

Unitarian Universalist Congregation



Ormond Beach

A NOTE FROM OUR MINISTER: May Your Holidays Be Imperfect

As I write, it's not yet Thanksgiving. I hope your fourth Thursday of November was a safe and enjoyable one. As we look forward to a December jam-packed with holidays and holy days and a full schedule of social events, I want to wish you a Very Merry Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!



I wish your holidays to be imperfect and here is why: for decades we've been bombarded with the message that Christmas has to be perfect—the perfect tree, the perfect gifts, the perfectly set table, the perfectly roasted turkey with all the perfect trimmings. We see these images of perfection in advertisements; we see them depicted on television and in movies. In December, a person can't turn around without being faced with an image of gleam, glamour, or glitz. It's Martha Stewart's way or the highway, right? Well, I say Martha Schmartha! How can anyone possibly live up to her standards?

Last month, I talked about the idea that our market-driven society wants us to believe that validation comes only through the pursuit of perfection. I call the varying forces of our market economy the Market Gods. The Market Gods want us to remain in pursuit of the perfect everything, and the pressure is high when it comes to making Christmas Day the Perfect Day. Somehow the Market Gods have gotten us to conflate our religious values with material wealth.

And what the Market Gods don't want you to know that perfection is impossible. They dangle that carrot so that it's just out of reach and compel us to believe that it is by airbrushing a perfect golden brown on the turkey and setting a perfect Christmas dinner scene which requires a team of 20 people to put together. Do you think Martha does all that cooking and decorating by herself? I seriously doubt it.

This holiday season, think about the Amish, who are wonderful craftspeople. Their work at times approaches perfection and when it does, they purposely put a small defect in whatever it is they are producing. Whatever holy day you are observing this December, I hope you will put some imperfection in your plans, your meals, your decorations, your gift-giving. Give up your pursuit of making this Hanukkah or Christmas the best ever. Enter into December with the mindset that all will not go as planned. The turkey may not brown, the mashed potatoes may be lumpy, and you may not find that action figure your grandson asked for. . . let go of perfection and instead lean into the meanings of the season: love, light, faith, hope, quiet, rest, and renewal. May they be yours.

In love and faith,
Rev. Kathy

NOTE: A Special Meeting of UUCOB members has been called by the President and Board of Trustees for Sunday December 2, 2018 immediately after the Sunday service for the one purpose of approving the repair of one of the air-conditioners. The negotiated cost of repair is \$8,450.00

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE— Gratitude + Generosity → Happiness

We have left Thanksgiving behind us. As I write this column, that holiday is a day behind us, and now we move on to Christmas. Much of our time in between is focused on what is to come. But I want to focus for a while on the “thanks” before diving into the “giving” and maybe connect the two in an important way.

The science of psychology has connected both gratitude and generosity to happiness. The studies that point to these connections continue to pile up, including those that document what happens in the pleasure centers of our brains as we practice either. Apparently, both thankfulness and giving affect even our biology.

The word “gratitude” is derived from the Latin word *gratia*, which means grace, graciousness, or gratefulness. It occurs to me that, depending on the circumstances, gratitude encompasses all three. How much better we feel when we focus on remembering with love all those who have given us a hand up when we needed it, or helped us feel that we were, indeed, capable of doing something we found daunting. How much better we feel then instead of going back over old hurts. We can use up our time either way. It is a choice every day. Focusing on what is good in our lives makes us more inclined not just to be thankful, but also to give others reasons to feel good about themselves.

So, I'm going to make myself happier by telling all of you the gratitude I feel towards you UU denizens—I am grateful:

- For all of you who pitched in to make the marketplace work once again.
- For the many hours of unpaid time you give to all of us
- For the care you give each other
- For staying open to each other even when there are differences of opinion
- For caring about the big stuff and wanting to talk about it
- For the underlying understanding that we are people who want a better world and need to do things to make progress in that direction
- For friendship
- For being you.

Thank you for your gracious giving.

--Joan Thate

Upcoming Pulpit Presentations

December 2— Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey, “Hanukkah Begins!”

An intergenerational service featuring the Youth from our Religious Education program.

Service Leader: Cliff Jackson

December 9—Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey, “Embracing the Mystery”

In our lived experience on this earth, there will always be that which cannot be adequately described in words. In addition, our knowledge and our ability to know will always be limited, even if you are Richard Dawkins. As rationalists, how then do we embrace the mystery of not knowing.

Service Leader: Gaia Davies

December 16— Ben Tousley, “Simple Gifts”

Folksinger and inspirational speaker Ben Tousley will be speaking on appreciating life in all its simplicity.
Service leader: Rita Scheeler

December 23—Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey, “Mystery, Wonderment, and Light: ‘Tis the Season”

In the culture of our Western Hemisphere, December is filled with holy days full of light, mystery, and wonder: Hanukkah, Solstice, Yuletide, Christmas, and New Year’s Eve. Stories from each tradition will be told and sung and celebrated.

Service Leader; Linda Kalaydjian

December 30— Ellen Nielsen, “Joys and Concerns at the End of the Year”

As 2017 draws to an end, 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 participation from our members and friends, brief periods of silent meditation as well as music of consolation and celebration.

THE ALLIANCE—The Busy Month of December!

When school began this fall, 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 were 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!



Christmas Giving Project: To raise additional money to buy Christmas gifts for these teens, our crafts fair begins at our December potluck on December 7. We’ll host the Christmas craft table after Sunday services on December 9 and 16, where you can shop for unique Christmas gifts, including crocheted hats, potholders, jewelry, hand-painted snowmen and much more!! Then on December 23, enjoy our annual Christmas Cookie Sale. Proceeds from the craft and cookie tables support the Christmas giving project. I hope our congregation will get into the Christmas spirit and join us in making a difference in the lives of these young people.

Our Christmas tree will soon be up, and we will continue our 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. All our UU member are invited to donate new pairs of socks and to help decorate the tree.

Christmas Eve Service and Dinner: Please gather with us at 5 pm on Christmas Eve, Monday, Dec. 24th to enjoy stories about celebrating Christmas then and now, wonderful music from our choir and UU musicians, singing carols and lighting candles. A dinner will follow around 6:30 with more stories and music.

However, we cannot do this without a great deal of help. Please contact Gaia or Jeanne to offer your help with cooking, decorating, setting up, entertaining or breaking down. Be inventive — bring your special decorations, stories, instruments and game ideas as this celebration will be a community effort!

If you plan to attend, please add your name to the sign-up sheet in our sanctuary or e-mail Gaia Davies at gaiadavies@gmail.com

--Jeanne Young and Gaia Davies

LIFE LONG LEARNING— Program for December

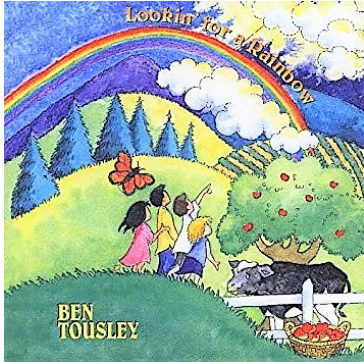
Life Long Learning programs for 2018-2019 will be varied and include topics related to philosophy, history and the arts as well as science and education. Each session includes time for audience questions and comments. **With holiday exceptions, programs are scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.**

“The Book of Job: Biblical Existentialism— December 12, 2018, 4:00—5:30

Dr. Dan Kennedy will discuss “The Book of Job” as an example of Biblical Existentialism. A part of Old Testament Biblical wisdom literature, this important text addresses the age-old philosophical and theological Problem of Evil. Why do bad things happen to good people and good things to bad people? Might it be because we live in an indifferent and impersonal universe? Using a Biblical critical analysis approach, Dr. Kennedy will examine the origin and story of Job, and argue for an interpretation related to Existentialist philosophy.

Dr. Kennedy retired from a career that combined psychology and education, spent mainly in university settings in Oregon, Hawaii, and Florida. He was a licensed psychologist for a number of years in Hawaii and Florida. After retirement, Dan remained active in education for several years through adjunct faculty positions at the University of Central Florida and Nova Southeastern University. In addition to education, his areas of interest include the humanities, social sciences, history and philosophy of science, and exercise physiology and sports science.

--Tom Hilburn



Musical Workshop on “Life Stories”

Folksinger and inspirational speaker Ben Tousley will offer a workshop entitled "Life Stories" on **Saturday, December 15** in Room 1 beginning at 2 p.m. Please plan to join Ben for this interactive musical experience. The workshop is limited to 20 participants, so **contact Dan Gribbin at (386) 956-1813 to reserve a slot.**

A graduate of Harvard Divinity School, Ben Tousley has offered concerts and services to hundreds of faith communities and colleges throughout New England and along the East Coast. He has served as chaplain to college students, the elderly and hospice patients and is a skilled facilitator of life story and bereavement groups. A long-term survivor of cancer, Ben has increasingly offered his services to those facing life-threatening illness. Since 1994, he has been an adjunct faculty member at Springfield College School of Human Services.

According to *Boston Globe* music critic Scott Alarik, Ben is “an engaging singer-songwriter with a pleasant reedy voice and a repertoire of hopeful topical tunes, singalongs and lyrical love songs. His ability to begin political writing deep within himself represents the genre at its best.”

MOVIE NIGHT— “Boys Don’t Cry”

Hilary Swank won both the 2000 Golden Globe and the Oscar for best actress for her gender-bending role as Brandon Teena in “Boys Don't Cry.” A romantic tragedy based on Teena’s true-life story, the film is the selection for LGBTQ Movie Night on December 28th beginning at 7 p.m. Please join us for discussion to follow.

December 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Mindfulness Retreat: 9 am - 4pm
2 Discussion Group: 9:15-10:15 am Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 am Tai Chi: 4-5 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	3 Brown Bag lunch w. the Minister: noon-1 pm Yoga: 6:15-7:45 pm	4 Mah Jongg: 10 am -noon Meditation: 6:30-8:30 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	5 Worship Mtg: 11 am-12:30 pm Choir Rehearsal: 6-7:30 pm	6 Democracy Now: 10:30- noon Alliance: noon-2 pm Spiritual Growth: 4:30-6 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	7 1st Friday Potluck 6-8:30 pm	8
9 Discussion Group: 9:15-10:15 am Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 am Tai Chi: 4-5 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	10 Brown Bag lunch w. the Minister: noon-1 pm Prayers & Meditation: 3-4 pm Yoga: 6:15-7:45 pm	11 Writers Group: 10 am-noon Mah Jongg: 10 am-noon Woman's Group: 1-2:30 pm Meditation: 6:30-8:30 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	12 Life-Long Learning: 4-5:30 pm	13 Finance Mtg.: 10:30 am-noon Democracy Now: 10:30- noon Spiritual Growth: 4:30-6 pm Vespers: 5-6 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	14 Heart 4 Souls: 5-9 pm	15 "Life Stories" workshop with Ben Tousley: 2-3:30 pm
16 Discussion Group: 9:15-10:15 am Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 am (Share the Plate) Tai Chi: 4-5 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	17 Brown Bag lunch w. the Minister: noon-1 pm Yoga: 6:15-7:45 pm	18 Mah Jongg: 10 am-noon Meditation: 6:30-8:30 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	19	20 Jotter articles due Democracy Now: 10:30- noon Spiritual Growth: 4:30-6 pm Board of Trustees Mtg: 5:30-7 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	21 Exploring Metaphysics: 6-7 pm	22
23 Discussion Group: 9:15-10:15 am Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 am Tai Chi: 4-5 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	24 Christmas Eve Alliance Supper: 5-8 pm	25 Christmas Day  N Anon: 7-8 pm	26	27 Democracy Now: 10:30- noon Membership Mtg: 2:30-4 pm Spiritual Growth: 4:30-6 pm Vespers Service: 5-6 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	28 LGBTQ Movie Night: "Boys Don't Cry": 7-9 pm	29 WORK DAY 8:30 am -noon  VOLUNTEERS
30 Discussion Group: 9:15-10:15 am Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 am Tai Chi: 4-5 pm N Anon: 7-8 pm	31 Brown Bag lunch w. the Minister: noon-1 pm Yoga: 6:15-7:45 pm					

Upcoming Sunday Services

Date:	Topic:	Presenter:	Service Leader:
December 2:	“Hanukkah Begins!” A short Congregational meeting following the service	--Rev. Kathy Rickey	--Cliff Jackson
December 9:	“Embracing the Mystery”	--Rev. Kathy Rickey	--Gaia Davies
December 16:	“Simple Gifts” Share-the-Plate Offering with the Alliance Christmas Giving Project	--Ben Tousley	--Rita Scheeler
December 23:	“Mystery, Wonderment, and Light: ‘Tis the Season”		--Linda Kalaydjian
December 30:	“Joys and Concerns at the End of the Year”	--Ellen Nielsen and the Congregation	

December 29— Join us for a work day on Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon. Let’s get our building and grounds ready for the new year. Both inside and outside tasks to be done, but working together can make it fun!



December Birthdays

Judy Gordon -6th
Nancy Greenleaf-6th
Ann Awdey-15th

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



The Jotter

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation Ormond Beach

December 2018

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.

Like us on Facebook

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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 to 11:45 a.m.
Discussion Group meets Sunday at 9:15 a.m.
Sunday Service: 10:30 -11:30 a.m.