



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Key West

Worship

Our Worship Experiences in February:

Sunday, February 5:

PRACTICE MAKES BETTER

We are often told that “practice makes perfect,” but with spiritual practice one does not seek perfection . . . only a path to one’s betterment. In religious traditions centered on prayer or meditation, such practices are easy to find. But what about for those of us who have no easy source, no dogmatic orders, no prescribed path?

Sunday, February 12:

EVERYONE SAY “I LOVE YOU”

At Valentine’s Day, it is easy to fall into simple, sentimental thoughts on love. But, if someone were to decide to live her or his life based on love, what would that look like?

Sunday, February 19

Guest Presenter, Joe MacKay

PRONOIA

We all know what paranoia is – the belief that something or someone bad is out to get us. But what about the flipside of that – the belief that something or someone good is out to help us?

Sunday, February 26

IT’S A LONG WAY FROM MAY TO DECEMBER

That old Kurt Weill song reminds us of the transition from the romantic notions of youth to the more mature understandings of age. On February 12, we thought about what it would mean to live a life based on love. What would experiencing life itself as mature love really mean?



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Key West

Wider Thoughts

As a youth, I found one of our hymns particularly compelling. In the series of hymnals since then the tune has been obliterated, and the verses condensed. It is now rarely sung by any Unitarian Universalist congregation.

It was the last verse that always got to me:

Since what we choose is what we are
And what we love we yet shall be.
The goal may ever shine afar –
The will to win it makes us free.

William De Witt Hyde

In a world so dominated by religious and psychological systems of thought that preach various forms of determinism, here is a breath of fresh air.

Instead of being advised to learn to accept as karma, judgement, plan, divine will, or the like what already is, we are being challenged to think of ourselves as co-creators of reality.

Personal choice and the guidance of love are proposed as the instruments of that creation.

Moses, in his famous Exodus from Egypt, acknowledged that he would probably never see the promised land. However, his journey as a free person toward that promise was what he held in faith. So, too, our own journeys in life.

It is not the accomplishment of our dreams that will fulfill us, but rather which dreams we choose and how we strive toward them that will decide our fulfillment. Yes, the goal may ever shine afar – not likely known in our own brief interlude of physical being – but it is in the will to go there that we find our spiritual meaning and freedom.

Rev Randy



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Key West

President's Message

Greetings, all!

Here we are, now in a new year of commitment to . . .fill in our NEW NAME!! As I reflect on our Congregational Annual Meeting (which will be a memory as you read this), I am focusing on *our* Stone Soup--a shared meal--and that commitment to our Beloved Community. The Stone Soup legend has several origins, common to all of which are the values of cooperation and resource-sharing. Do we all know this fable?

"According to the legend, travellers arrive at a village bringing nothing except an empty bowl and go door to door asking the villagers to give them something to eat. The suspicious and hungry villagers, who have little to eat themselves, refuse to share their food with the travellers. Then, one of the travellers fills the bowl with water and drops a big stone inside. The travellers then place the bowl at the centre plaza of the village and begin to heat it. This leaves the villagers both puzzled and curious... One of them then asks the travellers, what they are doing. They answer, "We are preparing a delicious stone soup! It is almost ready. We are only missing some ingredients". To help finish preparing the soup one of the villagers goes home to look for an onion, only a bit, to add to the soup... Another, also inquiring about the bowl, and after a similar response, also goes home to look for an ingredient that according to the travellers is missing for the soup to be ready. And this goes on and on for all the villagers that ask, until at the end a delicious and nutritious soup is ready, one that the travellers share with the whole village." (<http://www.stone-soup.net>)

The obvious moral of the story? Working together and everyone contributing= greater good achieved. This fable of resources discovered and shared to generate a rich, fulfilling meal for all is universal and powerful. We will have shared another literal Stone Soup meal as you read this message. More importantly, we will have participated in our Annual Meeting-- and we will have rededicated our time, our talents, and our resources to our "village" for 2012.

I continue my personal and shared journey with our Congregation, accept the nomination to the presidency again, and will endeavor to lead us through the next 2 years. May I suggest this fable as a living metaphor for us. I see ever repetitive Stone Soup: shared meals (to be sure!) and, more importantly, our Beloved Community pooling its tangible and intangible assets. May we journey together in that spirit and blessed be!

Joy Brown Taylor



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Key West

News & Notes

Our Minister, Dr. Becker, enjoys his Sabbath on Mondays. On other days, he is available by appointment for business or pastoral needs. He regularly checks email (minister@uufkw.org) and phone messages to the Fellowship Office (305-296-4369). In cases of emergency text or phone him at 305-407-7956.

FILMS OF SOCIAL WITNESS CONTINUE

Mondays, February 6, 13, and 20th, join us for films which explore the many faces of social witness . . . from heroes to institutions . . . from close and far away . . . from now and before. We begin at 7pm promptly. No charge.

Feb. 11, Lobster Dinner at the Fellowship. Adults are \$35 and children are \$15. This is one of our major fundraisers. Please purchase a ticket and bring your friends. 305- 872-3179

FORUM ON BECOMING AN INTER-GENERATIONAL CONGREGATION

Sunday, February 26, join us after the service for a program and discussion on how we can grow in complexity as an community by thoughtfully responding to the needs of all ages. So, of course, all ages are welcomed (we will have a simple lunch right after the service for everyone!)

The Annual Reports for 2011 are now available. As part of our "green" agenda, paper copies will only be made available by request to the office. The full document is online at:

<http://www.uufkw.org/annualreports2011.pdf> and there is a link to it on our website's front page.

CARING for UU is available to all! Do you have a special need? Do you want a buddy? Are you in the midst of an emergency? Do you want to involve our congregation in helping another? Our Caring Coordinator (Elissa Bishop-Becker) will respond asap to our church phone 305-296-4369 (leave a message); or e mail care@uufkw.org. Our CARING for UU Network can use your help, too: be on call to prepare a meal, provide a ride, be a listening ear, you name it. Please contact Elissa at care@uufkw.org with your contact information to join the Network!

"UU RIDES" Find yourself in the need of a ride in Key West?? Consider calling Janet (443-822-8677) or Joy (305-587-7833). We can give you the ride you need (to the airport, doctor's office, home from the party, etc) complete with help with your luggage, conversation and even a hug, if you like. Cheerful, helpful service. Then you donate what you would have paid for a ride to the congregation. An easy fundraiser!

Tuesdays, 5:30 pm - All are welcome to join the **sangha** in mindfulness meditation, sitting and walking, in the tradition of Vietnamese teacher **Thich Nhat Hanh**.

Fridays, 5:30 pm – Zen Meditation

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Key West

"Vision Statement: A vibrant UU congregation of reasoning and spiritual individuals committed to the ideal of One Human Family."

"Mission: To engage individuals in a transformative journey of spirituality, study, service and fellowship."

"Covenant: Love is the force that binds this fellowship together in spirituality, study, and service.
We foster each individual's personal search for universal values. "

We support the democratic process in human relations and we pledge allegiance to the cause of a united world community."

There are seven principles which Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Unitarian Universalism (UU) draws from many sources:

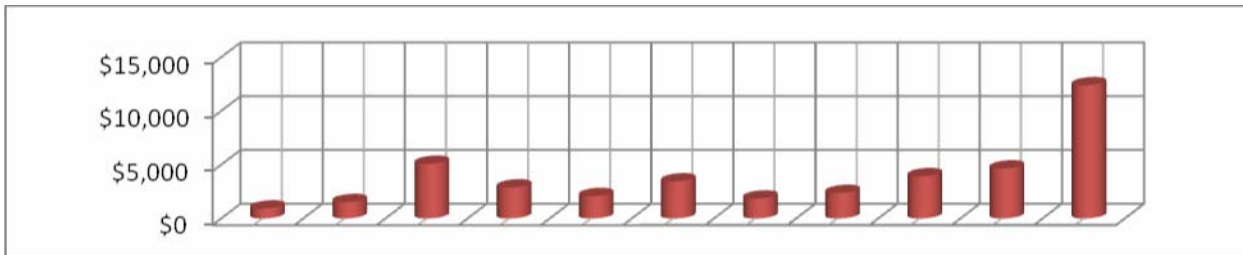
- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
- Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

These principles and sources of faith are the backbone of our religious community.



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Key West *Treasurer's Report*

Fundraising has become a very important source of income for our budget. Last year we had the BEST fundraising year in our history! Check the graph below for the last eleven years. 2011 fundraising was more than double the next-best year of 2003.



Last year we initiated many *new* fundraising programs. Not only did they produce income, they provided many opportunities for members to participate directly in helping UUFKW meet its financial goals. All the literature says that it is important for members to participate, not just *attend*! Here's a summary of all the 2011 events and opportunities.

Fund-raiser: events:	Amount raised in 2011:	Participants or comments: (Yes, we have an affinity for <i>food-type</i> events!)	Dining
Lobster Dinner:	\$1,432.00	Barb Dreher and volunteers	
Divine Dining:	\$2,614.91	Joy Taylor and volunteers	
Mexican Dinner:	\$ 282.00	Barb Dreher and volunteers	
Oktoberfest:	\$ 236.00	Barb Dreher and volunteers	
Seder Dinner:	\$ 60.00	Connie Gilbert and volunteers	
Vegetarian Dinner:	\$ 174.00	Jean Marc and Flora Buffard and volunteers	
Property Watch:	\$2,010.00	Jim Smith and volunteers (needs more)	
Fitness Warriors:	\$ 100.00	Jim Smith and volunteers	
UU Rides:	\$ 205.00	Janet Whalen-Dunning and volunteers	
Guest Stay:	\$ 650.00	Joy Wood, Denise O-K and volunteers	
IBIS Bay concert:	\$1,540.00	The Gents, <u>and</u> \$1,118 to Cancer Foundation	
Artwork Sales:	\$ 100.00	Lois Kincaid art donations	
SCRIP Gift Cards:	\$ 47.00	Ann Ewing initiative, just beginning	
Sales Referrals:	\$2,500.00	Corporate responsibility, thanx for the business	
Walk on Georgia:	\$ 450.00	Joy Taylor, raffle prizes from throughout year	
Total:	\$12,400.91		

Most of these fundraisers are new to UUFKW, and as these ideas mature they may generate more income. Other ideas barely got off-the-ground, but show promise for the future ... eBay sales, flea markets, etc. We even had a few Florida Lottery tickets dropped into the collection plate! The year 2012 could be even better.

If anyone has additional fundraising ideas, please let me or the Board know. Good chance to contribute mightily to the income-side of our budget. And a *very* good chance to become involved with UUFKW. Likewise, anyone who can volunteer to assist with any of these initiatives would be appreciated. For example, "Property Watch" could mean putting up hurricane shutters during the summer for part-time residents ... it would be a task that could take *many* volunteer hands for several properties!

Jim Smith, Treasurer UUFKW