



Volume 11, Number 10

Unitarian Universalist Church in Livermore

November 2006

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in conversation

Late last month I went back to high school for a day. Among the things I learned was that it was a very good thing I didn't have to take any tests. More on that later.

The opportunity came via Livermore's Chamber of Commerce who sponsored the Principal for a Day Program, geared to help civic leaders better understand the needs and realities of our public schools. I spent a morning at Livermore High School with its Principal, David Chamberlain. We talked about the schools, toured the campus and dropped in on more classes than I could count.

Before I go any further, I should say that a clear highlight of the morning was encountering two of our own youth, who both looked surprised, but pleased to see me. We have great young men and women, but could it have been coincidence that both were sitting in the front row of their respective classes? When I was in school that was the last place I wanted to be. (With the exception of the principal's office, of course.)

What impressed me next was how so much was being done with so little. As wealthy as our nation and our region is, it is nothing short of shameful that our schools have so little in the way of resources to work with. While there were computers, yes, but everywhere we turned there were things that needed updating and repair. The newest building was the library, which looks fabulous from the outside, but is painfully modest inside. It doesn't take much to figure out what message our students pick up when so many of their classes take place in mobile units.

What I saw in my time at LHS was good teachers, bright students and concerned administrators. The school was dealing with the suicide of a student late the week before. And while I was there we noticed a police officer walking the campus. He was there to collect information concerning another student who had disappeared after her first class the previous day. "How often does something like this happen?" I asked. "Far too often," was the reply.

I'm grateful to the Chamber and especially to Principal Chamberlain and the many teachers whose classes we dropped in on. I hope none of the interruptions proved to be heinous. And to the bright-eyed physics teacher whose trick of mechanics I fell for, know that I'll be enlisting the help of a couple friends of mine. I'm studying up, and I'll be back.

in peace,
Eric



**We are a
Welcoming Congregation**

Sunday Services

November 5 For Love of Country

With all the hyperbole leading up to any major election, it can be all too easy to forget that we have good reason for loving our country. Imperfect as it may be, the American experiment still shows signs worthy of hope.

Rev. Eric speaking.

November 12 Standing on the Side of Love

Unitarian Universalists have been supportive of commitment ceremonies for same sex partners for decades. Someone must have figured out early on that we all benefit when love and commitment are respected, celebrated, and supported. We will explore some of the specifics.

Intern Minister, Sonya Sukalski.

Sunday, December 3

The choir from the Mission Peak UU Congregation in Fremont will join us this morning.

Rev. Eric speaking.

November 19 Making Justice Manifest: Honoring the Work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

This morning, as we begin our annual Guest at Your Table program, let's pause before Holiday Rush reaches its fever pitch to lift up the work of the UUSC and reflect on the gifts justice work provides the workers, not only the beneficiaries. Rev. Eric speaking.

November 26 Emptying into Riches, A Lesson of the Season

Yes, this can be the season of accumulation and busyness. Can be. Or we can try following the season in which light is less and see what discoveries are still to be had.

Rev. Eric speaking

Sensing the Spirit with Sonya

I had the pleasure to do a short term field experience with the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry in California a few years ago. I had no idea that making cold calls to Unitarian Universalists (UUs) all over the state could be so fun, so energizing, so inspiring. One of my jobs was to ask people to make valentines for our Governor – asking him to “stand on the side of love,” and support marriage equality legislation. It was tremendous to see the creativity and passion people put into these homemade correspondences about pending legislation. Even though UUs number only about 13,000 in California, the Governor's office took note, and invited the head of our Legislative Ministry, Rev. Lindi Ramsden, to discuss similar legislation a few months later. Having spent significant time in Santa Fe at the New Mexico state legislature in the early 1990's, it was powerful to imagine that UUs voices were being heard on this issue.

But even more touching than knowing that the powers that be were taking notice of Unitarian Universalist's perspectives was the warm appreciation directed at me because I was doing the work of an ally. An ally is someone who speaks and acts to highlight justice issues even if they do not directly benefit from the work. An ally is someone who sees that injustice anywhere affects us all, and works to address it. An ally is someone who could easily turn a blind eye to unfairness in societal systems that benefit them, but instead they choose to work to change them. I know there is quite a bit of ally work going on here, but I am not sure I know the details or specific experiences you have had. If you are anxious to share them, or if you are curious to understand this better, I encourage you to attend the Cottage Conversation on Marriage Equality I will be hosting. We will watch a piece of the excellent film *Tying the Knot*, and discuss where California is at on this issue.

Once again, please join me for a Cottage Conversation on Marriage Equality Nov. 16th at 7:30 pm in the Tot Green Room. This is a good event to invite a friend or neighbor to attend with you. Let me know you are coming –via email: sonya.sukalski@comcast.net or phone: 510-886-5931.

Sonya Sukalski, Intern Minister 2006-200

News from Religious Education

Greetings UUCIL Families!

We are having a good year out in our Religious Education classes.

Earlier this month, I sent a letter to all families about our exciting upcoming Holiday Service for all ages. Hildy Pehrson and Alyce Rossow are heading up the project, called *Three Miraculous Births*. We will be acting out the stories of the births of Buddha, Confucius, and Jesus.

We hope that your child or youth will participate in bringing this story to life for the congregation. The schedule for this action is as follows:

- Nov. 12:** Any interested children & youth meet after church in the Founder's Building to read for parts.
- Nov. 19:** First read through (during potluck)
- Dec. 3:** Walkthrough
- Dec. 10:** Rehearsal, after church
- Dec. 16:** **9:30 am, Dress Rehearsal**
- Dec. 17:** **9:30 am, SHOW TIME!**

Our social action project this month will take place on November 19. We will be doing crafts and making lots of raw material art that we can turn into

cards to sell at the annual holiday boutique. This social action helps support the work of our church and our congregation. All interested artists are welcome.



Okay, here's the rest of the important stuff! Mark your calendar!

Religious Education Committee Meets:

Wednesday, **Nov. 8**, 7 p.m.

Our Whole Lives Meets:

Saturday, **Nov. 11**, 6-9 p.m.

Sunday, **Dec 3**, 12-2 p.m.

Social Action Sunday:

Sunday, **Nov. 19**

Fun Sunday, All Ages at Church:

Games & Popcorn—no turkey!

Sunday, **Nov. 26** 10:30 a.m.

As always, I welcome your input and feedback. Please contact me with questions or concerns. Without all of you, there wouldn't be an us!

Warmly,

Leslie Lemieux, DRE

Membership Committee

What Is This Thing Called Unitarian Universalism?

Want to find out more about UUism and more about your own belief system? If you are considering membership at UUCiL or if you have been a member for many years, this class is for you. In addition to learning about this congregation, you will learn that UUism really is a religion even though it seems so different from other faith traditions.

Bring your questions and join Eric Meter, Sonja Sukalski, Karen Crosley, Lois Duelgen, and other special guests in the Tot Green Room from 12:00 - 2:00 on Sunday afternoons, **November 5 and 19**. Please call the office (925-447-8747) or send e-mail (uucil@sbcglobal.net) for further information and to register. Donations to defray the cost of materials and lunch will be accepted.

Members Saving The World

After you finish reading your issue of *UU World Magazine*, please bring it to church so we can share it with visitors. You can leave it in the Membership Committee mailbox in the office or on the bookcase in the entry. This is an ideal way for newcomers to get acquainted with us.

If you are interested in exploring ways to become more involved in the life of this religious community, send e-mail to lois@dueltgen.net.



Life at UUCiL is moving along at a breakneck speed as usual, but we seem to be having fun while we accomplish lots. While we focus on our 50th year as a Unitarian Universalist congregation, we plan on sharing the old and the new with each other in many ways. There will be several opportunities to celebrate—both informal and formal, here and offsite. We hope to celebrate us and also reach out to the community. Please save Saturday, May 5, 2007 for a celebratory dinner to be held at Beeb's Restaurant. Other dates will be announced as they are arranged. If you know of people that should be invited to the celebrations, talk to Claire Nelson or Alyce Rossow. If you have memories that you wish to share, talk to Jane Staehle.

Tuesday, November 14 is the next UUCiL Board meeting where we will have a special guest in attendance, Cilla Raughley, Pacific Central District Executive. The Board would like to ask the congregation to join the Board for a special potluck dinner. 6 pm is suggested as dinnertime. More details will follow.

The Rental Task Force has had small group discussion meetings. I hope you had an opportunity to attend one of those. Program Council met on October 1 and had a very successful sharing session. Sonya Sukalski, our intern minister has had several get to know you sessions. I've heard great things about those!

Thanks to all the hardworking people that showed up for the Fall Work Party on October 21!! Carpets were cleaned, the wisteria and grapes were trimmed, flowers were planted, weeds were pulled, lighting and leaks were worked on, a new toilet was installed in the women's restroom, windows were washed, and so much more. The list goes on and on!! Thanks to Bob Stearns, Barbara Eniti and Chilli Barlow for coordinating all of this! Several committees are in need of members. Personnel is one of them. It is a very important committee which doesn't require a lot of time (no monthly meetings). They meet a couple of times per year and go over our staff contracts and help with the possible hiring of new employees. We also are in need of canvass committee members. Yes, we have to start thinking about this all important committee, even though there will be no meetings until at least January. Contact me if you are interested in either committee.

As always, let me know if you have any concerns or questions.

Janice Paquette
373-6894 / janicepaquette@comcast.net

A Member Reminisces ...

A Christmas Fantasy by Alyce Rossow

In 1968 I was Religious Education Director of the Livermore Unitarian Fellowship. I began the year by having a meeting at my home of all the parents and asking them what they hoped their children would gain from Sunday School. Among the many suggestions was one from Dolores Hiskes that we have a Christmas pageant. She remembered really enjoying pageants when she was in Sunday School. Little did she know that she was going to be asked to write and direct such a pageant!

In December the children presented "A Christmas Fantasy" in the multipurpose room of East Avenue School. We rented the room with a stage because we did not have the space to have such an elaborate program in the Fellowship House. Dolores Hiskes wrote the pageant and I was her assistant. My husband, Jim Watson, recorded all the beautiful background Christmas music which Dolores had so carefully chosen. (I still have the reel-to-reel tape.)

Every child had a part, and there were at least seventy-five children participating. All the children from third grade through eighth sang in the choir directed by Margo Kirkewoog. Each class presented a scene. There were drummer boys and angels, dolls and elves. Fourth and fifth graders danced a Danish folk dance and older girls were Santa Lucia dancers directed by Olga Shearer. "The Night Before Christmas" was acted out and we had a nativity scene. One young man didn't want to play a part, so he was the curtain puller. At the end, during refreshments, Santa arrived and each child had a chance to sit on his lap and tell him what they wanted for Christmas. That was really a fantastic celebration.

Take a look back as we move forward.....

Share your memories of the early days of our congregation in this new monthly feature in our newsletter. As we move closer to celebrating our 50th anniversary, Rev. Eric, the Board of Trustees, and I invite you to jot down a few words of a favorite memory of our growth and changes over the years. A funny story, a moving moment, amusing anecdotes celebrating departed members, would all be welcome in this space. As part of our celebration this spring, we will be putting together a memory book, but we need your memories! You will be able to contribute to the book throughout the coming year, but we thought it would be nice to help get those memories started through a monthly newsletter column.

Please submit your memories to Julie O'Brien, our newsletter editor. You may contact me directly with

any questions.

Here's to 50 more!

Warmly, Leslie Lemieux

Remembering the decades:

Starting in January, we will be celebrating the decades of the church's existence, starting, of course, with the 50's! So, dust off any memorabilia you may have from those times—got a poodle skirt? How about some pictures of Livermore from back then? Or pictures of congregation members from back then? Whatever you have, bring it in to Leslie—we'll be making some creative bulletin boards for a walk through the years....

Have You Ever Made Coffee For 40?

If you haven't prepared the coffee on a Sunday morning you may feel like coffee for 40 is too hard to measure! It really isn't because the directions are posted on the refrigerator, complete with to find all the equipment and what equipment to use.

Our coffee preparers are few, if you look on the sign-up sheet on the back table. So maybe some are just a little uncertain how to go about it. So here's the recipe recommended by years of experience:

Water for URN	COFFEE
(COLD water tastes better)	(use 8 oz. measuring cup)
50 cups	3.75 cups
40 "	3.00 "
35 "	2.75 "
30 "	2.25 "

The coffee urns are usually kept on the coffee cart. On regular Sundays make 35 cups; 40 in winter, on potluck Sundays make 50 cups. Tea water is heated in the smaller urn. Again, use COLD water.

The rest of the directions are all detailed on a sheet posted on the refrigerator in the kitchen.

Now, doesn't that sound easy? Why not sign up for a Sunday? You don't even have to stay to do the dishes because now another person will sign up for clean-up. We can use all the help we can get

Potluck Nov 19

S through Z has potluck duty this month! If you can't be there, please switch with someone who can. Those who are able to could help by putting their chairs away when they are done. Potluck duties include setting up tables and chairs, putting the food out on serving tables, putting plates, bowls, utensils and napkins out and restocking them as needed, bringing dirty serving dishes to the kitchen, and putting away tables and chairs. If the weather is nice, the tables can be set up outside before the service. When we are eating inside, the sanctuary chairs will need to be stacked near the walls before the tables can be set up (the sanctuary chairs do NOT need to be moved back after the potluck). Here is the potluck rotation schedule.

S-Z November 19	G-I February 18y
A-C December 17	J-L March 18
D-F January 21	M-O April 15
P-R May 20	

Goings on at UUCiL in November and the Months beyond . . .

November 5 and 19 – What Is This Thing Called Unitarian Universalism? This class will meet from 12:00 – 2:00 pm and all are invited. Lunch will be provided. See the full description of the class elsewhere in this newsletter.

If you are interested in exploring ways to become more involved in the life of this religious community, send e-mail to lois@dueltgen.net.

Minds on Fire

Minds on Fire will meet on Tuesday, **November 7** from 7:00 to 8:30 at the home of Helen Meier. Our Fall meeting dates are: **November 7** and **December 5**.

We welcome new members. Please join us for interesting discussions on a variety of topics. For more information, please call Shelley Covey or send her an email at shelcovey@comcast.net

UUCiL's Adult Singles Group

UUCiL's Adult Singles will meet this month at UUCiL on **November 8** at 7:30 pm in the Tot Green Room. Come and see what we're all about! We'd love to have you join us!

Please contact Polly Sellers for details @ 462-3942 or psellers01@sbcglobal.net

UUCiL Book Group

November 9, 7:30 pm Tot Green Room

Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Fight Terrorism and Build Nations...One School at a Time by **Greg Mortenson** Reviewer: Alyce Rossow

This is a non fiction account of Greg Mortenson's experiences in Pakistan and Afghanistan. After an unsuccessful attempt to climb K2, the second tallest mountain in the world, Gary was nursed back to health in a Shiite village. He was shocked to learn that the children in this village had no school. He promised to come back and build a school. He subsequently went on a one man crusade to fight poverty by building schools, especially for girls.

-Alyce Rossow

Shawl Ministry

The Shawl Ministry will meet Wednesdays this month: **November 1** from 10 – 11:30 am and **November 15** from 7 to 8:30 pm. Bring your needlework and join us in making shawls. We have patterns to use or you can bring your own. For more information about the shawl ministry visit their website: www.shawlministry.com and for more information about our meetings at UUCiL call Kim Rowe at 606-9531.

Party Planners Unite!

50th anniversary committee meeting Thursday, **November 16** at 7 p.m. All are welcome! Come join the fun!

Shakespeare At UUCiL

Oregon Shakespeare Festival actors will be at UUCiL on **November 17 & 18** at 8:00 pm. This is a major fund-raiser for UUCiL as well as a delightful event, so please join us and bring your friends!

A reception featuring desserts, refreshments, and conversation with the actors will follow each performance. Members are encouraged to bring snack food for the reception. There will be babysitting during the Saturday evening performance. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students and are available from Joan Dickinson or at Books Oasis, 2369 First Street, Livermore.

November 26

- Regular Fourth Sunday Orientation for Newcomers follows the service in the Tot Green Room.

December 3

– People interested in joining UUCiL are invited to a continental breakfast before the service so we can celebrate your commitment to this religious community as you sign the Membership Book. Please call the office for exact time and place for this event, and to let us know you will be attending.

Do you like to Scrapbook?

Would you like to spend the evening scrapbooking with other UUCiL'ers? Then please join us **December 2** from 6:30-10:30 pm for an evening of fun and fellowship in the Tot Green Room. Bring your books, supplies, photos, and good cheer. \$5-\$10 is the suggested donation to the church. Questions? please contact Suzanne Breckenridge.

Holiday Table: 1st 3 Sundays in December, featuring home made *goodies* and arts & crafts items, plus coffee, tea and other gifts for sale. But – *We Need You* to donate handmade items and baked goods to sell. If you love to bake cookies or breads, make candy or jam, can fruit, or do craft projects, please consider starting now to help make this mini fundraiser profitable and delicious. Last year's sale was enormously successful. Now, it is your turn to contribute your special talents, indulge in your favorite hobbies and benefit UUCiL. For information contact Joan Dickinson

November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>* denotes items described in detail in this newsletter</i>			1 Shawl Ministry*, Green Rm, 10:00-11:30,	2 Long Term Rental Mtg, Green Rm, Noon	3	4 Choir Rehearsal
5 <i>For Love of Country</i> , Rev. Eric Choir Sings Naming Task Force, Round Table Rm, 11:45-1:30 UU Class*, Green Rm, 12:00- 2:00 pm	6 Kontempli, Green Rm, 8:00 pm YAG, Green Rm, 9:00 pm	7 General Election Voting, Sanctuary, 8:00 – 8:00 Intern Comm., 6:00 pm Minds on Fire*, Meiers', 7:00-8:30 pm	8 RE Comm., Founders' Bldg, 7:00-9:00 pm UUSingles*, Green Rm, 7:30 pm	9 Book Group*,, Green Rm, 7:30 pm	10	11 OWL, Green Rm, 6:00-9:00 pm
12 <i>Standing on the Side of Love</i> , Intern Minister, Sonya Sukalski Membership Comm., 12:00	13 Kontempli, Green Rm, 8:00 pm YAG, Green Rm, 9:00 pm	14 Board Mtg, Green Rm, 6:00-9:00 pm	15 Shawl Ministry*, Green Rm, 7:00-9:00 pm	16 Cottage Con*v w/ Sonya, Green Rm, 7:30 pm 50 th Anniv. Comm.*, 7:00-9:00 pm	17 Shakespeare*, Sanctuary Stargazers, 7:00-10:00 pm	18 Shakespeare*, Sanctuary Girl Scout SIG, Green Rm, 6:30-9:30 pm
19 <i>Making Justice Manifest</i> , Rev. Eric Choir Sings RE Social Justice Action Project, Potluck* (S-Z), UU Class*, 12:00-2:00 pm, Green Rm,	20 Kontempli, Green Rm, 8:00 pm YAG, Green Rm, 9:00 pm	21	22	23 Thanksgiving	24	25
26 <i>Emptying into Riches</i> , Rev. Eric Newcomer Orient.*, Green Room, 11:45-12:15	27	28	29	30	December 1	December 2 Choir Rehearsal Scrapbooking* Green Rm., 6:30-10:30 pm



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Welcoming Congregation*