

the Outlook

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Verdugo Hills
4451 Dunsmore Avenue, La Crescenta, CA 91214
www.uuverdugo.org

February 2015
Volume 20, Issue 2



Unitarian Universalist
Church of the Verdugo Hills
818.248.3954
uucvh@uuverdugo.org

Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford

Deborah Rice
Ministerial Intern/Candidate

Elizabeth Brown
*Director of
Religious Exploration Education*

Ann Kleinsasser, *President*
Linda Hunt, *Vice-President*
Cindy Lopez, *Secretary*
Gary Clark, *Treasurer*
Teresa Jones, *Administrator*



IMAGINE

a religion that embraces many
different beliefs.

Where all are accepted; where
we cherish the process of
developing our own spiritual
path;
where we respectfully support
the paths of others.

Welcome to UUCVH!

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

10:30 AM

Children's Religious Exploration Education class concurrent

February 1

"In White America"

A staged reading by the Off Foothill Players.

Directed by Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford

This play by Martin B. Duberman is a compilation of speeches, letters, diary entries, and conversations that chronicle the history of racism in the United States from the early days of slavery to more recent times. Hopefully, on this first Day of Black History Month, its words will provide us with a telling picture of our past and inspire us to create a different future.

February 8

"The Swinging Door"

Deborah Rice, Ministerial Intern & Elizabeth Brown, DRE

Please join us for this intergenerational service where we will explore the love we feel for the Spirit of Life, ourselves, each other, and the world. This will be an experiential and participatory service, so come prepared to have some fun!

February 15

"What's Love Got To Do With It?" Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford

On this day after St. Valentine's Day, we will look thoughtfully and hopefully at the many different facets of love and the way they can affect how we feel, think, and act. Love can be platonic, romantic, erotic, creative, redemptive, compassionate, and more. Come and celebrate this amazing emotion with us and walk away with new insights and maybe even a song in your heart.

February 22

"Beyond Categorical Thinking" Everardo Aguilar, Guest Speaker

Your attendance is essential at the Beyond Categorical Thinking Sunday Service and Workshop afterward. Everardo Aguilar, a twenty-year volunteer Beyond Categorical Thinking facilitator will speak on the need for the program and how it plays a part of our Ministerial Search processes.



**Sunday, February 1
First Sunday Potluck at
11:30 AM**



**Sunday, February 1
Shared Ministry Team
12:30 to 2:00 PM**

You have a trusted friend to talk to in confidence!

The Shared Ministry Team at UUCVH is ready to help with pastoral care.

The team members are: Jerry Buchanan, Celia Eiben, Linda Hunt, Deane Phinney, and David Tyner – all trained & supervised by Rev. Betty.

For complicated issues, you can also contact Rev. Betty on her cell to schedule an appointment for pastoral counseling. We all want to support you in living a more abundant life.



**Monday, February 2 at 7 PM
All skill levels welcome.**

Many of our projects are donated to children in need & local hospitals such as sweaters, blankets, preemie baby booties & hats.

Contact Knitting Circle Chair Linda Hunt for more details.

MINISTER'S MUSINGS

By now many of you have probably heard about our twenty-seven year-old granddaughter's life-threatening bout with pneumonia. It was certainly a scary time for our family. And I am happy to say that she seems to be on the road to recovery. Although at this writing she is still in the Intensive Care Unit at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, she is off the respirator and breathing on her own again – a true blessing.

This experience has made me very aware of a number of things that many of us may take for granted in our lives. One of those things is the importance of family, whether biological or otherwise. As soon as we received the call from our daughter about her daughter's condition, a network of family connections was formed to offer physical, emotional, and spiritual support to our daughter as she lived with the reality of her child's tenuous hold on life. So I am very grateful for family, including my wonderful husband.

In addition, I have recognized the importance of friends when we are in grave circumstances. If Samantha's long-time friend had not come to her apartment when she could not reach her by phone and taken her immediately to the hospital, our granddaughter would not be alive today. In addition, we have all been bolstered by the support of friends and colleagues who shared e-mails and texts and calls with us in our time of despair. So I am grateful for friends.

And I am grateful for a religious and spiritual community like this one that gave me the support I needed to go to Maryland to be with our daughter and her daughter, covering many tasks that I was not here to perform. Thank you so much!

My hope is that we can all experience the blessings of family, friends, and a religious community in the good times and the difficult ones. I am convinced that these things, along with many others, can make all the difference. May it be so for all of you.

Blessings,
Rev. Betty

February 2 - 6

Rev. Betty will be attending the
UUMA CENTER Institute for Excellence in Ministry
Asilomar Conference

Debbie Rice, Ministerial Intern and the Shared Ministry Team are available for pastoral care during this time.



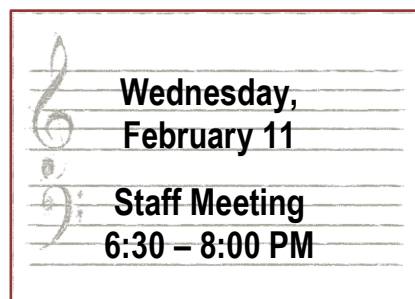
Thursday, February 5
Membership Committee
11:00 AM



Sunday, February 8
Spiritual Explorers Group
12:30 - 2:00 PM
All are welcome to join as we
talk about a different
spiritual and/or religious
topic each month with
openness and respect.



Sunday, February 8
Internship Committee
Meeting
12:00 - 1:00 PM



Saturday, February 14
Lupercalia

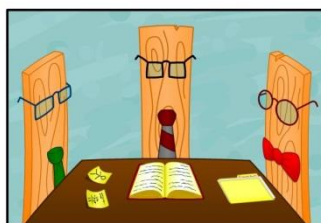
PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Over the years, one of my favorite “non-Sunday” UUCVH activities has been attending Friendship Dinners. I still remember the first dinner we attended after joining the congregation, hosted by the Phinney's. It was a lovely sit-down affair complete with a little chocolate turkey “favor” at each place (it was November). This was the first of many great memories of dinners we have attended or hosted.

One dinner we hosted in balmy spring weather was out on the patio with children running everywhere—others were dinner by candlelight at our dining table with adults only. On one of those evenings a few of the guests even stayed to help us do dishes and take the dog for his evening walk. We once had a memorable dinner at Paula Hallowell's home, where her flair for decorating with nature items, candles and antiques was on full display. Linda Hunt hosts relaxed gatherings indoors and out, with buffet table, fun music and gracious hospitality. I remember lovely evenings at the artistic and welcoming homes of Edith Young and Yvonne-Brossus Fisher. Friendship dinners traditionally have guests bringing the different courses, but it's always a treat to share an evening at the Berberian's home where gourmet cook, Halina, treats guests to a wonderful meal. Our former member Julianne Spillman wanted to host a dinner after she had moved to an assisted living facility, so we had the dinner in our Fellowship Hall and she brought decorations and special foods.

No matter whether the group is large or small, the setting formal or informal, indoors or out, these gatherings are a wonderful opportunity to get to know each other better. I hope you will plan to attend our next dinner coming up on February 21, either as a host or a guest. A sign-up sheet will be available in the Fellowship Hall on Sundays after the service. Guests who sign up will be divided among the host homes and hosts will call their guests to arrange what dishes to bring. Enjoy!

Ann Kleinsasser



Wednesday, February 18
UUCVH BOARD MEETING
7:00 PM

COME INTO THE RE CIRCLE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION EXPLORATION

Monday, February 16



Monday, February 16
Gnu UUs Dinner Meeting
5:30-7:00 PM
Contact Paula Hallowell,
Chair of the Gnu UUs for
details!



Tuesday, February 17
Committee on Ministry
meeting
7:30 – 9:00 PM



This month we are working on the 4th UU principle... everyone has a right to search for the truth. As you can imagine, for young children, truth is a very abstract concept. Rachael and I met to discuss this concept and how to move forward with our children who range between 1-5 years of age. We read through several UU publications to determine how to move forward and we decided to focus on “the right to ask questions”. For young children, asking questions is not only a way to gather information, but it also helps them to develop their own personal “truth”. While human beings have all different types of truths and some that even contradict each other, an individual’s truths become a part of who they are and who they will become. We have been working with the children this month on understanding the truths of the UU faith and the truths of themselves and their families.

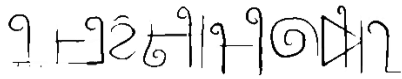
We started out by giving the children the opportunity to ask any question they would like and encouraged them to share those questions with their family members after the service. Through this simple activity, we can gain deeper insight in to what children are curious about, what they believe is true and even gain insight into any misconceptions or misunderstandings our children have about life. While many of the children’s questions had to do with fact learning, the exercises we are moving through teach our children that their questions are important and that it is ok to ask when they need clarity or more information. All children, and even adults need to feel and know that it is ok to ask when you don’t know, and that we all have a right to seek out the truth about simple facts or even life’s deeper questions.

As always we feel blessed to be a part of your children’s spiritual journey! A friendly reminder... if you have any gently used books that have an overtone of UU principles, we would love to share them with our children. Please see Elizabeth or Cindy for more information.

Warmly,
Elizabeth and Rachael

Elizabeth Brown, Director of Religious Exploration Education
Rachael Myers, RE Assistant Teacher
Cindy Lopez, RE Chair

INTERN'S INSPIRATION



Thursday, February 19 **WRITING AS A SACRED** **PRACTICE**

With Debbie Rice,
Ministerial Intern

7:00- 9:00 PM

No writing experience is
necessary. Open to all!



Friday, February 20 **Outlook Newsletter** **deadline**

(Always the Friday after the
3rd Thursday)



Saturday, February 21 **FRIENDSHIP DINNERS**

The best conversations
happen over dinner!

Sign-up sheet in Fellowship
Hall. Remember to confirm
with your Host for actual
time.

Hello everyone,

I can't help but think of love during the whole month of February. Love is important all year long, but it seems to take center stage this month. I guess I feel this way because I spent so many years as an elementary school teacher, decorating the classroom with handmade hearts and special messages my students wrote to each other, their families, and even their teacher. The children were always so open to expressing love for those they cared about. It warmed my heart and made me hold on to that loving feeling all year long.

On February 8th Elizabeth and I will be presenting a very special intergenerational service on love. This will be a wonderful opportunity for the adults and the children in our congregation to worship together, sharing stories, hymns, writing, and maybe even some artwork centered on the love we feel for the Spirit of life, ourselves, each other, and the world. I hope you all will be there!

Wishing you love and joy,
Debbie



Friday, February 13

Women's Group Potluck Luncheon
11:30 AM

Contact Deane Phinney, our Women's Group Chair, if you'd like to join us! You are also welcome to "just show up" for potluck lunch!

*Aesthetics Committee following lunch!

BITS FROM THE BOARD

Abridged Draft of UUCVH Board Meeting Minutes
1/12/15



Monday, February 23
Worship Committee Meeting
7:00 – 8:00 PM



UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
MINISTERS
ASSOCIATION

Thursday, February 26
Valley Cluster UU Ministers
1:00 – 3:00 PM

The *Outlook* Newsletter is published monthly by The Unitarian Universalist Church of the Verdugo Hills 4451 Dunsmore Ave. La Crescenta, CA 91214 818.248.3954 www.uuverdugo.org

Deadline for copy is always the Friday after the third Thursday of the month.

Editor reserves the right to edit for content and/or space. © 2015 UUCVH

Present: President Ann Kleinsasser, Treasurer Gary Clark, Secretary Cindy Lopez, Trustees Howard Richman and Celia Eiben, Minister Rev Dr Betty Stapleford.

President Ann Kleinsasser called the meeting to order at 7:03pm. The chalice was lighted and members checked in.

Minutes: The 12/11/14 minutes were approved as read.

Treasurer: Printing & postage budgets to be reviewed. Revisit “Common Grounds” coffee project in spring. Internal Financial Audit Committee (Gary, Alan, Teresa, Tom, Roy) being formed for February financial check-up. “Wi\$dom Path” Curriculum TBD with Rev Betty.

Minister: Report of activities distributed and reviewed. Staff meetings continue regularly, including Minister, Intern Minister, Congregational Administrator and RE Director. UU Justice Ministry plans in the works within our cluster: “Economic Justice” project TBA.

Office: Job description and title presented: Congregational Administrator. Proposal to increase paid hours from 15 to 20 per week. Howard motioned to approve, with amendments including review in four months. Gary seconded.

RE: RE Assistant hired. Job description of RE Director and Asst to be written by Elizabeth.

Search Committee: “Beyond Categorical Thinking” workshop re-scheduled for Sunday, Feb 22.

Outreach: Recommendation from Membership Committee: send postcards to community residents, publicity for theatrical performances. Still in need of someone to head up Outreach projects.

Facilities: Ann & Cindy to head task force to organize policy folder.

Aesthetics: “Bazaar” closet clean-up scheduled for Sun, Jan 18th. Display window project to rotate among committee members. Possible décor theme to include 25th Anniversary of merger of Burbank & Fellowship of the Foothills. Seeking archives for display.

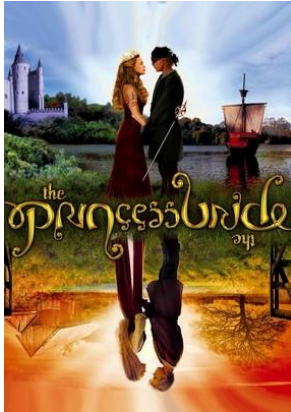
The chalice was extinguished and meeting adjourned at 8:49pm.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 18th.

Respectively submitted,
Cindy Lopez, Secretary

MOVIE NIGHT

Friday, February 6

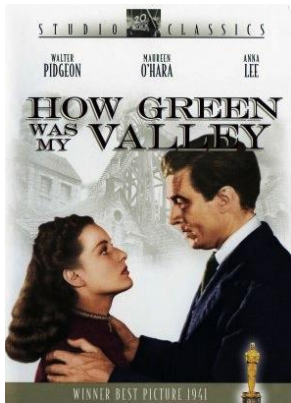


The Princess Bride

1987 PG 98 minutes

Blending comedy, adventure, romance and fantasy, this cult classic follows peasant farmhand Westley as he battles three bumbling outlaws and a nefarious prince to win the hand of his one true love, a young woman named Buttercup. Cast: Cary Elwes, Mandy Patinkin, Robin Wright, Chris Sarandon, Wallace Shawn, André the Giant, Fred Savage, Peter Falk, Peter Cook, Mel Smith, Carol Kane, Billy Crystal

NEXT MONTH'S MARCH MOVIE

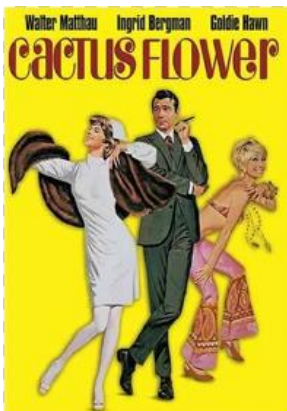


How Green Was My Valley

1941 NR 118 minutes

Recounted via the memories of the Morgan family's youngest son (Roddy McDowall), director John Ford's gentle masterpiece (which won five Oscars, including Best Picture and Best Director) chronicles 50 years in the lives of a clan of Welsh coal miners. As the years pass, the Morgans try to survive unionization, a lengthy strike and a mining accident; meanwhile, their hometown and its venerable traditions slowly disintegrate. Cast: Walter Pidgeon, Maureen O'Hara, Roddy McDowall.

COMING UP IN APRIL



Cactus Flower

1969 PG 103 minutes

Commitment-phobic Julian Winston (Walter Matthau) has been able to keep his girlfriend, Toni (Goldie Hawn), at bay by pretending to be stuck in a loveless marriage. But when Toni insists on meeting his missus, Julian's forced to recruit his assistant (Ingrid Bergman) to pose as his wife. Based on the play by Jean-Pierre Grédy, this lighthearted 1960s-era comedy is directed by filmmaker Gene Saks.

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

Our Search for our new minister is certainly picking up in pace!

Firstly, we want to share with you that Vivienne Payne has thoughtfully joined the Search Committee Team. Her generous and discerning participation will be another valuable strength to our endeavor. Welcome Vivienne!

The UUA requires each of us in the Search Committee to maintain confidentiality throughout this process. We can't disclose any applicant details – not even things like whether they like dogs or cats nor where they went to school, etc. However, we want to convey everything that we can to you – confidentiality is not the same as secrecy. So, we are totally open about the steps we take and welcome your questions and comments.

That said, we enthusiastically report to you that we have a fantastic pool of applicants. UU's are intriguing people! We are checking references and scheduling conversations and interviews. It is our due diligence to thoroughly research and get to know each applicant. Some of our initial meetings are taking place via Skype and Facetime. (It's a pretty cool way to have "in-person" meetings.)

The applicants are getting to know us too. They are asking lots of questions about how we do things, where we've been, and where we want to go in the future as a Beloved Community.

The next, and very important, step for all of us is to attend and participate in the upcoming *Beyond Categorical Thinking* workshop. We are catering lunch for everyone and it will be a fun yet challenging day! The sign-up sheet is in Fellowship Hall – please put your name down so we will have a good head-count for lunch. Also, include any special dietary requirements you have as we want to accommodate everyone's preferences and needs. So far, we have "gluten free" and "vegetarian" requests.

Part of the purpose of our *Beyond Categorical Thinking* workshop is to explore and share our own expectations about our next Minister. As a congregation, it is crucial for us to talk about the qualities, pros and cons of hiring a particular type of person who will become our new Minister. We're basically referring to the benefits and drawbacks of hiring a giraffe instead of polar bear to be our Minister -- would one be a better fit than the other for UUCVH?

All UUCVH members and friends are invited to participate.

The workshop and lunch will begin after Sunday Service on February 22 at noon.

With affection,
Your Search Committee Team,

Deane Phinney,
Co-Chair

Terresa Jones,
Co-Chair

Roy Lopez

Vivienne Payne

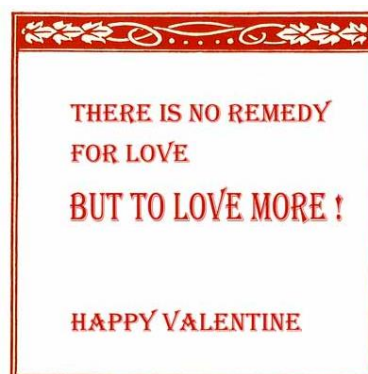
Howard Richman

February 2015 at UUCVH

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:30am Worship Service "In White America" Noon Potluck Lunch 12:30pm Shared Ministry	2 7:00 pm Knitting Circle	3	4 10-12pm Cleaning service	5 11:00 am Membership Comm.	6 6:30 pm Movie Night "The Princess Bride"	7
8 10:30am Worship Service "'The Swinging Door' 12:30 Spiritual Explorers 12 noon Internship Comm	9	10	11 6:30 pm Staff Meeting	12	13 11:30 am Women's Group Potluck Luncheon (Aesthetics following)	14 <i>Lupercalia</i> <i>St. Valentine Day</i> <i>!</i>
15 10:30am Worship Service "What's Love Got To Do With It?" Search Comm. Meeting	16 <i>President's Day</i> 5:30 pm GNU UUs Dinner	17 7:30 pm Comm on Ministry	18 7:00 pm Board Meeting	19 7:00 pm Writing As A Sacred Practice	20 <i>Outlook</i> Newsletter Deadline	21 Friendship Dinners (Check host's time)
22 10:30am Worship Service Beyond Categorical Thinking BCT Workshop 12-3pm	23 7:00 pm Worship Comm	24	25	26 1:00 pm Valley Cluster Ministers Meeting	27	28 Search Comm. Meeting

SAVE THE DATE!

Feb. 1 First Sunday Potluck, noon
Feb. 1 Shared Ministry 12:30 - 2:00pm
Feb. 2 Knitting Circle 7pm
Feb. 5 membership Comm 11:00am
Feb. 6 Movie Night 6:30pm "Princess Bride"
Feb. 8 Internship Comm at Noon
Feb. 8 Spiritual Explorers 12:30 – 2pm
Feb. 11 Staff Meeting 6:30pm
Feb. 13 Womens Group Potluck 11:30am
Feb. 13 Aesthetics 12:30p,
Feb. 14 Valentine's Day
Feb. 15 Search Comm meeting
Feb. 16 President's Day
Feb. 16 Gnu UUs Dinner 5:30pm
Feb. 17 Comm on Ministry 7:30pm
Feb. 18 Board Meeting 7:00pm
Feb. 19 Sacred Writing 7:00pm
Feb. 20 Outlook Newsletter Deadline
Feb. 21 Friendship Dinners
Feb. 22 Beyond categorical Thinking Noon-3pm
Feb. 23 Worship Comm 7:00pm
Feb. 26 Valley Cluster Minister's 1:00pm
Feb. 28 Search Comm meeting



the Outlook

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Verdugo Hills

4451 Dunsmore Ave. La Crescenta, CA 91214

uuverdugo.org