

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Los Gatos



Fellowship News

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SUNDAY PROGRAMMING FOR OCTOBER

Sunday Services begin at 10:30 PM

Sunday Forums: 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month: 12 – 1 PM (Childcare provided)

October 5, 2003: “Hands, Paws, Wings, and Claws”

An Intergenerational and Interspecies service led by Erika Hewitt, Minister

At this Blessing of the Animals service, we'll celebrate non-human members of the interdependent web and recommit ourselves to caring for them. The Children's Choir will add to the delight, as will the assembly of small critters in our sanctuary. *Please note:* Dog owners are asked to bring their canine companions in virtual form only (such as a photo or tape recording), unless your dog is a service animal. Our congregation's covenant “to create a compassionate and welcoming intergenerational community” requires us to protect the emotional and physical safety of our children, some of whom are frightened by dogs. Please bring all other animals in safe carriers.



October 12, 2003: “The Foibles and Yearnings of Porcupines: Ministry”

by Yvonne Schumacher Strejcek, from the UU Community of the Mountains

If we are all ministers, doing shared ministry, why do congregations need clergy? Yvonne will reflect on UU clergy-congregational relationships and the gift we give ourselves, our congregations, our communities, and the world at large by supporting our UU professional clergy. She will also share her experiences as a member of a congregation that just ordained its first minister. A lifelong UU who is a charter member of her Grass Valley congregation, Yvonne is past president of Sierra Foothills UUs in Auburn and of the Pacific Central District. Additionally, she recently served as Acting District Executive for the PCD. What does any of this have to do with porcupines? Come to the service and find out.

October 12 FORUM (12-1 PM): “What Now, California?” Wes Peyton, Fellowship friend, will discuss the California political situation. He will draw from his experience in a 40-year career with the San Jose Mercury News that ranged from copy boy to chief editorial writer. After retiring from the “Merc,” he worked for four years as political editor of the Los Gatos Weekly Times, where his chief chore was covering town government.

October 19, 2003: “Why is Grace So Amazing”

by Addae L. Watson

Grace is a word that can be used in many contexts. In the most familiar usages it describes decent behavior, and an offering of thanksgiving before a meal. But in the context of theology it becomes ethereal and difficult to define. What is grace, and why is it so amazing? Addae who is a student at Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley and a member of First U U Society of San Francisco will explain. She recently completed a successful internship and summer ministry at Community Church of New York, and will graduate with a Masters of Divinity in May 2004.

October 19 FORUM (12-1 PM): “What Wiccans Do.” Walt Main, UUFLG member and Wiccan, will describe Wicca as practiced by many in the Bay Area. “Sabbats and circles and spells, oh my!” It has also been pointed out that the Wiccan philosophy is in harmony with the 7th principle of the UUA. Please note, this forum has been moved from the usual fourth Sunday because of the Fall Membership meeting of October 26, 2003.

October 26, 2003: “Assailants in the Guest House: Inviting Grief into Our Lives”

by Erika Hewitt, Minister

Grief and its attendant loss are difficult to accept because we have so little control over their depth and duration. Based on Rumi's poem “The Guest House,” this service will explore the intersection of grief and peace. In observance of the Day of the Dead, we'll have an altar for photographs and other mementos of loved ones who have left this world. In the spirit of creating anew, the service will also include an Ingathering of new members.

Minister's Corner by Erika Hewitt



Unlike some women, who daydream about their wedding day, I've spent the past five years imagining a different rite of passage: my ordination into Unitarian Universalist ministry. It's not just the *visible* signs of ordained ministry that I crave, like wearing a stole and using the title "Reverend." For me, the real meaning of ordination comes from a congregation

exercising its unique authority to say, "We affirm your call to ministry," and a minister receiving that irrevocable blessing.

In September, I asked your Board and Committee on Shared Ministry to support my request that you, the congregation, ordain me. After a year together, I've grown to love you, to cherish our relationship, and to appreciate all of the ways that we teach each other about ministry. Rather than wait for the "someday" of called ministry, I would like *you* to be the congregation that will always hold the special place in my heart as the people who ordained me.

What *is* ordination? On the surface, an ordination ceremony resembles a worship service (held on a Sunday afternoon). There's a chalice lighting, great music, and invited guests who preach and issue a "charge" to both minister and congregation. The ordenand (that would be me) receives the "right hand of fellowship" from her colleagues, who fill the seats along with the members of the congregation.

Similar to the vows in a wedding ceremony, the apex of this service is the moment in which the entire congregation, in unison, confers ordination on the minister. You, after all, are the only ones who *can*. The Preliminary Fellowship that I received from our Association last year was credentialing – our UUA's blessing of my qualification for ordination. But our UUA Constitution says that "member churches alone have the right to...ordain their ministers."

Ordination, then, is a covenant into which the congregation enters acts on behalf of all Unitarian Universalists everywhere, and the minister enters on behalf of her life-long ministry, wherever it may lead. Once ordained by you, my ordination would be valid in every UU congregation, for the rest of my life.

The decision to ordain me is rightfully yours, and so the vote will be an agenda item at the Business Meeting (October 26, 2003). No date has been set, nor have any

plans been made – this is simply a vote on whether you're willing to take on this responsibility and honor in the coming year.

You can call or email me any time with your questions about ordination, or contact members of your Committee on Shared Ministry (**Doug Doughty, Sharon Graham, Katie Rall and Bill Scarvie**) or your Board (**Jim Beebe, Tim Connelly, Audrey Freeman, Russell Malley, Susan Parks and Julie Springer**).

As a special treat, I've also invited a special guest as our speaker on Sunday, October 12, 2003.

Yvonne Schumacher Strejcek will preach about ministry and her congregation's recent ordination of their first minister. With many years of leadership in our District, I can't think of a better person to speak than Yvonne, and I don't doubt that the service will be wonderful.

(Also wonderful: Your By-Laws Review Task Force, whose hard work and thorough research will be evident at the Business Meeting! Kudos and thanks to **Bob Bixler, Allison Levy, James Sheldon and Julie Springer**).

Onward and upward we go!
Shine on,
Erika



Save This Date

Do you always sit around the house looking at each other after your Thanksgiving meal? Don't know what to do after sunset? This Thanksgiving, November 27, 2002, Erika and her visiting family members will host a Family Open House at the Fellowship for cider, games, conversation, puzzles, music; you name it. More details will appear in the November newsletter.

Please remember that Erika's office hours are currently on Thursdays between 4 and 5:30 PM. Erika is also available throughout Thursday afternoons and evenings for home visits. Please call 623-4484, or email her at Erika@UUminister.com, if you'd like to schedule a visit. Please also note that office hours on Thursday, October 2, 2003, will not be held as Minister Erika Hewitt will be away on study leave.

President's Corner by Susan Parks



Hello to all

Another month rolls around. Never too busy though to stop and chat or to have pancakes. Thanks again to all who joined in creating and eating that wonderful morning repast on August 31, 2003. Wow, this last Board meeting we accomplished many things. The Board established a *Board Covenant*: our promise to each other how we will work together.

And, after much reflection and work, we have adopted a fair and sound *Disruptive Behavior Policy*. This is going out to the Council and you can look for information coming from committees you are involved in. We also set aside a date in January for a Board retreat to reflect and work on our short and long range plans. We still will keep in mind the goals from our Fellowship Startup Weekend from a year ago: right relations, enhancing Sunday and intergenerational services, growth, and strengthening ties to the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Also, please mark your calendars (or better yet, plan to be there) for the October 26, 2003, fall Business Meeting.

And a very important item we are asking you, our fellowship, to vote on, is coming up. The Board is excited to ask you to vote to ordain our own **Erika Hewitt**. What? You say. I know there are questions; such as: What is ordaining? What does it mean? Who does it? Why is it important to the Minister? Why is it important to the Fellowship?

Great questions! This is about relationships, about the larger fellowship to which we belong, and about recognizing Erika in a unique and valued way. It is a two way street where she honors us by asking us to have her ordained here at our Fellowship and we honor her by inviting her to be ordained.

Related to this, we will have a unique opportunity to hear from **Yvonne Schumacher Strejcek** who comes from the Pacific Central District congregation that ordained her as their first minister. Yvonne will be speaking October 12, 2003, at our services. This will be a wonderful opportunity to get another's experience about the meaning of ordination. We also encouraged you to ask questions of Erika, the Board, and the Committee on Ministry about this opportunity.

Additionally at the Business Meeting, we will elect three members and one alternate for the *Nominating Committee*. This committee will recommend the slate of candidates for the Spring Business meeting. As always, this committee is key to our congregational continuity and it is a requirement of our bylaws to set forth the four-person *Nominating Committee* at the Fall Business Meeting.

Also, please be prepared to review and vote on possible bylaw revisions that may be coming from the *Bylaws Task Force*. This task force was established by you last year to review the bylaws. I know this group has been working diligently and seriously on issues related to the Bylaws and may be prepared to submit additional recommendations for voting.

By the way, another task force that has been working hard

is the *Safe Congregations Task Force*. They have been doing important work and have been planning a range of events at which to talk with YOU about their. So please keep your ears open for opportunities to listen to what they have to say as we move into fall.

Finally, we of the Board strive to do the work of the Fellowship that you have entrusted to us. If you are curious about how the work gets done, please join the Board of Trustees on October 9, 2003 for our monthly meeting. We meet at the Fellowship; snacks and conversation start at 6:45 PM and the meeting starts promptly at seven.

It feels a bit too soon, since I prepare the column well in advance of the month, but - BOO! Have a wonderful October.



Introduction to the Congregation

Taskforce"

"Safe Congregation

The *Safe Congregation Taskforce* was created by the Board to raise awareness of the importance of "right relations" within the UUFLG. It is our objective to inform and educate our membership of UUA standards regarding right relations and to make recommendations to the Board on how our Fellowship community should deal with situations regarding rude, hurtful, or abusive behavior. We also hope to create a process and environment to help members address safety issues. It is the priority of the taskforce to ensure the safety of children, youth, and adults in that order. All work will be done in cooperation with existing committees, groups, and policy.

The taskforce members are **Sharon Graham, Tim Connelly, Julie Doyle, Bob Shebesta, and Kathy Doughty**. We had our initial meeting on September 3, 2003 and we plan to meet several times a month until our work is complete. It is our hope to foster a caring environment within the UUFLG where we can respectfully express differences with dignity, where everyone can nurture right relations in safety, integrity, and with responsibility.

RE News: September kicked off our Fall/Winter RE term and we have eleven (that's right, eleven!) enthusiastic and committed volunteer teachers and advisors to lead our program. And we also have additional classroom and behind the scenes volunteers. Thanks to all! Our youth also participated in a community service event with *Sunday Friends* last month, making a meal with children. Thanks to **Brandon Connelly** for organizing a successful and fun event. Our grade school and middle school children will sing for the intergenerational service on October 5, 2003. Remember, if you have not yet registered your child/youth for the Fall/Winter RE term, please pick up a registration form from Diana.

**News from the Director of Religious Education
and Children's Programming
by Diana Humphrey**



Loving Boundaries

I read a story recently written by a man who grew up in a working-class neighborhood of a large eastern city. He described how on the mean streets of his childhood, he retained his moral compass because of the integrity of the community that surrounded him. He wrote about an incident where he was bullying a younger child and a little old lady jumped off her front porch and grabbed him by the ear and yelled at him in front of everybody. She called his mother too. That incident taught him that the adults in the community, even the ones who you might not know very well, were all in agreement that certain kinds of behavior were not allowed. You couldn't get away with rudeness or cruelty or recklessness, because somebody was always looking out for you.

I was reminded of our fellowship when I read that article, because I feel that for the most part we are a community that does a great job of holding loving boundaries for our children, even if we are not the parents. I've seen members of our community remind children to walk not run, admire their artwork, admonish (appropriately) noisiness and door-slamming and inquire with interest after their activities.

Children (and their parents) need this kind of support in our current time when so many adults are inclined to turn away saying "It's not my child - so it's none of my business."

In the religious education committee we have been talking over the last few months about issues of safety for our children. We came up with a few points that I want to share with you so that we are all on the same page.

Parent-pick up: After the service, we would like parents to pick-up their children from their classrooms before going out to coffee-time. This provides a clear transition of responsibility from the teacher to the parent. In the past we would have some children who would run outside as soon as they heard the closing song - this will no longer be allowed. We are not such a large group that we need sign-out sheets and wristbands. Parents can just check in with the teachers and then the responsibility for supervising the child passes from teacher to parent.

Coffee-time/Fellowship events: It is the parents' responsibility to be aware of and responsible for their own children. However our fellowship is the home of this larger community, and children do not need to be under the direct supervision of their parents at all times. The greater community has a responsibility to look out for the safety of our children. Our fellowship time is analogous to a large family gathering - if you spied your young cousin playing with matches, you would quickly intervene and then go find his mom. Similarly if you observe one of our young ones about to fall out of a tree or coloring on the bathroom wall, you have the authority and responsibility to step in.

The Parking Lot/Play Area: The crossing to the children's outside play area is right across the driveway entrance to our parking lot. Because of the hill the visibility is poor when making that turn - it would be very easy to not see a young child. Please be aware of this and use caution when entering the fellowship parking lot. Again, we are not so large that we need to have designated playground monitors or crossing guards. But parents should remind their children not to cross either driveway without an adult - it is the same as crossing a street. If you are on the deck and you see a child run across the driveway or out in the parking lot, please feel free to correct the child (keeping in mind UU principle #1) and let the parent know.

These points are clarifications and reminders mostly - solidifying in policy what for most of us already happens quite naturally. As our fellowship grows we will need to keep refining these policies. Perhaps in the future we will grow to need sign in sheets and teacher background checks and crossing guards. Until then we can hold loving boundaries of safety for our children by remembering that we all have the responsibility of protecting them and helping them grow up strong. In Fellowship - Diana

**News from the Committee on Shared Ministry
submitted by Bill Scarvie**

At the recent Monte Toyon retreat your *Committee on Shared Ministry* hosted an afternoon of Cafe Conversations, where participants gathered in small groups to discuss their relationship to The Fellowship and their feelings about our future. Each of us was asked to consider two questions: how does your involvement in The Fellowship touch your life? And: as we move from a casual, family-style fellowship to a more formal intentional religious community, how will this change affect you?

Most participants enthusiastically supported our commitment to grow the Fellowship; both numerically and spiritually. They also stressed that our commitment to one another is what keeps them involved. As we strive to grow, they said, we must also strive to preserve and protect our sense of community. Otherwise, why bother?

Other participants expressed anxiety over "getting lost" as our community grows in both directions. As more and more unfamiliar faces appear, and as the breadth and depth of our activity increases, they wanted to know how could they retain the sense of intimacy that they enjoy so much today? They also wanted to know how they could remain "in the know" and would there be room for them in "a more intentional religious" UU community?

These questions beg further discussion. Other questions will surely come up as time goes by, so let's keep talking. Seek out those in leadership positions: **Minister Erika Hewitt**, members of the Board and the Committee on Shared Ministry. Ask questions, express opinions, offer suggestions, and share insights and experiences. Open and direct communication is the most powerful tool we have. So, let's all master it, so it can serve us well.

Social Justice and Affordable Housing
By Betty Feldheim



The *Social Justice Committee* will meet from 5:30-7 PM October 6, 2003, at the home of Allison and Frank Levy (101 Pinta Court, Los Gatos: 408-356-8227). Please bring your own dinner; drinks and dessert will be provided.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The *Affordable Housing Network* will meet 6PM October 1, 2003, Room 134, Sheriff's Building, 55 West Younger Avenue, San Jose.

Other Meetings of Interest: The *Housing Action Coalition* meets 11AM-1PM on October 17, Santa Clara City Council Chambers, 1500 Warburton Avenue, Santa Clara. And the *Housing Committee, Interfaith Council on Religion, Race, Economics, and Social Justice* meets only "on call."

Additionally, there are subcommittees and many needs for action and advocacy between listed meetings and "on call" meetings. For example the *County Collaborative on Housing and Homeless Issues* also has a housing committee. For more information or if you are willing to help or participate in any meeting please see, telephone, or e-mail Betty Feldheim: (408) 867-1651 and bfeldheim@aol.com. Your help is very much appreciated. Thank you.



UUFLG BULLETIN BOARD

On October 19, 2003, donations for *Friends Outside* will be collected following the service. Clean, usable items of clothing, household appliances and kitchen utensils are appreciated. Contact **Lynn O'Keefe** 997-2540 with any questions.

NEW DIRECTORIES AVAILABLE

The new 2003-04 membership directories are ready. You can pick up your copy the next few Sundays after the service. Directories are free for members and others listed in the directory. Extra copies are available for \$1 for Friends of the fellowship and those who want an additional copy for work or another room of their house. If you are unable to make it to the fellowship, contact **Adrienne Gormley** at fellowship2us@yahoo.com or 358-1212 and she will mail you your copy.

The Landscape & Grounds Committee has scheduled a clean up day from 9:00 to whenever on October 11, 2003. Anyone interested in helping plant, weed, prune or work on things is welcome. Although we have hired a gardener we still need help to get in shape before the rains come.

Plans have begun for the Christmas Pageant, "*Spirit of the Christmas Tree.*" The choir needs a few more singers. If you are interested see or telephone **Ruth Webb** (408-356-1735) for information on practice schedules and parts.

PCD UU MEN'S 7th ANNUAL RETREAT: OCTOBER 17-19, 2003. For the past six years, 40-50 UU men have gathered for a weekend in October at the Westminster Retreat Center near Walnut Creek, CA. Please join us as we explore the meaning of "*The Roles We Play*" in our lives and the culture in which we live. The retreat will be held October 17-19, 2003, and the registration fee of \$195 covers meals, lodging and workshop materials. Limited scholarships may be available. To get more information, or to register, please contact **Russ Pfeil** at (510) 339-3273, or e-mail him atrwpeil@earthlink.net. You can also contact tonybushman@yahoo.com. or access our website (www.pcd-uu.org) to get a registration form and learn more.

The Women's Spirituality Group is open to new members as we begin the new 'school year'. If you are interested, please attend their meeting on October 1, 2003. The group meets the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 7:15 PM to 9:00 PM. Currently we are in the process of selecting a curriculum for the year. If you have questions please telephone **Ann Campbell** (374-8844) or **Sharon Graham** (356-5532).

The October 4, 2003, *Saturday Game Night and Potluck* (6 PM) will be sponsored by **Terry Rowe** and **Mary Terra** who will serve a casserole. Please bring either a salad or dessert. Games follow the potluck and families are encouraged to attend.

UUFLG Calendar for October 2003

- October 1: Forum Committee Meeting (6 PM); East Room. Contact: **Nan Bixler**, 356-5697.
- October 2: RUMs Noon brown bag lunch for Men with flexible time. Contact **Bob Bixler**, 356-5697.
- October 4: Game Night and Potluck (6 PM): Sponsored by the COM
- October 5: RECCY Meeting (9-10 AM); Contact: **Nan Bixler**, 356-5697.
Choir (9 AM)
Sunday Service (10:30 –11:30 AM): “Hands, Paws, Wings, and Claws”
An Intergenerational and Interspecies service led by **Erika Hewitt**, Minister
Exploring UU (12- 2 PM)
High School YoUUth Group meets at the Fellowship at 5:30 PM
- October 6: Life Stories Classes (10:00 AM – 12 PM and 1-3 PM)
Social Justice Committee meets (5:30 – 7 PM)
Exploring UU (7- 9 PM)
- October 7: Recorder Group (7:30- 9 PM)
- October 9: UU Women (10:30-Noon)
Office hours for **Minister Erika Hewitt** (4-5:30 PM)
Board of Trustees Meets (6:45 PM)
- October 11: All Fellowship Landscaping & Garden Clean-up (9-11 AM)
- October 12: Sunday Service (10:30-11:30 AM): “The Foibles and Yearnings of Porcupines: Ministry” by **Yvonne Schumacher**
Preschool/childcare (10:30 AM)
Children's RE: (K-8): Mixed Ages Lesson: *The Story of Persephone*
Forum (12-1 PM): "What Now, California?" with **Wes Peyton**
Exploring UU (12- 2 PM)
YoUUth group: Community service project (To be announced)
- October 13: Life Stories Classes (10:00 AM – 12 PM and 1-3 PM)
UU Women's Spirituality Group (7:15-9 PM)
Great Books Group (7:30-9:30 PM)
- October 14: Recorder Group (7:30- 9 PM)
- October 16: Office hours for **Minister Erika Hewitt** (4-5:30 PM)
- October 19: Choir (9 AM)
Sunday Service (10:30-11:30 AM): “Why is Grace so Amazing?” by **Addae L. Watson**
10:30 AM Preschool/childcare.
Children's RE (K-8): Small group classes:
Persephone Story/Day of the Dead
YoUUth group meets at the Fellowship at 5:30 PM
- October 20: **Newsletter Deadline**
Life Stories Classes (10 AM –12 PM and 1-3 PM)
- October 21: Recorder Group (7:30- 9 PM)
- October 23: Office hours for **Minister Erika Hewitt** (4-5:30 PM)
Adult RE Class: “Articulating Your UU Faith” (6:30-8:00 PM)
- October 26: Sunday Service (10:30-11:30 AM): “Assailants in the Guest House: Inviting Grief into Our Lives” by **Minister Erika Hewitt**
10:30 AM Preschool/Childcare.
Children's RE (K-8) Children's Chapel -- *Day of the Dead Celebration.*
Fall Business Meeting (12 PM)
YoUUth group: social event (to be announced)
- October 27: Life Stories Classes (10 AM –12 PM and 1-3 PM)
UU Women's Spirituality Group (7:15-9 PM)
- October 30: Office hours for **Minister Erika Hewitt** (4-5:30 PM)
Adult RE Class: “Articulating Your UU Faith” (6:30-8:00 PM)

**Remember this Date:**

Fall Business Meeting,
October 26, 2003,
(12PM)

Members: please be sure to mark your calendars for the annual Fall Business Meeting. This is an important part of our congregational polity. You will receive materials prior to the Business Meeting that will inform you about the agenda (see the President's message in this newsletter). Also come prepared to vote and work together as a community.

October

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1

Forum Comm.
(6 PM)

2

RUMS (12 PM)

3

4

Game Night
(6 PM)

5

RECCY (9AM)
Choir (9 AM)
"Hands, Paws,
Wings &
Claws"

6

Life Stories
(10 AM)
Social Justice
(5:30 PM)
Exploring UU (7)

7

Recorders (7:30)

8

9

UU Women
(10:30 AM)
Office Hours
**Board of
Trustees (6:45)**

10

11

Landscaping
& Gardening
(9 AM)

12

"The Foibles &
Yearnings. . ."
FORUM: "What
Now California?"

13

Life Stories
(10 AM)
UU Women's
Spirit (7:15 PM)

14

Recorders (7:30)

15

Office Hours

16

17

18

19

"Why Grace is
so Amazing"
FORUM: "What
Wiccans do."

20

**Newsletter
Deadline**
Life Stories
(10 AM)

21

22

Office Hours

23

Adult RE Class
(6:30 PM)

24

25

26

"Assailants in
the Guest
House"
Fall Business
Meeting (12 PM)

27

Life Stories
(10 AM)
UU Women's
Spirit (7:15 PM)

28

29

30

Office Hours

Adult RE Class
(6:30 PM)

31

