



CVUUF News

Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

A Welcoming Community to all persons regardless of their race, nationality, or sexual orientation.

Upcoming Sunday Services

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This newsletter is published online monthly by members of the Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. Download your copy at www.cvuuf.org.

Deadline for articles or photos is the next to last Sunday of each month at 6pm. Submissions are to be directed to: newsletter@cvuuf.org and may be edited at the sole discretion of the editor, Liza Diniakos.

Other ways to

SHARE

information:

News & Notes

Email:
newsandnotes@cvuuf.org

Weekly

e-Announcements

Fill out form at:
cvuuf.org/news/announcereq

Online Calendar

Fill out form at:
cvuuf.org/calendar/request

Facebook

Email:
www.minister@cvuuf.org



In January, we study "Mindfulness" from Karen Armstrong's *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*:

January 5 — A Mindful Beginning — Rev. Lora Brandis — As we participate in our annual "burning bowl" ceremony - our annual service of renewal and letting go - we begin the year by paying attention to the thoughts and ways of being that no longer serve us as we continue to learn how to lead a more compassionate life. We practice mindfulness to become observers of our own lives. We begin the new year mindfully, willing to start anew.

January 12, 9:15am — Mindful Eating, Mindful Life — Rev. Lora Brandis — Weight loss is always one of the top New Year's resolutions made each year.

Yet, by the time this year ends, only about 10% of those who were committed at the beginning of the year to their resolutions will still be following them. Paying closer attention to what we eat, how we eat and why we choose to eat what we eat takes us beyond a simplistic resolution into a more compassionate way of life. Mindful eating reminds us how our food is raised, who labors to create the food we eat and how what we eat affects our health. **There will be a Member Induction at this service.**

NOTE: *There will only be one service today. Please plan on attending service at 9:15 am and staying for the CVUUF Mid-Year meeting at 10:45am, followed by a special congregational celebration.*

January 19 — This Is Not What I Really Am — Rev. Lora Brandis — We learn from practicing mindfulness - the fifth step to a compassionate life - that who we are changes with each breath that we take. Clinging to "this is how I always feel" and "this is how I always behave" no longer makes sense. Like the Buddha we can learn to cultivate positive emotions. Like the Buddha, we can stand in this present moment knowing that we are so much more than we thought we were.

January 26 — Self-Discipline: Why Is It So Hard? — Frances Pardee — We greet the New Year with a list of resolutions for improving ourselves, but by the end of January most good intentions fall by the wayside. As they say, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Why is self-discipline so hard? It's a significant component of most traditional religions, with their lists of dos and don'ts and expectations of specific behaviors. But we UUs seem to have thrown out that line of thinking along with the dogma. This morning we'll discuss self-discipline from both the psychological and religious points of view.

CVUUF Sundays on CD: Recordings of most Sunday services are available on audio CD. They may be purchased for a \$3 donation, made at time of order. All proceeds go to the Library Fund. Order yours at the Library bookcase in Social Hall and do remember to pick up the CDs you've ordered! Sunday recordings can also be heard at cvuuf.org, some can even be downloaded to your iPod.



Muusings from Reverend Lora

"Small group ministry creates a sacred time where the stories of our lives are heard." - Thandeka

About fourteen years ago I was invited to become a small group ministry facilitator at the First Unitarian Church of Dallas. My "yes" to that request changed my life. In the alchemy of the small group experience I was transformed. I heard again a call to the professional ministry and this time I was able to pay attention.

We are all called to a ministry, because all we do together as the congregation is ministry. The Rev. Dr. Gordon McKeeman, who recently passed away, wrote that "Ministry is a quality of relationship between and among human beings that beckons forth hidden possibilities; inviting people into deeper, more constant more reverent relationship with the world and with one another." The tributes celebrating Dr. McKeeman's life all reference this important quote, reinforcing the truth that as Unitarian Universalists everything we do together is ministry.

UU theologian Thandeka wrote that, "Small group ministry creates a sacred time where the stories of our lives are heard." In other words, small group ministry creates the time and the space to invite people into a deeper relationship with each other and with their UU faith. Last year during the January Board/Council retreat, the leadership of this Fellowship charged me with revitalizing our small group ministry.

Working with Carol Flanagan and Annie Barker, I led a six-week covenant group to train interested facilitators in order to launch new groups for this revitalization project. I trust that the "yes" each participant said changed their life as well. Now it is your turn to say "yes."

Say yes to our invitation to participate in a chalice circle starting at the end of January. Each group will meet at least six times during the next six months and then end, so that the more constant and more reverent relationship you develop with eight to ten people can be shared with the entire Fellowship. In September of next year you will be invited to say yes again. You will be invited to join another chalice circle, to get to know more members of this community and to deepen your relationship with your UU faith.

This is the way we grow our congregation - one small group at a time. This is the way we grow our faith. This is the way we nurture spiritually courageous people who transform the world through justice and compassion. Who wouldn't want to say yes to that?

Lora

Rev. Lora keeps office hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday by appointment. She is off on Mondays. To reach her, please email her at minister@cvuuf.org or call her cell phone (214) 629-0405. Due to the volume of email she receives, it may take her several days to respond to an email. Rev. Lora takes an email Sabbath on Sundays and Mondays. Please feel free to call if you have a matter that needs immediate attention.



Jill Kitsuse-Fulton, Administrator,
admin@cvuuf.org

January 2014

CVUUF OFFICE HOURS

Sundays 10-2pm
Wednesdays 12-4pm
Fridays 9-1pm

President's Message



As we greet the new year there are many causes for celebration, gratitude, and excitement in our congregation.

Sunday, January 12 will be a banner day for the Fellowship. On that Sunday, there will be just one worship service, starting at 9:15. During the service, an induction ceremony will recognize our most recent group of new members of the congregation. A new member induction is always a moving and inspiring experience. We are fortunate to be enriched by a wonderful group of people who have signed our membership book and joined us in shared commitment to our mission to nurture spiritually courageous people who transform the world through justice and compassion. Please come to this service and participate in welcoming them in our community.

Also on January 12, our annual Mid-Year Fellowship Meeting will take place starting at 10:45am. The meeting will include reports to the congregation from Rev. Lora, our Treasurer Terry Hinricher, and I. We'll also elect the first slate of members to the new Leadership Cultivation Committee. (The Leadership Cultivation Committee was voted into place at a special Fellowship meeting in October. It replaces the Nominating Committee.) I'm thrilled and grateful that seven outstanding people have agreed to serve as candidates for the LCC. They are Matthew Weisman, Nancy Healey, Anne Ewell, Riley Neel, Claudia Deising, Ashly Barth, and Jo Ann Van Reenan.

Following the Mid-Year meeting, our congregation will hold a special event in recognition of Reverend Lora receiving Final Fellowship (full ministry) from the Unitarian Universalist Association's Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Final Fellowship is a huge achievement; the culmination of many years of work, study, sacrifice, and accomplishment. It requires great commitment, courage, skill, and faith - qualities we are privileged to witness in our minister every day during our journey together. A glorious celebration is planned which will provide an occasion for all of us to acknowledge and lift up Rev. Lora's milestone, and express our love and appreciation. Please don't miss it!

As addressed in Rev. Lora's message, Chalice Circles are launching in January. I've signed up and I'm looking forward eagerly to the program. I encourage you to sign up as well. I believe Chalice Circles will bring a powerful new dimension to our congregation that will deepen the transformational benefits of membership in our lives. The time commitment is doable for most people, even those with busy schedules. This type of program is proven and successful in many other UU congregations. I am confident that will be true for us as well.

See you on Sunday!

Willie, president@cvuuf.org

The Mid-Year Fellowship Meeting of the Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is scheduled to take place on **Sunday, January 12, starting at 10:45am.**

Following the meeting, a **Special Fellowship Event** is planned to recognize Rev. Lora Brandis' milestone of being granted Final Fellowship by the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Please join us to lift up Lora's accomplishment, and to sing, celebrate, and rejoice!

There will be only one worship service on that Sunday, at 9:15am.



Justine Fischer,
Director of
Religious
Education
(DRE)

News From Religious Education

JANUARY RE

As we continue with our Compassion curriculum, we will focus upon Mindfulness. PreK through middle school meet at 9:15 and high school at 11:00 am.

- January 5 – Mindfulness overview
- January 12 – Buddha
- January 19- Free and Responsible Search
- January 26- Words and Deeds of Prophetic Men and Women

MICOP

Join in the fun on Saturday, January 25, 2014 beginning at 3:00 pm. We will be making cereal jewelry with our MICOP friends at Harrington Elementary School 2501 Gisler Street, Oxnard.

LOOKING FOR SOME

COMPASSIONATE PEOPLE

This year our theme runs for the entire length of the year, twelve full months. Our plan is to have spiritual nurturers in the classroom for 6 months at a time. That means we will need to change over to new teachers in March. We ask that you help in the classroom twice a month. It's a gratifying and rewarding experience. Please think about supporting and serving our community in this way. If you have questions or would like to see if it is a good fit for you contact Justine at dre@cvuuf.org

KUDOS

...to all who made donations to the Westminster Free Clinic; and to those who helped with the MICOP Fiesta Navedina.

For information regarding Religious Education, I can most easily be reached at dre@cvuuf.org.

Yours in faith,

Justine



January Birthdays

Abby Cho-
Miller, Jake
de Ronde,
Maya Espe,
Alan
Goddard,
Ethan
Halseth and
Lowell
Welch.

Adult Religious Education

Living Compassionately

Third Sundays 12:15-1:30pm
Ongoing until August 17, 2014

Rev. Lora and Justine will co-facilitate a study group of Karen Armstrong's *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* after the second service on the third Sunday of each month. The study group is drop-in so there is no need to register. Join us as we move through all twelve steps together towards a life constantly guided by compassion.



Community Forum

Friday, January 17 2014, 7:30pm

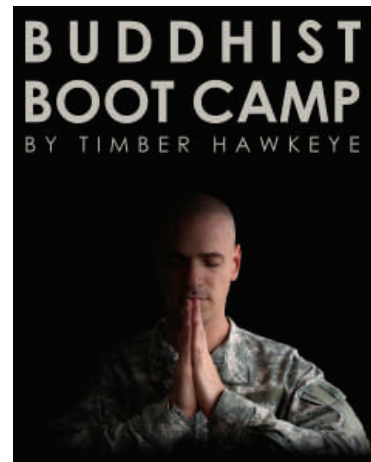
BUDDHIST BOOT CAMP

Non-Judgment Day is Here!

Meet Timber Hawkeye, the best-selling author of *Buddhist Boot Camp*. The book offers a non-sectarian approach to being at peace with the world, within and around us.

Intend to leave feeling more awakened, enlightened, enriched, and inspired!

This program is free but donations are gratefully accepted.



Community Forums are held at:

Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 3327 Old Conejo Road, Newbury Park
<http://forum.cvuuf.org>

Special Collection •

January 19, 2013

Lutheran Social Services

With compassion, love and hope, LSS has helped under served children, disadvantaged families, homeless, the abused, elderly and developmentally challenged. Your generosity will help LSS to make a difference in these people's lives. Make your check payable to CVUUF, and note "LSS" in the memo.

MANNA NEEDS

Salad Dressing
Canned Meat
Tuna
Canned Stew/Chili
Catsup
Soup
Pancake Mix
Cookies

Shampoo
Other Grooming Items

Adult Religious Education



The Wi\$dom Path: Money, Spirit and Life

Monday, February 3 , 7:30 to 9pm

Our congregation was chosen to field test this new adult RE curriculum. Developed by the UUA, it is designed to create a deeper understanding of attitudes and actions relating to money within the context of UU values. The class is comprised of twelve weekly workshops. Register and questions: Todd Hess and Frances Pardee, leaders.

Rise Up and Call Her Name

Mondays, February 3 through May 12, 2014

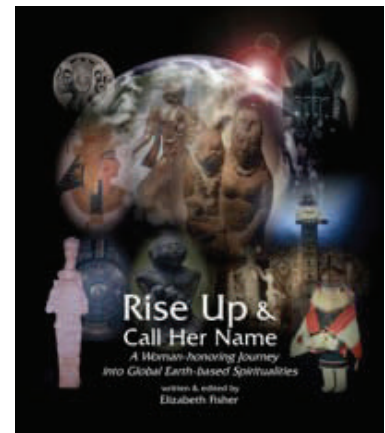
7 to 9:30pm

(skip February 17 and April 14)

This 13-week class explores women's spiritualities around the world through art, music, dance, journaling, group discussion and personal reflection.

\$25 for the sourcebook.

Register and questions: Robin Lindsey or Christine Blasman



WE are on the Side of Love

The national Standing on the Side of Love organization is "a community of people compelled to speak out against oppression, united in the common belief that love is the ultimate guiding force of our world."

If you believe that all people deserve dignity, find a seat at the following Conejo Valley Unitarian Fellowship programs.

DETAINEE VISITATION

Carpool to Adelanto Detention Facility

Friday January 10, 2014 8:15am

Contact: Gordon Clint

Reverend Lora will be making her fourth day-long trip to visit immigrants isolated in the Adelanto Detention Center.

Since September 13, 2013 the Detention Witness program has made 7 trips and facilitated 58 visits with 41 different detainees. CVUUF volunteers who have not yet visited are especially encouraged to share this meaningful experience.

Two-person teams will sit and talk with each detainee for one hour. We should return to CVUUF between 5:00 and 6:00pm.

Participants need to RSVP to Gordon ASAP. He will answer any questions and give you the name of a detainee you can write so your visit will be expected.

30th Annual & Final Latin American Encuentro

Saturday, January 25, 2014, 11am—4pm

Palomar UU Fellowship

1600 Buena Vista Drive

Vista, CA

Contact: Jan Meslin, jmeslin@co.net

NATIONAL STANDING ON THE SIDE OF LOVE MONTH

Week 1: Living the Dream



Week 2: Sharing Our Stories



Week 3: Building Bridges of Love



Week 4: Pause, Reflect, Celebrate!



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

http://standingonthesideoflove.org/2014_30days_calendar

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Find out how to be part of this nationwide campaign.

Join US!

On **Sunday, January 12th, 2014**,
we will induct all new members who signed the book between July 2013 and January 2014.
Please join us in welcoming our latest new members:

Craig Brainard, Kelly Castillo, Barbara Davidson, Tracy Gogan, Moni Seif Daniele and Brett Welch, Denyse Dunn, and Amy Cook.



Find Your Place in a Chalice Circle!

Chalice Circles are small communities of 8 to 10 people that meet monthly for a finite number of sessions and are designed to give participants an opportunity to get to know each other while developing deeper self knowledge. By sharing life experiences in small groups lead by trained facilitators, participants will explore meaningful questions about our values and ideas of spirituality, learn together, and make a difference through service projects for the congregation and the larger community.

Every Chalice Circle will explore the same topic each month to create opportunities for congregation wide reflection. Groups will form anew each church year to help develop wider connections over time. Come, join a chalice circle, and share your story!

For more information, contact Carol Flanagan.



Annual New Year's Hike Sandstone Peak

January 4, 2014

9:30am ~ 4:00pm

*Weather Forecast: mostly sunny, 69°
Hoping for far-ranging views at the top!*

We will carpool from the Citibank parking lot, Westlake & Agoura Roads at 9:30am. The hike has a fair amount of altitude gain/loss; a little bit of rock scrambling at the top (we help all to get to the top); but otherwise it is moderately strenuous (depends on your attitude, good shoes help).

Bring 1 liter of water or more and your lunch/snacks. We snack/admire the view at the top and then take the Mishe Moqui trail to lunch in the grove.

RSVP to Pete Hauger so he will know who is meeting at the carpool site.

Have a Resolution to Expand Your Creativity?
Quilters & Crafters
Thursday, January 16, 7pm



Start a new or work on your unfinished projects.

NOTE: Our monthly meeting day will change to first Monday of each month starting February 2014.

Apologies in Advance

An Interactive Night of Improv Fun!

Saturday January 11, 2014, 7:30pm



From left, Alex Crane, Henry Lubka, Wesley Marshall and Daniel Weisman (ape-ologies... ed.)

A tantalizing troupe of talented teenagers!

You will be entertained & you will entertain!

Come take part in the splendor & madness of theatrical improvisation!

Bring friends & family for a cacophony of laughter, giggles
and other sounds of delight!

Suggested Donation: Adults \$15, Students/Seniors \$10
Contact Matthew Weisman or Pamela Lopez for tickets



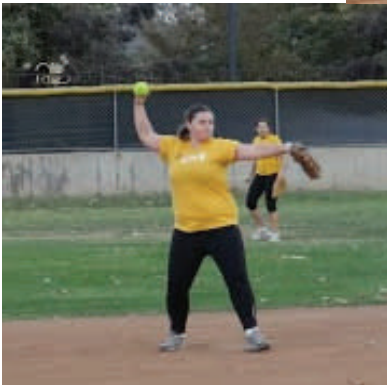
WHAT'S YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?

“Rule Number One,” says Coach Dave, aka The Love Manager of the Conejo UUs, “is have fun.”

Rule Number Two is get some exercise. Final Rule is to avoid the Mercy Rule.

Join Us. If you don't play, come hang out. Games are Sunday evenings in Newbury Park. The next season begins February/March 2014. For more information, speak to Dave Buss, or any of the players (or scorekeeper) shown here.

[Photos by Chuck Fernald.]





January 2014



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
			7:30pm» Transitions Group 7pm» Pledge Captain's meeting 7:30pm» Meditation Group	9:45am» Jonquil Group 7:30pm» Choir Rehearsal	9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9:15am» Worship Service 10am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 10:30am» Writing to Prisoners in Solitary 11am» Parent Support Group 11am» Worship Service 2pm» Gaming Afternoon 5pm» Newcomer AA Meeting	6:30pm» Finance Committee	6pm» Feeding Hands 7:30pm» Worship Committee 7:30pm» Community Forum Planning Committee	12pm» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 7:30pm» Meditation Group	7pm» Sapphire covenant group 7:30pm» Choir Rehearsal	9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours	2:30pm» Emerald Covenant Group 7pm» Movie Group 7:30pm» Apologies In Advance
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:15am» Worship Service 10am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 10:45am» Mid-Year Fellowship Meeting 11am» Parent Support Group 12:15pm» Dharma Workshop 5pm» Movie Group 3 5pm» Newcomer AA Meeting 5:30pm» New Member Dinner	7pm» Women's Evening Group	9:45am» Gardenia Group 7pm» CVUUF Board of Trustees meeting	12pm» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 7:30pm» CVUUF Council meeting 7:30pm» Meditation Group	7am» Opal Covenant Group 9:45am» Jonquil Group 7pm» CVUUF Quilters & Crafters 7:30pm» Choir Rehearsal	9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 7:30pm» Community Forum	9:30am» Neighborhood Network Contacts meeting
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:15am» Worship Service 10am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 10:30am» Writing to Prisoners in Solitary 11am» Parenting Teens Support Group 11am» Worship Service 12:15pm» Adult RE: Living Compassionately 5pm» Movie Group 3 5pm» Newcomer AA Meeting 6pm» NEWSLETTER DEADLINE		7pm» Music Ministry meeting	12pm» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 7:30pm» Meditation Group	7:30pm» Choir Rehearsal	9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 7:30pm» Movie Group 1	
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9:15am» Worship Service 10am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 11am» Parent Support Group 11am» Worship Service 12:15pm» Dharma Workshop 5pm» Newcomer AA Meeting	7pm» Women's Evening Group	9:45am» Gardenia Group	12pm» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 7:30pm» Meditation Group	7pm» Sapphire covenant group 7:30pm» Choir Rehearsal		

Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

COVENANT OF GOOD RELATIONS

In order to assist us in fulfilling our mission to nurture spiritually courageous people who transform the world through justice and compassion, we the members and friends of the Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship enter into this Covenant of Good Relations.

We, the members and friends of this congregation, value:

- Opening our hearts and minds to those who have traveled journeys unlike ours and whose strengths and challenges may be different from ours.
- A welcoming space for all to speak their truth respectfully.
- The importance of deep listening and respect for each other.
- Relationships with others of all ages, and the gifts that each generation brings to our community.
- The democratic process, through which we give voice to concerns and offer our time and energy to arrive at solutions.

In the wider community, we honor our responsibilities for upholding spiritual ideals, engaging in civil discourse with those of other religious traditions, and promoting our UU values.

In my interactions with others in this congregation, I will:

- Speak honestly and directly to the person(s) with whom I have a concern, using thoughtful, compassionate language.
- Forgive the errors and shortcomings of myself and others as we contribute to our shared ministry and express gratitude for the many gifts we bring.
- Assume good intentions in those with whom I disagree and examine my own part in the disagreement.
- Listen deeply to, and actively seek resolution with those concerned before engaging the Conflict Resolution Committee, Committee on Ministry, the Council or the Board of Trustees in conflict mediation.
- Expect divergent beliefs and opinions and persist in respectful dialogue—especially in times of uncertainty—remaining open to new understandings while doing my part to sustain this Covenant.
- Respect the minister and staff's professionalism, time and privacy.
- Assume responsibility for understanding the church structure and governance model.
- Assume responsibility for keeping informed of church business.

Through this Covenant of Good Relations, it is our intention to foster healthy and productive relations within our church community as we work together to achieve our mission.



Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

3327 Old Conejo Road
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Jill Kitsuse-Fulton, Administrator, admin@cvuuf.org

Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford, Minister Emerita

Board of Trustees 2013-2014

Willie Lubka, Board President, president@cvuuf.org
David Barker, Vice President
Michael Teasdale, Secretary
Terry Hinricher, Treasurer
Laure McKinnon, Trustee At-Large
Phoebe Rivera, Trustee At-Large
Don Vernardos, Trustee At-Large



additional UU resource links:

[Unitarian Universalist Association \(UUA\)](#)

The UUA serves 1,000+ congregations in the US and the world.

[Pacific Southwest District \(PSWD\)](#)

PSWD serves 50 Pacific Southwest congregations in California, Arizona and Nevada.

Sunday Service is held at 9:15 & 11:00 am, with Coffee Hour following each service. Children's Religious Education is held during the 9:15am service. Childcare is provided and YRUU (our high school RE program) meets during the 11:00am service.

Visitors are always welcome!