

The Torch

JANUARY 9, 2017

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Upcoming Services

January 8th

Services at 9:00 and 11:00 am
Religious Education at 11:00 am

"Tilting Right"

-Rev. Tom Goldsmith

January 15th

Services at 9:00 and 11:00 am
Religious Education at 11:00 am

"Out of the Shadows"

-Rev. Tom Goldsmith and the Chancel Choir

January 22nd

Services at 9:00 and 11:00 am
Religious Education at 11:00 am

"Beyond 100 Days of Resistance"

-Rev. Matthew Cockrum

Interfaith Remembrance Jan. 26th

Please mark your calendars for Thursday, January 26th at 7:00 p.m.. Our church will host the annual remembrance for Down Winders. An Interfaith group of clergy will join Tom Goldsmith in exploring the effects of a nuclear world. The choir will join the service.

Reverently Yours (Rev. Tom Goldsmith)

It's New Year's Day today and I contemplate the scary possibilities of a new year, a new president, and a new social gestalt for minorities facing deportation by the millions. There are also millions of Muslims who might need to register as posing a danger to our country. The safety net, which keeps millions of people of all races barely alive with medical care and supplemental income, will be shredded. We in liberal communities will be challenged in meeting the desperate needs of those who will be abandoned by government, including the elderly whose social security income and Medicare insurance will surely be diminished.

We're facing a raw social Darwinism where survival itself will meet unprecedented tests. We in liberal communities will also be challenged to keep despair and depression from invading our sanity.

Many of us surely feel that good progressive leadership is the right tonic for our country, our earth, and our future. Put Bernie in the White House and with the help of a progressive Congress, we can move forward in creating a more humane and caring society. And yet the right solutions are elusive for everyone; it's not that easy. As a microcosm for understanding the complexities of social issues, we need go no further than our own homeless crisis in Salt Lake City. I sometimes try to imagine that if I had unlimited monies and endless power, I could magically resolve the homeless problem. Truthfully, I wouldn't know where to begin. There is no solution.

Homelessness results from economic losses, poor education, mental illness, joblessness, and a host of random causes from medical issues to drug addictions.

We could build ten Fourth Street Clinics, twenty new shelters, and pay the salaries of the greatest social workers in the world to supply resources, and never remotely touch the problem of homelessness. Regardless if the mayor is Donald Trump or Karl Marx, or anybody in between, the root issues of homelessness lay beyond any tinkering with the social system.

The current approach taken by our city, however, seems to make matters worse. If The Road Home currently shelters 1100 people, and the plan is to build four new shelters in two years accommodating a total of 600, and then tear down The Road Home, somebody is not doing the math. Especially since homelessness will likely increase during the new administration, the mayor's plan lacks not only logic but compassion.

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By removing the shelter and the homeless population away from the city's prime real estate awaiting development, we are just as guilty as the infamous one percent for advancing financial gain ahead of human concern. Homelessness is a tremendous inconvenience for development, business, and tourism. But how do we sleep at night; how do we live with ourselves, if we treat homelessness simply as a blight that needs to be purged. I am the first to admit that I don't come close to a solution. But I can measure the direction of compassion, and we are clearly heading in the wrong direction. TRG

In the Life . . . (Rev. Matthew Cockrum)

We're all in this together. You know that, right? It's one of the reasons many of us come to church...and keep coming. It's one of the powerful reminders of our seventh principle, one often quoted and remembered: "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

One of the ways this has been true during my time with you has been through a Support Team comprised of Christine Ashworth, Philip Moos and John Rasmuson. These three folks have met with me monthly during my time with you at First Church to serve as a sounding board, think tank, and interpreter of your congregation's life, history and culture. The next time you see any of these folks please offer them thanks for their service!

One of the reasons I'm sharing this with you now is because you will be hearing from this team in the coming month as they help me plan and implement a February event. This event will be a critical part of continuing to plan for the ministries of Congregational Life following my departure. Rest assured, your church staff is also in the planning mode for this and we intend to have several components in place and ready to report on by late February. Stay tuned for more!

Finally, below are a few other tidbits for your consideration. First, an excerpt from the letter from Unitarian Universalist Association President, the Reverend Peter Morales, which I shared as a reading during our January 1 worship service. Second, an update on local events in honor of Martin Luther King, and how you and your youth can participate.

Again, we're all in this together, Friends, the work of building and being Beloved Community.

Here's to The Work!
Peace, Faith & Passion,

Matthew

More from Matthew

Following is an excerpt from a letter sent to Unitarian Universalist ministers in the wake of the recent US presidential election. Though this was addressed to clergy it deserves a wider audience. May it encourage you.

A message of support in these troubling times
- UUA President Peter Morales

Dear Colleagues,

These are tough times. We are living in the midst of historic cultural turmoil. Long festering resentments are being unleashed, posing immediate threats to the most marginalized in our society and presenting long term danger to our natural environment.

People are understandably anxious...

...I believe we are entering dangerous times. I expect that the new administration will unleash human rights abuses aimed at migrants and Muslims shortly after it takes office. In the longer term, other marginalized groups (women, the poor, people of color, transgender people, etc.) will be in danger. We are already seeing an increase in violent acts by people who see the election as validation of their hate.

Among the dangers we face is the temptation to "normalize" the situation. I pray that the incoming administration will prove to be more humane than its rhetoric and many of its most ardent supporters. I see no evidence that this is the case. None. It is irresponsible folly to act as though we are in a normal transition between administrations.

We must prepare to provide sanctuary and resist.

First, we must provide sanctuary in the broadest and richest sense of the term. We begin with offering safe places for reflection and healing for

our congregants and for those coming to seek spiritual community. But these times demand more. We must provide sanctuary to those most vulnerable. In particular, migrants (primarily from Mexico and Central America) may well face mass deportation. In addition, Muslims have been targeted.

Second, we must prepare to resist human rights violations in active ways. We must make it much harder to deport, register, discriminate and despoil.

In the past most of our work for justice and compassion has been positive. We have been advocates for marriage equality, racial justice, civil rights, immigration reform and environmental justice. To use a sports metaphor, we have played offense. We joined with others to advance an agenda. Today we must prepare to "play defense." We will have to respond quickly to acts of the government. We will have to react rather than act. We will need to be agile and fast.

As always, the key will be to work together. We have shown our ability to do this from resisting the human rights violations of Joe Arpaio in Arizona to joining the resistance at Standing Rock. We are effective when...[we]...work together at the local level, combined with support from regional and national staff. We make a difference when we form strong partnerships with other faith groups and secular organizations...

...In the coming weeks you will hear more as we work together to support you. For now, I want each of you to know that you are not alone. Together we are strong. Together we inspire one another. Together we can do this. We need one another.

Thank you again for all you do.

Love will guide us. Hope will sustain us. Ultimately we shall prevail.

Faithfully,
Peter

Info Session January 8th

New to Unitarian Universalism or First Church? Join Rev. Matthew Cockrum in the small chapel after service for a brief information session with light snacks. Meet other newcomers, ask burning questions and become more familiar with this

congregation and the living tradition from which it draws.

MLK Workshops & March: January 15 (12-5 p.m.) & 16 (1:30-4:45 p.m.)

Initially planned as a reined long overnight conference for youth, our MLK Con with a focus on racial justice and the Black Lives Matter movement has been reduced in scope. High school youth (10th-12th grades) and their teachers from First Unitarian Church and South Valley Unitarian Universalist Society are invited to gather on Sunday, 1/15, for lunch at noon in room 216 followed by workshops around racial justice. The next day, MLK Day, all interested participants are invited to meet at First Church at 1:30 and then walk to East High School to participate in the Martin Luther King Day Rally and March, which begins at 2:30 p.m., concluding with a march to Kingsbury Hall. The march is almost a mile so dress accordingly! Questions, contact Rev. Matthew Cockrum at clminister@slcuu.org or 801.582.8687 ext. 205

High School OWL (Our Whole Lives) Sessions & Parent Orientations:

Calling interested 10th-12th graders and their parents! First Church is offering a two-weekend immersion of high school OWL, a lifespan sexuality education curriculum, February 3-4 and 17-18 (overnight, 6 pm Friday to 8 pm Saturday) for \$40 (sliding scale and scholarships available upon request). Parents must attend an orientation session and sign a permission slip in advance. Orientation sessions are scheduled for Sunday, January 22, 3-5 pm and Thursday, January 29, 6:30-8:30 pm. Please contact Lissa to reserve your orientation slot and confirm your intention to enroll your youth. reassist@slcuu.org or 801.859.6878.

Are We Good Homeowners?

-submitted by Julia Rossi

Besides preserving our many wonderful programs, the UU congregation is charged with preserving the historic building and grounds we occupy. And this is a big charge. I like to say nothing happens without a space. You cannot have a church service or a Sunday school or a daycare if there is no place to gather. But creating and maintaining space is expensive; there is upkeep, utilities, repairs and updates. Sometimes the space needs to be extended or enhanced.

There was a time when we didn't think about providing a sound system or grounded plugs or solar panels or even air conditioning. But that was then and this is now. As the needs of our church change and grow, the space also needs to change and grow. Everyone who owns a home knows this. And while it is really fun and exciting to add a new addition to your house, to remodel a kitchen or to re-landscape, most of the things we spend money on are far less glamorous. We replace furnaces, upgrade electrical wires, respond to broken gutters and change filters. We pay for heat and air conditioning and lights and internet access. It's a bit of a drudge but it has to be done. When someone raises money for a new football stadium, the donors get their names in bright lights. It doesn't quite work that way when we raise money for a furnace.

So where are we in regards to meeting the needs of our space? Last year, the Environmental ministry and Rev Tom Goldsmith asked the church to undergo an 'energy' audit. Sounds like something we can all get behind, right? The audit was done by Nexant Inc. to include electrical, gas, and water usage. While the auditor praised us on how well we are doing given our size, he also made some serious recommendations. Here are a few. Brace yourself. Replace single-paned windows in the parlor and stairwells (\$8,000); replace windows or install storm windows in the chapel itself (\$47,000); replace chapel doors (\$10,000); replace the boiler (between \$40,000 and \$60,000); replace air conditioning condensers and air handlers (between \$65,000 and \$70,000).

These are not all that he recommended but they are the biggies. And these do not cover needs that are not tied to energy efficiency such as re-doing floors or re-painting the interior or replacing computers. Of course we can ignore these things, many homeowners do. And, if lucky, the homeowner's furnace will squeak by until the house is sold. But we are not in that situation because we are not going to sell our house. A good homeowner takes care of replacement needs and repairs. A good homeowner budgets for it and prioritizes what is an emergent need. A good homeowner also understands that unexpected repairs can be needed over night (the old rainy day fund).

How can we be good homeowners? Do we need a long-term building fund? I suggest that we start

by educating ourselves and talking about the steps we can take to preserve our space.

Environmental Ministry News

Film Screening: Conversation with the Valve Turners
Friday, January 6th, 7:00 PM, Eliot Hall - submitted by Joan Gregory, Environmental Ministry

Cosponsored by: Environmental Ministry, Association for the Tree of Life, and Climate Emergency Coalition

"If people are not acting as if there's an emergency, people don't believe there's an emergency. So for me, this is about acting consistent with the threat I'm seeing."

– Leonard Higgins, valve turner

On October 11, 2016, five brave climate activists, determined to act commensurately with the truth of unfolding climate cataclysm, closed safety valves on the 5 pipelines carrying tar sands crude oil into the United States – stopping 15% of US oil flow for an entire business day.

"The biggest coordinated move on US energy infrastructure ever undertaken by protesters." – Reuters

Come listen to the valve turners' deep reflections about courage, fear, hope, and motivations for action, a web video chat hosted by author Kathleen Dean Moore – a 1:10 hour film – and then join the discussion. We'll begin with a 7-minute film about the action by Utah's own Steve Liptay, who faces 2 misdemeanors for his role in documenting the action.

Was this an appropriate and practical response to terrifying climate conditions?

Who are we going to be in the face of what is going on?

What are effective responses to Trump?
How can we support the valve turners in their trials?

"Even as seas rise against the shores, another great tide is beginning to rise — So, let us be ... a tide of outrage against the pillage of the

planet, let us be ... a tide of commitment to justice and human rights, let us be ... a swelling affirmation of moral responsibility to the future and to Earth's fullness of life." – Kathleen Dean Moore, [Great Tide Rising](#)

Threatened Bear River program, Friday, January 20, 7pm, Eliot Hall -submitted by Judy Lord, Environmental Ministry

After years of lurking in the shadows, the proposed Bear River water diversion has emerged as a proposal to provide additional lawn water for Wasatch Front residents. Water lobbyists at the Utah Legislature are proposing to spend at least \$2.5 billion to divert the Bear River — the Great Salt Lake's single largest source of water each year. Although the project has been given initial funding and a green light from the Legislature, many people are left with a list of questions about the project and its impacts: What will happen to the Great Salt Lake's wetlands if the diversion is approved, what are the next steps for the project's approval process and what can be done to stop this destructive project?

Zach Frankel, Executive Director of the Utah Rivers Council, will present an interactive presentation on the Bear River Water Grab and discuss the many alternatives to diverting the life source for the Great Salt Lake.

Congregational Briefs

Refugee Resettlement Committee It happens every year. The run-up to Christmas makes such demands on people's time and energy that workaday routines are suspended from mid-November to New Year's Day. The car's oil doesn't get changed, the colonoscopy is postponed, the cobwebs go unchallenged and the furniture donations to the Refugee Resettlement Committee (RRC) cease. Starting off the new year with empty warehouses leaves RRC volunteers scrambling to set up apartments for January arrivals from Sudan and Iraq. Please, as your routine reasserts itself this week, make it a priority to recycle your sofa, chairs, tables and lamps. Call Joe Dubray at (904) 527-9773 to schedule a pick-up.

Dinner and Dialogue Dinner and Dialogue is going strong! There have already been several dinners, and we have many more in the works

clear through May. Feel free to sign up in the white binder in Eliot Hall at the Congregational Life Table to host or attend a dinner in order to connect with people in our congregation. If you have any questions, please call Darlene Thayne at 801-455-6553 or send me an email to suppers@slcuu.org.

Mindfulness Group Sundays Following the end of the first service, in the Parlor.

UU Lunch Bunch A family-friendly group for anyone and everyone who would like to get together for lunch and chat with like-minded people. Meet at the Restaurant on Sundays at noon during the summer. For more information contact Sonia Carnell at (801) 262-1151 or lunchbunch@slcuu.org. (No current Lunch Bunch dates were available at the time of printing.)

"In the Spotlight" . . . the Haertel Family

-submitted by Jan Crane

We're the Haertel family (Jennifer, Barry, and our two crazy critters: Thomas- 4 and Polly-2). We've been attending the First Unitarian Church for just over four years now. By "we," I mean me (Jennifer) and the kids, but Barry shows up for events once in a while. Both Thomas and Polly have been dedicated here at First Church, and I signed the book and pledged in November of this year. We're from the Salt Lake City area and live just a few blocks from church. When the weather is nice and the kids are cooperative, it's a lovely stroll. We started coming because the idea of a community seemed important for raising kids and I had attended a UU service or two as a college student. I loved the feel and principles, but as a single woman, I didn't really feel the draw of religious community until a few years later when Thomas was born. Now that he is old enough to be in an RE class, I am committed to coming regularly and so excited about all of the great people we are meeting who are so full of love. We really couldn't dream of a better village to raise our babies in. I pledged because I know that this place can't exist without the money to keep it going. All of the great programs and, heck, even just coffee costs money. I want to do my part to support everything we love here. – Jennifer Haertel