Greetings!

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Report from Our Board President (Jay Roller)

Connecting with the Larger UU World:

As most of you know, Pam Gehrke has been our wonderful 4th Sunday worship leader for the past 9 months. On Sunday, November 1, it was my honor to represent Live Oak for Pam’s Ordination ceremony at her home congregation, UUs of San Mateo. Now an officially ordained UU minister, Pam will continue to serve us, but may be looking for new opportunities in the future.

In addition, I recently had the opportunity to meet with Jonipher Kwong, our liaison from the UUA’s Pacific Western Region (PWR) of which the Pacific Central District is a part. We talked about how Live Oak might best use the resources of the UUA to help us thrive as a small congregation.

Children & Youth Religious Exploration (CYRE): Volunteering at APC, Intergen Service, and Upcoming Classes
There is a lot to reminisce about this month. First of all, several parents, youth, and children gathered at Alameda Point Collaborative a few Saturdays ago to help in their plant nursery. By helping to clear and replant a few gardens, we assisted the families who live there to find stability and a path to a better future. Thanks to all who came: Ximena, Bruno, and Franco Rossi, their friend Sloan, Kiam Watson-Kajim, Sylvia Balding and Sammy Lovering, and Brooke’s family, Ihab, Grace, and Manny Bishara.

And in a separate story below you’ll find some photos and details from our intergenerational service celebrating Día de los Muertos.

In November and December, we will be finishing our food unit by looking at some aspects of food justice and some UU food heroes. On November 15, we’ll do some blind taste tests between similar foods and then talk about which one tastes better and which one best reflects our values and ethics. In coming weeks, you may want to talk to your children about why you make the food choices that you do.

Last, due to two family trips, I will be absent on Nov. 22nd and Dec. 6th. If you would like the pleasure of teaching during these weeks, please let me know. Simple lesson plans will be provided and Elena Waller will be the assistant teacher.

Nine of our eleven hard-working APC garden volunteers

Wonderful Intergenerational Día de los Muertos Service
Our entire community celebrated *día de los Muertos* together on Sunday, November 1 -- with people from all generations participating in the service. Many thanks to the day's worship team (*Brooke Bishara, Eric Fethe*, and *Richard Stromer*) for designing and leading the program.

And special thanks to *Isaiah Hand* who blessed us with his music, playing *St. James Infirmary* on his clarinet. Much gratitude also to *Franco Rossi* for contributing his excellent public speaking skills reading, *Essential Wisdom* (by Charles Stephen). Our fabulous (and growing) choir, led by *Adrian Borcea*, joyously sang *Pura Vida!* (Enjoy Life!) and *Hold Me, Rock Me*.

And special thanks to the children and youth who created and decorated sugar skulls for our ofrenda (altar) and then helped arrange the altar with flowers, traditional Mexican decorations -- and photos and mementos shared by members and friends. Last, thank you *David Fry* and *Kathryn Duke* for photos.

Note the sugar skulls enhancing the ofrenda, thanks to our children & youth.
Check out all the sugar skulls created by Live Oak’s children and youth.

Heartfelt Thanks to ...

Our Children & Youth Religious Education Committee: Sylvia Balding, Kathryn Duke, Lisa Fry, and Ximena Rossi. The CYRE team works with our teachers to develop and arrange activities during -- and outside -- the classroom. They sometimes fill in as the assistant teacher. Recently, they have been working on ways to promote CYRE (and Live Oak) beyond our own community. We also thank Judith Heller for assisting Brooke one Sunday last month.

"More Love & Justice Project" Makes News

You may remember Live Oak UU gave each of our children and youth an envelope with $15.00 and asked them to use that money to help bring more love and justice into our world. Teacher Brooke Bishara helped the kids think about things they might want to do with their money. And, of course, their parents worked with them, too.

Four of our kids have reported on how they used their money. Four more will report this later month. Let's start with Sammy who gave his $15 to the Alameda Food Bank. Sammy's gift and note actually made news! The food bank posted a photo of his note and cash on their Facebook page (below).
Sammy’s sister, Amelia, chose to give her money to Toys for Tots, to help make Christmas happier for other children.

Jaden and Jacob, used their money for two projects. First, they purchased items for people who are homeless. They put these items together in plastic bags to give to people in need. Here is a list of what they included in their bags. The second project was to clean up garbage from a public site. For that, the boys bought gloves to wear while cleaning.

NOTE: if you wish to create packages for people who are homeless, you might use the list above or this larger list of potential items for such packets.

**Adrian Borcea’s Upcoming Concert: Improvisational Music**

Our wonderful -- and talented -- pianist and choir director, Adrian Borcea, will present an evening of improvisational music on Saturday, December 5, at 7:30 p.m. The concert is part of the Forest Hills Concerts series held in San Francisco (at 250 Laguna Honda Boulevard). Admission is $20. We are blessed to enjoy some of Adrian’s improvisations during our worship services.

A couple of Live Oak’ers have expressed interest in attending this concert. Interested in
Adult Education / Faith Development:
Watch and Discuss Carl Sagan’s Cosmos 3rd Fridays

On the 3rd Friday of each month, starting Friday, October 16, Live Oak adults will gather to watch one episode of Carl Sagan’s Cosmos: A Personal Journey.

This month (November) we’ll view the third episode, "The Harmony of the Worlds." The subject matter for November is described below:

"Beginning with the separation of the fuzzy thinking and pious fraud of astrology from the careful observations of astronomy, Sagan follows the development of astronomical observation. Beginning with constellations and ceremonial calendars (such as those of the Anasazi), the story moves to the debate between Earth and Sun-centered models: Ptolemy and the geocentric worldview, Copernicus’ theory, the data-gathering of Tycho Brahe, and the achievements of Johannes Kepler (Kepler's laws of planetary motion and the first science-fiction novel)."

We will gather regularly on the third Friday of the month (but not in December). Come for one episode, a few, or all of them. We meet at a home in Oakland. Email Lisa for the location -- and to let us know you'll be coming.

Resources for Talking to Kids About Racism
When members of the Creative with Kids blog noted a need for resources for talking with children about race and racism, regular contributor Lorien Van Ness put together a list of more than 60 items (books, myths, media, toys, and activities), dividing materials by age groups: very young (0-3); preschoolers (2-5); and elementary aged (5-12).

Lorien noted, “People have different comfort zones for when to introduce discussions about racism; everyone’s family is different and I’m firm believer that you know your family best. That being said, I would urge you to think about how you want to discuss racism now, even if you feel that your children are too young. It is such a complex, heavy issue that it can be difficult to know where to start.”

Perhaps this list will be helpful to some of us at Live Oak UU.

**Save the Date: Sunday, December 20**

Once again, our choir and musicians welcome us (and guests) to a holiday concert an hour before our regular Solstice service on December 20. Come by 3:00 p.m. to enjoy the music. And then stay for the service -- and the communal meal afterward. It's a Live Oak tradition.

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 (lisasfry@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@yahoogroups.com.