



The
UNIGRAM

Monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento

Vol. 36 No. 1

JULY 2005

MONTH OF SUNDAYS

Service 10:00 am.

Note: During the summer, there is only one Sunday service at 10:00 a.m. and no Forum.

- July 3 **We Are Stardust! Science and Spirituality**
Connie Barlow
- July 10 **The Rev. Olympia Brown and Her Famous Congregant**
Judith Morris
- July 17 **The Heart and Soul of General Assembly**
Be Patterson
- July 24 **Things Are Not Always What They Seem**
Katye Ridgeway
- July 31 **The Stronger Pull**
Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry



IN FOND MEMORY OF BILL CAMPBELL

Bill Campbell joined UUSS in 1957. When his company, Campbell Construction, built our present campus on Sierra Blvd., he suggested changes that made a very low price possible. He was a low-key, extremely capable person, building many major buildings in Sacramento, California and abroad. He and his wife Marti, daughter Melissa and son-in-law Richard Lyman and family enjoyed the outdoors and their retreat in Carmel. Still driving at 94, he lived life to the fullest until the end. Bill's many longtime friends at UUSS will miss him. - Lou Watson

ALL-CHURCH CAMPOUT

The All-Church campout at Camp Norge was a great success. Seventy of us enjoyed the serene quiet and beauty of the recreation center. Thank you to all of you who pitched in to make this such a success and particularly Doug for doing the service on Sunday morning. It was positively spiritual. - Thelma



AT THE MOMENT . . .

Something came alive. It was obvious though hard to describe.

While at the University of Wisconsin years ago, I partially supported myself teaching guitar, piano and recorder. My first recorder student, Melanie, was diligent for a thirteen year old. She practiced regularly and carefully. Her sound was diligent, regular and careful.

At the end of her first year of study, I assigned her "Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring," a lyrical Bach melody. She fingered the notes correctly and took it home to practice.

The next lesson, the melody burst to life. I didn't hear notes, phrases and articulation. I heard something in her soul sing out through her playing. I was touched. She smiled shyly, pleased she could be part of something so beautiful.

Transcendence requires both careful, diligent practice and letting go to allow a greater sense of life to flow through us.

At its best, a church does both: discipline and release, careful attention and lyrical trust.

As the church year comes to a close, I'm aware of both. It's been a good year, thanks to a lot of effort by the Board, Program Council, staff and many, many others. We've increased intergenerational services and programming, revitalized the new membership program, begun Family Promise (offering housing to homeless families) and Welcoming Congregation. The Program Council came into full operation; we had the most successful canvass since I've been here (an increase of over 12% when many congregations' budgets are shrinking); we've added a new Business Administrator, a choir with a larger, fuller sound, a kid's choir and much more.

These are the notes, the discipline, the careful work. They are the foundation and something to be proud of. But by themselves, they don't sing, they don't transcend.

What I love about this congregation is not only its willingness to do hard work, but to let down, laugh and let spirit flow through.

I was overwhelmed by this love after my bike accident a year ago. Lyn and many others stepped in quietly and gracefully during the months when the world spun every time I moved. During the Fall and early Winter many said to me, "We miss

you, but don't come back until you are healed." And during the Spring when the obvious external symptoms were gone, I still received many queries about my health. I feel blessed by all your kindness and graciousness. (At this point the remaining symptoms of my concussion are subtle and starting to blend with the symptoms of normal aging.)

I see that flow of spirit other places, as well: in the music, in the generous ways you listen on Sunday morning, in your irreverent humor, in the number of picnics, parties and celebrations at the end of the year, in the maturing of the Lay Ministry and Ministry Circles and so much more.

We will never do the disciplined work or the letting go perfectly. This world is not about perfection. But I thank you all for being such a wonderful, colorful and kind congregation. I feel graced to be with you.



FINDING DOUG . . .

By the time you read this, I'll be at the General Assembly of the denomination which is in Fort Worth this year. I'll be back for a few days at the end of June. I'll be on vacation in July. August is study and preparation time for me without regular office hours or meetings. I'll be back in the pulpit in late August. Next year my sabbatical will be in two phases: one November through December and one February through April.

For emergencies or pressing issues, the office (483-9283) will always know how to reach me.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

My heart was pumping and I could feel my skin begin to heat up and tingle. From my meditation practice, I knew that I was uncomfortable with the comments members were making at the Congregational meeting. I was able to acknowledge my current state and be open to the present situation. Were they really questioning the validity of raising Doug's salary closer to UUA guidelines, or were they supporting the non-ministerial staff? To many it might have seemed like the former, but from comments made to me after the meeting, it was the latter.

This is what our semi-annual meetings are all about — the opportunity to question Board actions and propose other paths. It works. Many of you, like me, may have squirmed in our chairs, but hearing and understanding opposing views actually furthers our knowledge of what we believe is right.

The Board and I learn something from each congregational meeting. As we reflected upon the last meeting, we decided in the future to hold small group meetings around the budget before the annual meeting. Many of you will remember that Terry Throop, one of our previous treasurers, initiated this practice. This will give the Board a chance to discuss and explain the various line items and hear, respond to and adjust to members' concerns and priorities.

We also discovered that many of you, although you religiously attend the meetings, are reluctant to publicly state your views. Maybe you're like me, afraid that you won't be able to back up your claims with facts, or unsure if expressing a gut feeling is sufficient. We are not all accomplished orators, but every one of us has the right to ensure that all points of view are heard. I admire those members who consistently and eloquently state their opinions, and I encourage others to try it out. We won't bite!

So, what did happen at the May 15 meeting? Four new board members were elected: Virginia Dunstan, John McMillan, Judy Morrison, and David Paul. All the other unopposed candidates were also elected. The constitutional amendment to add language about the Program Council passed, and the one to remove wording about the Communication and Conflict Management Committee was tabled until October. Interested parties are planning to bring a revamped proposal to that meeting.

Members passed the budget with the pledge to increase non-ministerial staff salaries by 3% if monies allowed. They also wanted the Program Council to receive more money if possible. The Board will act upon both those directives at future meetings.

It was a productive meeting. I will admit that more than once I had to take note of my body's reaction to comments, acknowledge it, and release it. I can do this because I truly believe that, in spite of our differing opinions, we all have the same goal — to ensure the future strength of UUSS.

In the faith,

Mary

P.S. I will be on vacation, so will not produce an August column.

GET ON BOARD

At the May meeting, the Board approved funding for Mary Howard's attendance at Leadership School this summer. The ministers provided reports. Doug gave us his summer schedule, so

the office will always know how to reach him in an emergency. Lyn will take action to interview and select the RE Assistant, with the Board making the final hiring decision. Lyn also informed the Board of the RE summer program and schedule. Chris thanked the Board for their support during his internship. He has been called to the Berkeley church (Kensington) and will start there in the fall. The Board said, "It's been a pleasure having you!"

UUSS is in good shape financially. Suzanne continues to estimate that we will have between \$5,000 and \$10,000 extra at the end of the year. As of the date of the meeting, we had \$385,395.64 in pledges. Suzanne suggested waiting until the end of June to determine if there are sufficient funds to follow the direction of the congregation and give larger salary increases to non-ministerial staff. Mary plans to notify the Congregation of any action as soon as possible. There will also be announcements at the October Congregational meeting.

The Board agreed that next year the canvass will start in February to make the budgeting process more realistic. Jack and Fran Kennedy were vice-chairs of the Canvass Committee this year and will be chairs next year. Small group meetings will be held to discuss budgeting issues before the May 2006 Congregational meeting. The Board Secretary will keep the Master Calendar and work with various parties including the Program Council, Religious Services Committee and the office staff to ensure smooth communication.

Mary was given authority to designate members as GA delegates.

The Board agreed that Monica Hannasch's batik "Wheat" could be hung in the auditorium until the end of August. A second of her batiks and photographs of her along with a small podium on which will be placed her 1990's booklet with colored illustrations of her art work will be displayed for one day. Next year a Policy Committee on Art will be appointed to develop policies about what art can be displayed in the buildings and on the grounds.

LYN'S COLUMN

This month's Religious Education activities are a great reflection of our shared ministry for children at UUSS. We'll have intergenerational worship on July 3 and 24. The other three Sundays, children will gather in one multi-age group to discuss Unitarian Universalist Principles. The volunteers leading RE this summer are adults from many generations, some with lots of recent RE experience and some with lots of historic RE experience.

I appreciate how well the congregation has come together to offer a quality summer program and am confident that volunteers will experience something

valuable for their own faith development. If you get a taste of Religious Education this summer and would like a longer-term relationship with the program, there are still openings for regular Sunday School teachers and assistants in the fall. Our program in 2005-2006 focuses on "big questions," exploring topics that kids and adults all wonder about. For instance, in September we'll ask, "What is the purpose of religious community?" In October, we'll think about, "How do I respond to loss and death?" In November, the question "What is a person?" relates directly to our first UU Principle. If you are as curious about these questions as our kids are, I hope you'll consider joining the elite corps of RE volunteers.

It feels a little strange to be writing this, since I'll be away from UUSS for most of July. In the first two weeks, I'll be out of town on vacation. At the end of July, I'll be at home on "study leave," preparing sermons, writing curricula, and reading the books that help me do my job the rest of the year. I'll be back in the office full time in August. Being away from congregational life is always difficult and I will miss you very much, yet I know that we will all benefit from the time apart. As you move through the warm summer days, remember to collect a little bit of water from the places that touch your heart. We will gather these drops together in September, symbolizing that we come from different sources yet merge in a common wellspring called community.

FINDING LYN

In July, I'll be away on vacation and study leave. The office will be able to get in touch with me in case of an emergency.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CALENDAR

- July 3: Intergenerational Worship: We Are Stardust. Children, youth, and adults stay together for this celebration of science and spirituality.
- July 10: UU Principle #3: We Accept One Another and Learn Together. Children will hear the story, "How My Parents Learned to Eat" and play a game called "Magic Shoe."
- July 17: UU Principle #4: Each Person is Free to Search for What is True and Right. Children will hear the story, "Everyone Knows What a Dragon Looks Like" and play a game called "Guess What We Are."

- July 24: Intergenerational Worship: Music. Children, youth, and adults will enjoy worship together.
- July 31: UU Principle #5: The Right to Speak Out and Vote on Things That Matter. Children will hear the story, "The Island of the Skog" and play a game called "Ghost."
- August 7: UU Principle #6: We Work for a Peaceful, Fair, and Free World. Children will hear the story, "Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes" and will make origami cranes.

NEWLYWED STAFF MEMBER

Congratulations to Office Administrator Lourdes Montero on her recent marriage! Volunteers staffed the office in early June while she and her groom honeymooned. Now we'll all have to get used to her new name: Lourdes Price.

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

In May, members voted to appoint a Revitalization Task Force, charged with developing a plan for continuation and energizing of the Alliance. The purposes of Alliance remain the same — fellowship, education and service. The Task Force will survey members, consider various alternatives that would simplify and clarify roles, responsibilities and structures, and present a recommendation to a general meeting of the Alliance membership on October 12, 2005. Task Force members are Kate Throop, Chair; Joyce Miller; Fran Oyafuso; Joan Rubenson; Glenda Smaage; Aggie Vawter; and Polly Watson. The Task Force welcomes comments, questions and support from the congregation as we undertake our work.

THE CARING NETWORK

I have been a member (for two years co-chair) of the Caring Committee since March 2002. While serving with the committee, I met and got to know many wonderful people. My jobs included working at the Caring Table in the foyer after services, delivering cookies to homebound folks, developing a volunteer list of folks who offered support to members and friends, and meeting with others to find ways to improve our services. My life has definitely been enriched as a result of being a member of the committee. Those who served with me on the Caring Committee this year were: Shirley Eley (co-chair), Steve Hoverman, Nan Johnson, Annette Kregel, Joan Spurling, and Glory Wicklund. Edie Isaacs (Program Council liaison)

and Fran Yankauer (former co-chair) offered support and inspiration.

As with many good things in life, a time comes when we feel the need to change direction in order to refresh. That time has come for me, and it has come for some of the others on the committee, as well. However, I believe that even though the committee itself is in transition, the *Caring Network* is alive and well at UUSS. My guess is that everyone who walks through a door of our beautiful church campus is included in the group of people concerned about others. What I'm hoping is that each of us will continue being our own Caring Committee of one to look out for each other. If each of us would commit to sending out one caring card (or e-mail) and making one or two caring phone calls a week, just imagine the overall impact of good will those simple gestures would generate. How about inviting someone over for coffee and cookies, offering an occasional ride to church, making a pie, salad or casserole for someone whose partner is in the hospital — the possibilities are endless!

If there is a member out there in UUSS land who feels compelled and able to lead a group of folks to organize the next Caring Committee (there have been several versions in our UUSS history), please let us know who you are. I think there is a need out there — especially for communications (visits, calls and cards) to hospitalized or homebound members and friends. I know there are folks who want to help with this and just need an enthusiastic person or persons to lead the way. If leadership in Caring sounds like something to which you can commit (even in a well-defined, limited way) you will get plenty of support. Hey — if you read all the way through this — thanks for caring!

Joan Rubenson

Phone 363-2415, joanndavid@yahoo.com

PROGRAM COUNCIL PAPERS AVAILABLE

Program Council has recently made their papers available for any church member in a notebook which has been placed in the church office. It is entitled "Program Council Papers." These papers include such information as how to write a charter with sample charters; what should be contained in an annual report with samples; minutes and agendas of all meetings, purpose and charter of the Program Council and so on. We hope each one of you will take a look at it and access it as needed.

Shirley Hines, Program Council secretary

UULM REPORTS NEAR WIN FOR AB 19

The "Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act" (Assembly Bill 19) lost its final vote on the floor of the California State Assembly in June, according to Rev. Lindi Ramsden, Executive Director of the Unitarian-Universalist Legislation Ministry (UULM). UULM supported the bill.

The official tally was 37 in favor, 36 opposed, but according to Ramsden there were actually 40 votes in favor at one point—just one vote shy of passing.

"This is an amazing and extremely hopeful accomplishment," Ramsden said. "We came so close; we fully expect that similar legislation will be reintroduced."

Ramsden sent special thanks to congregations that took the time to pass a formal resolution in favor of full civil marriage equality for gays and lesbians. "I never realized while I was in the parish, the power of those resolutions when communicated to legislators."

Although UUSS has not yet passed such a resolution, the newly-forming Interweave Chapter at UUSS will be seeking support for a resolution later this year so that UUSS can add its name to the list of congregations formally in support of full marriage equality for gays and lesbians.

WORKSHOP: OPTIMISM ON THE FUTURE

On Tuesday, July 5, from 7-9 p.m., Rev. Michael Dowd will lead a workshop on the theme, "Beyond Sustainability: A Hopeful, Inspiring View of the Next 250 Years." Evolution, the Great Story, bridges science and religion, providing common ground for atheists, pantheists, humanists and other spiritual seekers, says the Rev. Dowd. He offers an original way of thinking about how our relationship to the cosmos affects social justice and environmental sustainability, exploring how long-term evolutionary trends and short-term historic trends offer hope for a healthy, beautiful and life-giving future. This workshop will explore the unique human contribution to these processes, likely challenges, expectations and opportunities over the next 250 years, and how this new perspective can make a difference to the individual's life and concerns.

The Rev. Dowd, and his wife, Connie Barlow, are "itinerant UU educators and evolutionary theologians/storytellers." They have led workshops for various UU events, and have worked with UU, Jewish, Catholic, Protestant and Evangelical leaders on peace, justice, and environmental issues. Their books and other resource materials will be available at the July 3 service and the July 5 workshop for interested readers, parents and teachers. More information can be found online at: www.thegreatstory.org.

LETTER FROM ROBERT

I don't know what to say (which in itself says a lot!). Thanks to all of you for putting up with me for however many years we have been relating and working together. The surprise gathering in my honor was a bit overwhelming. I could have cried a number of times, but for whatever reason held the tears in (tears of gladness, of course). It is always difficult for me to relate to a large crowd when I am the focus of attention. I do much better one-on-one. Nevertheless, there was such an outpouring of affection and appreciation that I tried to just let go and soak it in. I hope that you all could feel it coming back from me to you because that was my intention. It was evident that certain folks had devoted a lot of time and energy into putting the evening together. My top hat is off to you (Fred Astaire-style). I'm glad that I had the opportunity to experience so many friends enjoying themselves. The nature of the program allowed me to see and hear a reflection of my style and actions, the pomposity and all of my control issues, anal retentiveness and perfectionism, presented with love and taste. It's good to know that I'm accepted in spite of all my faults. I say this not in jest, but with sincere appreciation for a community that can really acknowledge who a person is while simultaneously honoring their role in "the family". It's a blessing to have such people in one's life. May we all be so blessed. Humbly and gratefully, Robert

OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH

Would you like to lead or facilitate a class/workshop for adults this fall? The Adult Enrichment Committee needs your help and promises flexibility in terms of topics, dates, times, and number of sessions. If you're interested in leading a group but have no firm topic in mind, we have some UUA curricula available. Please contact our new committee chairperson, Joyce Bray, at nanajb@yahoo.com or leave a message for her in the church office. Registration for classes will begin in late August, so we will need to receive all class proposals by the first week of August.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Thank you so much for the donation of the new filing cabinet which was not only delivered, but first sanded and painted. The only information I have on the donor is the name Alicia. Now after looking at the other four filing cabinets, I see that one (a cheap one) has drawers that are very hard to open because the metal is so thin it bends when someone pulls on the handle. We could really use

another filing cabinet to replace this one. Anyone else out there have one they don't want? If so, call Shirley Hines at 444-6553 or the office at 483-9283.

BASS LAKE WEEKEND

Once a year the UUs of Palo Alto sponsor a gathering at Bass Lake for a weekend of wonderful times, when UUs from all over our district relax together, worship, swim (the lake is warm!) and sing to the stars! They would like to preserve their weekend there as a UU weekend, but will have to keep the numbers up to do that, so registering over the next four weeks is important!

For more information, contact Charles B. Rosene, District Administrator, Pacific Central District – UUA, 6536 Telegraph Avenue, C-102, Oakland, CA 94609 or phone (510) 601-1437.

SAVE THESE DATES!

PCD Leadership Development Day
Saturday, November 5, 2005
UU Church of Palo Alto
Details to be announced right after Labor Day!

District Assembly 2006
April 28-30, 2006
Concord Hilton
Sponsored by the Mt. Diablo UU Church
Keynote speaker will be UUA President Rev. William Sinkford; Sunday morning worship will be led by the Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker.

UNIGRAM SUBMISSIONS

Send articles for the Unigram by the 10th of the month preceding publication to unigram@uuss.org. For guidelines on formatting and content of articles, check the UUSS web page at <http://www.uuss.org> and click on "Current Information" and "Get Your Information Published," or go directly to <http://www.uuss.org/unigramguidelines.html>.

July 2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9:45 am Childcare 10:00 am Service	HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSED Iron Bell Zen		10:00 am Daydreamers			PMC Work Day
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
9:45 am Childcare 10:00 am Service 11:30 pm Social Responsibility	10:30 am Senior Support 7:00 pm Iron Bell Zen	5:00 pm Executive Committee	10:00 am Daydreamers 2:00 pm Program Council/Steering Committee 7:00 pm Liturgical Music	6:15 pm Worship Leaders 7:00 pm Religious Services 7:00 pm Caregivers Support		5:00 pm Couple's Club
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
9:45 am Childcare 10:00 am Service 5:00 pm CUUPS	7:00 pm Iron Bell Zen	5	10:00 am Daydreamers 3:00 pm Program Council 7:00 pm Liturgical Music	6:30 pm Board of Trustees 7:00 pm Book Group	9:30 am Women's Alliance Revitalization Meeting	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
9:45 am Childcare 10:00 am Service	10:30 am Senior Support 7:00 pm Iron Bell Zen		10:00 am Daydreamers 7:00 pm Liturgical Music			
31						
9:45 am Childcare 10:00 am Service						



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 (president@uuss.org)

Assistant Minister for Education:
 The Reverend Lyn Cox
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Music Director: Mike Reynolds (483-9283)

Organist: Barbara Lazar (483-9283)

Business Administrator: Suzanne Hock
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Head Custodian: Robert Hosley
 (483-9283 ext. 251; 752-0882, 24 hrs. robert@uuss.org)

Custodian: Elaine Cooper (483-9283 ext. 252; Pager 730-8803 when on duty).

MONTH OF SUNDAYS

July 3 **We Are Stardust! Science and Spirituality** *Connie Barlow*

This intergenerational service celebrates our scientific understanding of how and where atoms formed, offering renewed intimacy with the night sky. Disney's Lion King believed stars were his ancestors — now we can, too! And, according to Carl Sagan, "We are recycled star stuff!"

July 10 **The Rev. Olympia Brown and Her Famous Congregant** *Judith Morris*

Rev. Olympia Brown, the first congregationally ordained woman minister in this country (Universalist), had two illustrious careers and an important avocation. A small serious woman, she was in good relationship with her famous congregant, P.T. Barnum. What an unusual friendship! Rev. Judith Morris was the founding minister of the UU Community Church in Sacramento for nine years. She currently does ministry with Sacramento's homeless as a resource counselor at Francis House.

July 17 **The Heart and Soul of General Assembly** *Be Patterson*

Longtime member of UUSS, 2nd year Starr King student, and lifelong UU Be Patterson will share

hir experience of the spiritual side of GA and discuss hir passion for anti-oppression work.

July 24 **Things Are Not Always What They Seem** *Katye Ridgeway*

Katye — storyteller and singer extraordinaire — returns with an intergenerational service featuring a native American story, "Buffalo Woman," and an African story called "Talk Talk." Those of us who were present at her last appearance here give her rave reviews. Her work inspires and delights adults as well as children.

July 31 **The Stronger Pull**

Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry

The Sufi poet Rumi writes, "Let yourself be silently drawn by the stronger pull of what you really love." In our increasingly busy lives, how many of us take the time to be silent enough to listen to our deepest yearnings? But honoring what we really love is a spiritual path that can lead us into ever widening circles of joy. Join us as we explore the spiritual nature of desire. Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry is a mother, a minister and a seeker of joy in everyday life. She is currently piloting the "Weekend Ministry Program" with the Unitarian Fellowship in Chico, a PCD project designed to enable smaller congregations to achieve their goal of full-time ministry.