



Wow! Lots of News! Including the Picnic in the Park Tomorrow

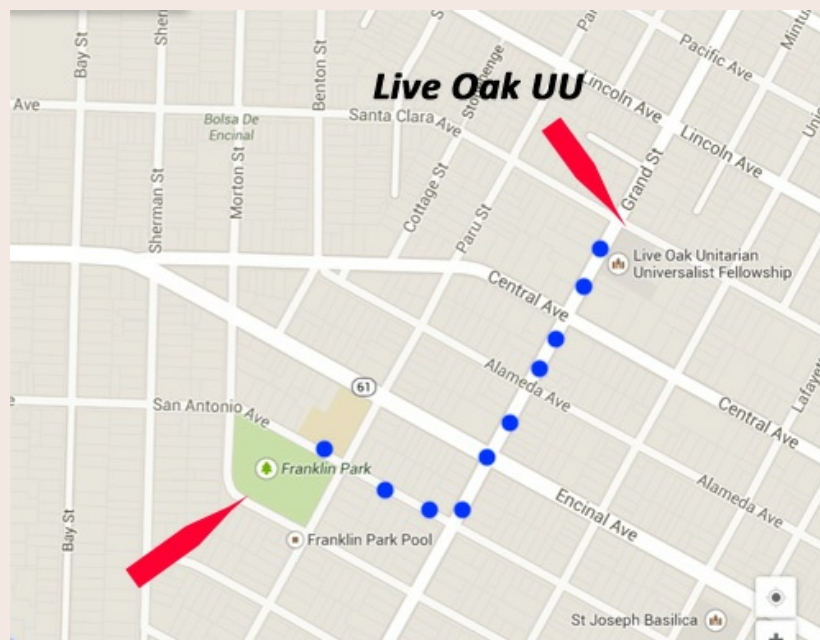
Greetings!

In this issue (in order):

- Picnic Tomorrow (Sunday, Aug. 9) -- Franklin Park
- News from Our Children & Youth Religious Exploration Teacher
- Games, Games, Games: 5th Sunday (August 30 @4:00 p.m.)
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- Why Be a Worship Associate?
- Social Justice & Service Group
 - Help Fill Backpacks (Equipped for Success campaign)
 - Help Distribute Backpacks & More at APC
 - Watch the First Documentary in the Group's Film Series (9/13)
- General Assembly: A Brief Report
- Gratitude: Recognizing Our Own
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- Adult Education / Faith Development Discussions: 3rd Fridays

Picnic in the Park: Tomorrow (Sunday, Aug. 9)

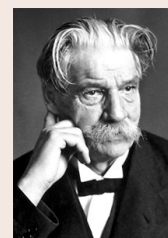
Join Live Oak'ers in Franklin Park TOMORROW (Sunday, August 9) at 4:00 p.m. Bring a dish to share, if possible. You can just hang out together or enjoy the discussion group led by Roger Hallsten (topic: cheerfulness). There are play areas for the kids. Bring frisbees, balls, whatever. Look for familiar faces. We'll be just a bit "up" from where the bottom red arrow is pointing in the map below. The park is at 1432 San Antonio Ave.



News: Children & Youth Religious Exploration Team

Sunday School at Live Oak continues to be a fun adventure each week. Thank you to all the children and youth who are attending and bringing their own stories and high spirits.

Our current focus is on medicine as a way that we help others and serve our communities. We're learning the inspiring stories of great Unitarian heroes like Dr. Albert Schweitzer and nurse Clara Barton, along with trying out the practical arts of medicine, like bandaging heads and splinting fingers. Our own **Sylvia Balding**, RN, will be visiting our class on Aug. 23rd to share her knowledge of first aid and serve as a role model for those who might want to be health care professionals later in their own lives. And speaking of visitors, **Rosetta Zeviar**, one of our newest visiting teens, will be sharing her experience as a Sea Scout with the class on Aug. 16th. Her visit is inspired by **Judith Heller's** wonderful sharing of her love for dragon boat racing during our sports unit. (See article below.)



Starting in mid-September, we will be turning our attention to food! Having a small, mixed-age class allows us to do many wonderful lessons that involve cooking. These activities relate to community, food justice, and Unitarian heroes (did you know that a Unitarian invented Jell-O?).

On a final note, here's a special shout-out to **Franco Rossi** and **Isaiah Hand** who spoke with great eloquence and conviction at our service on Aug. 2nd about their terrific experiences at MiSC (Middle School Camp for UUs) this summer. We are deeply proud of them, along with **Renzo Rossi**, who attended for the second year

in a row. All three boys have plans to continue attending these UU camps and weekend retreats. The next MUUGs (Middle School UU Gatherings) retreat is at the end of August. Contact Marlene Abel at marlenea@sonic.net for registration information.

Dragon Boat Enthusiast Judith Heller Visits Our Class



On July 19th, **Judith Heller** came to our class to talk about dragon boat racing, a sport she took up only four years ago. Judith showed us her paddles, life vest, hat, and even her seat cushion! She taught us how to row to the rhythm of her clap (in a real dragon boat, a drum keeps the beat).

She loves her sport because she gets to be out on the water and work with a team. There are, of course, challenges in dragon boat racing (as in any sport). Judith mentioned specifically taking criticism, staying in shape, and handling conflicts with teammates. She especially likes it when her boat full of "Grannies" goes faster than the younger rowers expect. Thank you so much for sharing with us, Judith. You are an inspiration to many!

~ Brook Bishara

Woo-hoo! ANOTHER Games & Potluck Night: Sunday, Aug. 30, 4:00-6:30 p.m.

Woot! More fun and games. Join us on the 5th Sunday in August (Aug. 30) in the Guild Room for an all-ages Games Day & Potluck. Kids, youth, and adults are all welcome. Bring a game or two, if you wish. Or be ready to learn something new!

We learned some great new games at our most recent Games Night. Come try one of those -- or some of the past favorites. Fun for all levels of players!

And, as usual on Sundays, please bring a dish to share for our communal meal. We'll start off with games, then add in food. So, feel free to use the refrigerator, if you need to. And you may reheat things in the kitchen, if needed.



We had a terrific turnout for the Aug. 1 Games Night -- 27 adults, 4 kids, and 1

very cute baby. Several people brought guests, which was delightful! **Eric Fethe** and **Reena Shah** brought some great new-to-us games.

Incredible Experience: Find Your Spiritual Voice!

Twelve Live Oak'ers (some from our Worship Team and some not) have been participating in a course we called "*Finding Your Spiritual Voice.*" If you were at the worship service on May 17, you got to hear five of the participants delivering reflections they wrote for the class. (If you missed them, you may listen to some or all of them [here](#). Once on that page, just scroll down to May 17.)

Ask any of the participants (Kris Arrington, Kathryn Duke, Eric Fethe, Lisa Fry, Seri Gomberg, Kate Hand, Renee Harper, Mary MacKay, Darlene Pagano, Jackie Roth, Jay Roller, and Richard Stromer) and you'll hear sincere accolades. For example:

- *I LOVE being in a writing group, especially one with a spiritual inclination.*
- *Having a writing buddy is a great idea -- and almost always makes what I've written better than it was.*
- *I have discovered that I like this medium of moving people. ... And I have discovered in others a depth to match my own.*
- *Listening to this group of folks read what they've written is better than most church services I've ever attended.*
- *I like writing about my thoughts and experiences -- and discovering they fit into a larger frame that others find interesting.*
- *Knowing a deadline is coming up, I find myself focusing, looking inside myself more deeply.*
- *A blank piece of paper -- or screen -- is intimidating, but not as bad as I expected it to be.*
- *I have stories worth sharing. Who knew?*



This course is based on a book by UU Minister Erika Hewitt, called [The Shared Pulpit](#). Kate Hand called this book "*a recipe for an amazing journey.*" And the great news is, Richard has volunteered to lead a slightly shorter version of the course next spring. You need not be considering being a Worship Associate or Worship Leader to take this class. You may simply be interested in looking more deeply into your own spiritual path. If so, this course is for you.

Opportunity for Growth: Be a Worship Associate

"Being a worship associate is important to me because it provides an outlet to strengthen my connection to Unitarian Universalism. I'm new to the worship team, but the experience has been extremely gratifying and impactful already. Don't think of the creative process and the public speaking aspect as obstacles: you can't find a group that is sweeter, sharper, or more collaborative."

~ Eric Fethe

Our Worship Team is looking for one additional Worship Associate. **Eric Fethe's** quote (above) demonstrates what an enriching experience this role provides. But what do Worship Associates (WAs) do? They might:

- Assist with 5-6 worship services per year
- Present the "Sharing of Responsibility" (collection)
- Or introduce the "Embracing Meditation"
- Often they write/deliver a short personal reflection on the day's theme
- Attend planning and development meetings (6 per year)

If you've wanted to become more involved in our worship program, the role of Worship Associate is a great way to get started. If you're interested and/or have any questions, please contact the chair of our Worship Team, **Richard Stromer**, by email at rsstromer@gmail.com, by phone at 510-682-6302, or in-person after one of our worship services.

Social Justice? Service to Others? Here's Your Chance!

Back-to-School! TWO WAYS to HELP!!

1. The Alameda Education Foundation and other community partners are collecting school supplies for the Equipped for Success drive right now. Our collection next Sunday (August 23) will once again go the this program. We'll help provide 800 backpacks and supplies (notebooks, rulers, pens, compasses, crayons, etc.) to low-income students served by the Alameda United School



Volunteers are needed to fill the backpacks Wednesday, August 19 and Thursday, August 20th (shifts between 10 am to 12 pm). Join the Live Oak "Gang of 4" already committed to help: Nancy Balassi, Renee Harper, Jay Roller, and Richard Stromer! They'll be working on Thursday, the 20th. If Wednesday is better for you, let's see if we can get another team that day! If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Linda Posadas at the Alameda County Education Foundation to sign up

and get additional information. Her number is (510) 316-6034.

2. Alameda Point Collaborative (APC) is hosting a back-to-school celebration for their youth and families. In addition to distributing backpacks from the Equipped 4 Success drive above, APC is hosting a community resource fair. They're thrilled to welcome teachers from our local schools, as well as other service providers who can help our kids succeed in school.

But they need volunteers to help (basic set-up/break-down activities, interact with kids and families, just keep things running smoothly). Please sign-up for one of



two shifts. Shift one is from 10am-2pm, and shift two is from 2pm-6pm.

Sign up for a shift [here \(APC's Eventbrite page\)](#). On this page, you may also choose to donate money for ice cream treats to be given as rewards at this event.

They are also looking for donations of ice cream novelties that can be used as prizes for our back-to-school passport adventure. They suggest *Drumsticks Lil'Drums*, or something similar that is individually wrapped and hand-held. Donations of such treats may be dropped off at APC's main office located at 677 W. Ranger Ave between 9am-1pm and 2pm-6pm M-F from now until August 24.

Many thanks for making the start of school a great experience for APC youth!

Want more info? Learn more on their [Eventbrite page](#) (scroll down for FAQ).

Social Justice & Service Group Presents a Film Series: Starts September 13, 4:00 p.m. (Second Sunday Series)

The Social Justice & Service Group (SJSJG) is planning to start a documentary film series. The first fill will be shown in the Guild Room on Sunday, September 13, 4:00 p.m. followed by discussion. They are excited about the line-up of films -- and the opportunity for folks to discuss them after watching. More info to come soon. Many thanks to this team!

So What Is General Assembly -- and What Happened There?

Our own **Darlene Pagano** who attended the UUA's General Assembly (GA) in

Portland, OR, this year, has kindly offered us some impressions from her experience.

Laughing, she said the drive from Oakland to Portland (with a friend who is a member of the Palo Alto UU Church) was a bit of a throwback to a 1970s road trip. But once they arrived, they quickly enjoyed being part of the 4,900 UUs gathered together in one place.

There were business meetings, workshops, and plenary sessions through the day. Evenings were for worship and lots of singing! Darlene was glad she chose the track of workshops dealing with issues of Class. She noted, "Though not all were done well, they were valiant in their efforts."

"Black Lives Matter" was a major theme: workshops, discussions about Ferguson, talks by racial justice activists from across the country, including civil rights leaders [Dr. Cornel West](#), Rep. John Lewis, and the Rev. Clark Olsen. There was also a passionate, sometimes heated debate over word choices for an Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) introduced by the Youth Caucus. The AIW was overwhelmingly approved by the GA delegates. You can read more about the AIW, a die-in, and other actions taken at GA [in this article from the UU World](#).



Darlene will share more about a Statement of Conscience in support of reproductive justice which was also adopted. It includes a broad framework "which espouses the human right to have children, not to have children, to parent the children one has in healthy environments, and to safeguard bodily autonomy and to express one's sexuality freely." The statement explicitly acknowledges "reproductive justice" as a concept developed by women of color. There will be a curriculum about this that might be a good choice for a LO Adult Education program down the road.



And, of course, Friday morning everyone celebrated the news about the **Marriage Equality** decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. "That sucked up a lot of energy, time, and attention," Darlene said. She noted, at one point, UUA President Peter Morales announced folks could have 10 minutes to be as "smug as you want to be" because we, as UUs showed up early on the issue of gay rights. "But," he noted, "not always perfectly ... and not always early enough."

Darlene has more to share. If you're interested, just ask.

Heartfelt Thanks to ...

Debra Temple for sharing her musical talent, playing the piano for the choir -- and all of us -- several times this summer.



And we heartily thank **Michelle Nip** who has been our very reliable Assistant Teacher -- and Head Dishwasher -- for more than two years! We know the children will miss her. And so will all of us who have had the opportunity to get to know her. Michelle is moving a bit too far away to continue with us. We sent her a card with greetings from folks who were at Live Oak last Sunday. With our best wishes for the future, we thanked Michelle for all she's done for Live Oak and let her know we hope she'll come by to visit now and then.

And our own high schooler, **Franco Rossi**, will take over as the Head Dishwasher! Grab your apron and enjoy getting to know Franco as you help with the dishes.

Who Ya' Gonna' Call? (Nope, not the Ghostbusters)



Call **Bernadette Alexander** and **David Fry**, our now very *debonaire* audio crew, with their new UU baseball caps brought back from General Assembly by **Darlene Pagano**.

Bernie and David set up microphones, conduct mike tests for worship leaders, stay on top of the audio throughout services, make sure we have assisted listening devices for those who need them, and put all the equipment safely away at the end of each service. Give them a pat on the back next time you see either of them!

Adult Education / Faith Development Discussions

The 3rd Friday in August (Aug. 21) we will watch *The History and Modernization of the Unitarians in Transylvania*, a video documentary by Dakotta J.K. Alex, edited by Zoltán Varró-Bodoczi. We gather at 7:30 p.m. in a home in Oakland. Email [Lisa Fry](mailto:Lisa.Fry@uu.org) to RSVP (and for the location).

And starting in September, we will watch episodes of Carl Sagan's [Cosmos: A Personal Journey](#). More about that later. There are 13 sessions. Come for one, a few, or all of them.

Email options: We maintain two separate email lists. One gets ONLY reminder announcements of upcoming worship services. The other gets those notices, plus information about congregational meetings, activities, religious education, newsletters, and more. You are welcome to be on either list. Please let Lisa (lisafray@gmail.com) know if you wish to be moved from one list to the other -- or if you wish to be removed from our email list altogether. Note: We also have a listserv for members & friends of Live Oak. You may join it, at any time, by sending an email to uuliveoak-subscribe@yahogroups.com.

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