of putting our contributions to work. In fact, UUSC ranks even higher in terms of putting dollars into action than Human Rights Watch (91%) or the American Red Cross (83%). Check on your charity before you donate, and while you're at it, consider donating to UUSC. See Charity Navigator's useful website at <https://www.charitynavigator.org/>

December 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Pot Luck: 6- 8:30 pm	2 Subud Mtg: 6-9 pm
3 Discussion Group: 9:15-10:15 am Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 am (New Member Welcome) LGBTQ Session: noon- 1 pm Tai Chi: 4-5 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	4 Yoga: 6:15-7:45 pm F.A.I.T.H. Assembly: 6:30-8:30 pm in Daytona Beach	5 Mah Jongg: 10 am -noon Meditation: 6:30-8:30 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	6 Worship Mtg. 11 am-noon LGBTQ Session: 4-5 pm	7 Caring Mtg. 10-11 am Democracy Now: 10:15 am-noon Spiritual Growth: 4:30-6 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	8	9 Memorial Service: 2-4 pm
10 Discussion Group: 9:15-10:15 am Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 am Tai Chi: 4-5 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	11 Yoga: 6:15-7:45 pm	12 Writers Group: 10 am -noon Mah Jongg: 10 am -noon Meditation: 6:30-8:30 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	13 Life Long Learning: 4-5:30 pm	14 Democracy Now: 10:15- noon Finance Mtg.: 10:30 am-noon Alliance: noon-2 pm Spiritual Growth: 4:30-6 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	15	16 WORK DAY!  Subud: 10 am-8 pm
17 Discussion Group: 9:15-10:15 am Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 am (Share-the-Plate) Recital: 2:30 pm Tai Chi: 4-5 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	18 Yoga: 6:15-7:45 pm	19 Mah Jongg: 10 am -noon Meditation: 6:30-8:30 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	20 <i>Jotter</i> articles due	21 Democracy Now: 10:15- noon Board Mtg: 5:30-7 pm Spiritual Growth: 4:30-6 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm Celebrate Solstice: 7-9 pm	22	23
24 Discussion Group: 9:15-10:15 am Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 am Tai Chi: 4-5 pm Christmas Eve service 5-6 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	25 Christmas Day 	26 Writers Group: 10 am -noon Woman's Group 1-2 pm Mah Jongg: 10 am -noon Meditation: 6:30-8:30 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	27	28 Democracy Now: 10:15- noon Spiritual Growth: 4:30-6 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	29	30
31 Discussion Group: 9:15-10:15 am Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 am Tai Chi: 4-5 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm						

Upcoming Sunday Services

Theme: Hope

Date:	Topic:	Presenter:	Service Leader:
December 3—	“Candle in the Wind”	--Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey	--Patty Alsobrook
December 10—	“Defending Democracy & Human Rights”	--Howard Simon	--Rita Scheeler
December 17—	“Beware the Market God” Share-the-Plate Offering with the Alliance Giving Program—Jeanne Young	--Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey	--Chris Gruner
December 24 a.m.—	“Return to the Light”	--Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey	--Gaia Davies
December 24 p.m.—	“Yule, Carols, and Candlelight”	--Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey & the Congregation	
December 31—	“Concerns and Joys of 2017”	--Ellen Nielsen & the Congregation	

December Birthdays

Judy Gordon -6th
Ann Awdey-15th

Evan Rivers-15th
Don Kennedy -26th
Kathryn Neel -28th



The Jotter

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation Ormond Beach

December 2017

Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey, Minister: revk2rickey@gmail.com
RE teachers: Debra Hanson/Mary Wentzel: (contact UU Office)
Cathy Jackson, Office Administrator: (386) 677-6172
Office hours: M/W: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. & T/Th: 2:00 to 6:30 p.m.
Sunday: 9:45 a.m. +

Joan Thate, President: jbthate@gmail.com
Carolyn West: Jotter Editor (386) 672-9352
Website: <http://www.uuormond.org>
Children's' RE on Sunday 10:15 -11:45 a.m.
Discussion Group meets Sunday at 9:15 a.m.

Sunday Service: 10:30 -11:30 a.m.