



The Chalice and the Flame

Diverse people. Diverse beliefs. One community.

A Monthly Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem, OR

January 2020

Annual Congregational Dinner February 8

Plan to join us Saturday, February 8, at 5 pm for our second annual Congregational Dinner! We look forward to celebrating this amazing congregation with a wonderful evening. Watch the weekly email for the link to make your RSVP online, or check the Welcome Table during the fellowship hour or send an email to the office.

This year we are providing a main dish and those who wish to bring a side dish can indicate what they'll bring on their RSVP. We can't wait for this get-together – spread the word as all are welcome.

Sign Our Petition to the UUA on Sundays in January

We, the UUCS Committee on Ministry, have written a public statement addressed to the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA) concerning their censure of Rev. Todd Eklof.

Our statement was generated by Committee-facilitated discussions held in the Fall of 2019. Each discussion focused on aspects of Rev. Eklof's book, *Gadfly Papers*. As these discussions concluded, members indicated an interest in taking action to address the censure of Rev. Eklof.

[The proposed public statement](#) is the result of the collective thoughts from the Committee on Ministry. We ask that you read the statement and plan to attend the special congregational meeting to approve sending this statement to UUA and UUMA, as required by our Bylaws. The meeting date will be on March 1, following the service.

~Submitted by The Committee on Ministry (Ruth Larson, Megan Roller, Joel Martin, Eric Schuman, and Dina Triest)

Sign Up for the Next Journey to Belonging Series

Join in and share *your* journey to belonging in a 3-month Covenant Group to explore our spiritual journeys. The group will meet for 3 months on the third Thursday of the month: 6:30 - 8:00 pm: January 16, February 20 and March 19. This is a group to share where we come from, where we are, and what we look forward to exploring. All are welcome to join! Journey to Belonging is facilitated by Rev. Rick. Child care is available if you let us know when you sign up (we need a 2 week notice).

Sign up using the [online form](#), send an email to office@uusalem.org, or call 503-364-0932.

Help Homeless Families January 19-25

UUCS will be hosting homeless families January 19-25 through Family Promise. Volunteers are encouraged to sign up during the fellowship hours after services or use [the online Family Promise Signup form](#).

Singing Bowls Guided Meditation January 13

On Monday, January 13 at 7 pm, join Debra Shaffer for an hour of guided meditation and singing bowls. Focus on releasing stress and bringing in light and peace with the use of the bowls and guided meditation.

The cost is \$15 but there are two complimentary spaces for UUCS members on a first come basis. Contact Lennie Martin at lenniem07@yahoo.com.

Jo Sweeney Out of the Office January 16 through February 4

From January 16 through February 4, 2020 Jo Sweeney will be out for surgery and recovery. There may be delayed responses from the UUCS office during this time. Thank you for your understanding and patience.



Reverential Ramblings

~ Rev. Richard Davis, UUCS's minister

Recently, I was having a conversation with a young woman who envisions buying a condo in an area back east in a thriving, diverse neighborhood she has discovered. A computer was at hand so I suggested we look up future projections of sea level rise to see how it might affect this area. Alas, it doesn't look good. She'll need to do more research into this, but now she lives with the gloomy thought that her dreams may get inundated. How I regret that for the first time in history future generations must live with the awareness that the world we know is truly passing and what is to come will be harsh and hard for many to bear.

Even as she must now recognize and accommodate the realities of climate change into her future plans, so must we. The way we're living on this planet is unsustainable. Yet even as we individually recognize the gravity of this situation we have yet to muster the collective will to do much about it. This is the great moral, spiritual, political, psychological, and technological challenge of our time – perhaps the greatest of all time. What we do or don't do in response to our looming climate crisis in this coming decade will be pivotal. To begin, we must do everything we can to prevent the re-election of the president who is in complete denial about this threat and perversely undoes recent efforts to heal our environmentally abused world.

Recently I observed such abuse in motion: last spring I was relaxing on the back porch of the house of a friend who lives in rural Maryland. Suddenly he noticed a bright green flying insect – an emerald ash borer – an invasive insect that has destroyed tens of millions of ash trees and threatens to wipe out the entire species. My friend knew about this infestation, before the emerald ash borers spread to his region and he's been diligent about protecting the large ash tree in his back yard. When the arborist came by to protect the tree from infestation, he noted that this large beautiful ash tree providing shade over my friend's backyard was the last one thriving in the region. He told us of other types of trees that are likewise endangered – predictions are that we will lose forty per cent of our forests in North America. My friend commented that "it feels like we're living in the end times."

Yes, it can feel that way. Feelings are important but they can also lead you astray if you don't know how to manage them (not claiming to be an expert in that regard myself).

Here's a quote that helps me spiritually recalibrate during these unsettling times: *"I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day."* (E.B. White).

This is a good reminder to seek some balance. Yes, do ALL you can to work with others to address this great challenge of our time. Yet if in so doing you find yourself living under a cloud of gloom then you are neglecting to enjoy and cherish the great gift of life. A failure to practice appreciation and gratitude for this most amazing life that we now share is a sin* (*which means "to miss the mark.") Let that one sink in.

So, I thoroughly enjoyed my visit with my friend, who lives in an old 19th century chestnut log cabin. Such chestnut trees were wiped out years ago by a blight, but recently I read that scientists and arborists are optimistic that they can introduce a blight resistant chestnut. You never know what's possible.

Love,
Rick

Highlights and Happenings

Worship Team Update

The Worship Team ended 2019 with a lovely spiritual service held Christmas Eve and then a Celebrating Community Potluck/Service held December 29. Janet Stevens, celebrant, said that the potluck was an opportunity "to say goodbye to a year of challenges, triumphs, loss, love and journeys, as well as saying hello to a new year and decade with the promise of hope, adventure, friendship and mystery".

There were many positive comments on the experience as well as suggestions (ok, maybe nix the noise makers). We heard from June Jordan in her poem that, "We are the ones we have been waiting for. May we be bold and courageous to chart that new future". We picked words to inspire us for the new year, such as Fearless, Be Awesome, Grateful, and we toasted to remember the gift that we are through our actions, compassion, and love towards one another and the world.

A big thank you to Lynn Cardiff (who washed all the dishes), the Women's Alliance, the Worship Team and the many people who pitched in with cleanup, to make this community celebration possible. Hope to see you there next year if you weren't there this time around. If you see the celebrants up there speaking each Sunday, and think, "I would like to do that", send me an email at worshipteam@uusalem.org, and I can send you information about what it entails so you can see if you might be a good fit. See you in the new year! - Sara Pickett, *Worship Team Chair*

Habitat and Hope Update

Several important developments since our report in December:

1. We have received our tax-exempt status (501 (c) (3), to be technical.) We applied in November, and were warned that approval could take up to 18 months. This status means we can accept tax-deductible contributions directly; it also changes the report forms we must send to the IRS and the State of Oregon.
2. Our estimate is that the cost of construction, including water well and septic system, will be \$250,000. We have received pledges from the H&HV Board for \$60,000.
3. Our Board has adopted a target of construction late this summer. This is ambitious, and may not be possible, but we will try!
4. We plan to submit a grant proposal to the Oregon Community Foundation in January.

But there are many other important steps ahead. Any offers of help are welcome; contact Paul Wilson, Larry Nasset, John or Patty Davenport, Joe Dabek, or George Struble.

Is Our UUCS Microfinance Project Making a Difference?

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation, we raised a total of \$5,680 during the month of November 2019 from direct contributions, Share the Plate and Basha/Northern Lights ticket sales. This fundraising effort, combined with \$5,000 that we received back from Laos earlier this year, will allow us to contribute \$10,000 to the NEO Fund for microfinance projects in Nicaragua and India. We also hope to have another project in Peru funded from our remaining funds.

Do our micro-loans make a difference for the poor? Meet Johanna, from the Villa Vallarta neighborhood of Managua, Nicaragua. For years she sold soup on the street. Income for her family of six was about \$430 per month. In early 2018, desperate to increase her income, Joanna decided to take a loan from the NEO Fund, the first of 4 which she has taken and repaid. In October 2019 her income had increased to \$1,948 per month.

Do micro-loans make a difference for the poor? Absolutely! In Joanna's own words, "I used to sell a little before, but because of the NEO Fund – because of the loans – my business has increased and I am grateful!"

See our success stories on the [Microfinance page](#) of the UUCS website.

Calendar

Habitat and Hope Meeting

Tuesday, January 7, 12:30 pm

Coalition partnership with other Interfaith groups

Membership Team Meeting

Tuesday, January 7, 6:00 pm

Danza Azteca

Tuesday, January 7, 6:30 pm

The teachings of the Aztec Dance are tied to the Pre-Hispanic roots of ancient Mexico. It serves to connect the dancer to a universal view of the Anawak culture and the Nawatl philosophy: a worldview of nature. Aztec dance awakens and develops various human faculties which are essential across society but which the current educational system fails to implement in a conscious and permanent manner. All are welcome to attend.

Moms Demand Action

Tuesday, January 7, 6:30 pm

UU Compassionate Mind Sangha Silent Meditation

Every Wednesday, 5:30 pm & 7:00 pm

A welcoming place for meditation practice. Session I is for experienced meditation practitioners. Session II provides attendees with basic instruction, and explanation. The last hour, 8–9pm, is for discussion, compassion, about how to use meditation as a spiritual practice.

Choir Rehearsal

Every Thursday, 6:30 pm

ArtWorks Team Meeting

Friday, January 10, 10:00 am

Monthly business meeting of the ArtWorks Team. Open to all interested UUCS members.

Recovery Dharma

Every Friday, 7:00 pm

UUCS' Addiction Recovery Ministry and Support program is glad to sponsor the Recovery Dharma group meeting every Friday from 7 to 8 pm at UUCS. The mission of this national non-profit organization is to build an extensive and comprehensive network of groups, meetings, and communities that practice and promulgate Buddhist teachings and meditations for anyone seeking recovery from addiction. Drawing inspiration from the core teachings of the Four Noble Truths, emphasis is placed on both knowledge and empathy as means for overcoming addiction and its causes. Those struggling with any form of addiction greatly benefit when they understand the suffering that addiction has created while developing compassion for the pain they have experienced.

Compassionate Connection

Sunday, January 12, 11:30 am

Please join us, following the service, for Compassionate Connection, a time when we lay our
January 7, 2020

hands upon those in distress and our minister offers a prayerful reflection. We also invite other members to join us and offer compassionate support.

Social Justice in Action Team Meeting

Sunday, January 12, 12:30 pm

The monthly SJAT meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Alma Marianos Celebration of Life

Sunday, January 12, 1:30 pm

Board Meeting

Monday, January 13, 5:30 pm

All are welcome to attend!

PFLAG Meeting

Monday, January 13, 7:00 pm

PFLAG is the extended family of the LGBTQ community. We're made up of LGBTQ individuals, family members and allies. Because together, we're stronger.

Singing Bowls w/ Debra Shaffer

Monday, January 13, 7:00 pm

See article

Landscape Team Meeting

Tuesday, January 14, 10:00 am

Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday, January 15, 5:30 pm

Music Team Meeting

Thursday, January 16, 5:00 pm

Dances of Universal Peace

Thursday, January 16, 7:00 pm

Simple, easy-to-learn movements and songs honoring spiritual traditions from around the world. The dances bring together sacred phrases from the world's religious traditions in heart-awakening circle dances dedicated to peace within and without.

Finance Team Meeting

Friday, January 17, 10:30 am

Family Promise

January 19, through January 26

See article

Worship Team Meeting

Monday, January 20, 5:30 pm

The Worship Team meetings are not open to the general public, but if you are interested in serving on the committee or have information/concerns you wish to present, please email worshipteam@uusalem.org.

Committee on Ministry Meeting

Tuesday, January 21, 10:30 am

The Committee on Ministry meetings are not open to the general public, but if you are interested in serving on the committee or have information/concerns you wish to present, please email rdavis@uuma.org.

Danza Azteca

Tuesday, January 21, 6:30 pm

(See January 7)

Habitat and Hope Meeting (Offsite)

Thursday, January 23, 6:00 pm

ArtWorks Art Making

Friday, January 24, 10:00 am

Men's Group Meeting

Sunday, January 26, 8:30 am

UU men will be meeting to connect with each other, continuing the spirit of the two retreats. All UUs identifying as men are welcome! Men attending will check in and there will be discussion. All that is discussed will be kept confidential unless the safety of a participant or someone else is at risk.

Communications Team Meeting

Monday, January 27, 4:00 pm

Join the communications team for discussion of progress on our UUCS newsletter, website, Facebook,

publicity and video projects. Newcomers or visitors welcome.

Board Retreat

Monday, January 27, 5:30 pm

Safer Congregation Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 28, 5:00 pm

The Safer Congregation Committee meetings are not open to the general public, but if you would like to join the committee or have information/concerns to present, please email rdavis@uuma.org.

Facilities Team Meeting

Tuesday, January 28, 6:00 pm

Danza Azteca

Tuesday, January 28, 6:30 pm

(See January 7)

Life Lines Lay Ministry Meeting

Saturday, February 1, 9:30 am

Building Sacred Ground, Session 1

Sunday, February 2, 12:00 pm

Worship Services

January Share the Plate: [Family Promise](#)

Service Time: 10:30 am

Sunday, January 12

The Rev. Richard R. Davis

"Where Are the Walls of Your Penitentiary?"

Celebrant: Lennie Martin; **Anchor:** David Gortner

Music: UUCS Choir

We don't often speak of "penitence" in our religious tradition, where we emphasize the inherent goodness of human nature. What function, if any, might it have in our lives?

Sunday, January 19

The Rev. Richard R. Davis

"A Pernicious Legacy"

Celebrant: Janet Stevens; **Anchor:** Geoff Hutchinson

Music: Jon Chinburg

According to the history books, slavery was abolished in our nation near the end of the civil war. Yet Martin Luther King, Jr. saw how the economic practices of slavery continued. And so they still do.

Sunday, January 26

The Rev. Richard R. Davis

"A Model of Integrity"

Celebrant: Sara Pickett; **Anchor:** Becky Harrison

Music: UUCS Choir

What does integrity look like? Please come hear about one shining example from my personal life.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation Of Salem

5090 Center St. NE, Salem, OR 97317

Minister: The Rev. Richard R. Davis

rdavis@uuma.org

Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration:

[Open](#)

RE Sunday Assistants: Elsa McKinney-Menchaca

Music Director: Laura Christian

music@uusalem.org

Pianist: Kit Abrahamson

Board Chair: Christine Ertl

boardchair@uusalem.org

Congregational Administrator: Emma Kreger

Office Assistant: Jo Sweeney

Office open Tuesday-Friday, 9 am to 1 pm

Phone: 503-364-0932

E-mail: office@uusalem.org

UUCS Internet Links to:

Website: www.uusalem.org

Facebook: facebook.com/UUSalem

Social Justice FB: facebook.com/UUCSSJAT

Newsletter Editors: editors@uusalem.org

This issue was edited and formatted by Sharon Pierson, and edited by Elsa Struble and Vicki Cunningham.

EVENT SCHEDULING: please use the [Event Scheduling Request](#) form on the UUCS website to add your event to the UUCS calendar and/or reserve a UUCS space.

PUBLICITY and ANNOUNCEMENTS: Fill out the [Publication Request](#) form on the UUCS website for any announcement, event or news item. This form is a one-stop place to put a notice in the Sunday announcements, the UUCS newsletter, the UUCS website, the *This Week* email and or Facebook.

DEADLINES:

Newsletter: The deadline for the next newsletter is 8:00 pm on Friday, **January 31, 2020.**

Sunday Announcements and This Week submissions are due by **Tuesday** noon.