



Upcoming Summer Forum Presentations

**July 17: Reversing the Tragic
School-to-Prison Laws** -speakers
from People Not Prisons
movement.

**July 24: Family Members from
Sperm Donors** -Bill Cordray

**July 31: Is Our Politics Experiencing
a Meltdown?** -Tim Chambless and
Paul Rolly

**August 7: Inside the Armed
Resistance to the Federal
Government** -Anthony Rampton

**August 14: New Forms of Critical
Thinking and the Future of
Progressivism** -Rev. Harold
Straughn

**August 21: Our Annual
Environmental Justice Festival**

Summer Forum happens Sundays
at 10:00 am. Please see our
website at www.slccu.org for more
information on Summer Forum
speakers and topics.

This is the Last Paper Version of The Torch

First Unitarian Church has always been in the vanguard of even UU churches in Environmental issues. However, our dependence upon paper has forced us to recognize that we can (and need) to do more in regards to building a sustainable planet. Therefore, our newsletter (The Torch) will be paperless in the new Church year beginning with the next issue (August 15, 2016).

Please connect with the church website for all future issues of The Torch **OR** subscribe to receive The Torch in your email by filling in the right hand box at our page at <http://www.slccu.org/news/the-torch>.

Realizing that the new policy may cause a genuine hardship among some of our more elderly members, a few paper copies of a text only version of The Torch will be available at the church.

Thank you for your understanding as we, along with a growing number of churches and institutions, move into a paperless era.

Refugee Resettlement Committee News

-submitted by John Rasmuson

- The International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Salt Lake City needs rental housing for incoming refugee families. The IRC has asked for our help in finding apartments or houses that could accommodate a single refugee, a couple or a family. Please call Nancy Rasmuson at (801) 633-5666 if you have a place or know of one.
- The Refugee Resettlement Committee needs tea kettles for the kitchens of new arrivals. If you have one to spare or want to contribute a new one, you may leave it behind the screen in the Little Chapel. There is also a need for new or like new bath mats, wash cloths and hand cloths.
- Like the Clampetts on their way to Beverly Hills, Gary Widdison's truck is piled high with furniture. This load will be

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The Torch is published approximately 23 times per year, every other week during the regular church year & once per month during the summer.

Next Publication Date

August 15, 2016

Submission Deadline

August 8, 2016 (Monday)
by 1:00 pm

Events to be listed should occur after August 15th to ensure timeliness.

Editor

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Congregational Briefs

Mindfulness in the Summer

UU Mindfulness group continues to meet in the summer at 11:15 following Summer Forum in Room 201.

Open Minds Book Group

The Open Minds Book Group will not meet over the summer. The next meeting will be September 29th when we will discuss "Alexander Hamilton" by Ron Chernow.

UU Lunch Bunch

A family-friendly group for anyone and everyone who would like to get together for lunch and chat with like-minded people. Meet at the Restaurant on Sundays at noon during the summer. For more information contact Sonia Carnell at (801) 262-1151 or lunchbunch@slcuu.org.

- July 17: Copper Kitchen (4640 South 2300 East)
- July 24: Cancelled
- July 31: Corner Bakery (610 Foothill Blvd.)
- August 7: Windy Ridge Cafe (1250 Iron Horse Dr., Park City)
- August 14: Ruth's Diner (4160 Emigration Canyon Rd.)
- August 21: Market Street Grill (54 West Market St.)
- August 28: Hog Wallow Pub (3200 East Big Cottonwood Canyon Rd.)

Refugee Resettlement (continued from pg. 1)

used to transform empty rooms into a welcoming apartment for a refugee family starting a new life in Utah. Even as the First Church congregation takes its summer ease, the work of the Refugee Resettlement Committee continues unabatedly. To do that work, week after week, requires donations like the table and chairs stacked artfully in the Widdison truck. Please support the humanitarian work with your gently used furniture. Call Joe Dubray at (904) 527-9773 to schedule a pick-up.



In the Life

I had the privilege to journey with two different youth delegations from First Church this summer. In early June I joined three adult chaperones (thanks Sara Jordan, Rob Richardson and Elaine Stehel) in touring the Boston area with fourteen 7th and 8th graders. This is the culminating event in the year-long Coming of Age process to which these youth committed themselves. After spending a year exploring the "Big Questions" of religion and crafting their own faith statements, their diligent fundraising and your generous donations and support made it possible for them to travel to explore the New England roots of this living tradition we share.

I've got to admit that I lean toward the skeptical side when engaging in this kind of trip. It's not the kids - heavens no! I was reminded on this trip how very much I love working with youth. The skeptical side is the part of me that is intimidated by the high-minded, highbrow, intellectual and possibly elitist aspects of our New England roots. I also tend to be a bit dense when it comes to remembering dates, names, locations, etc. So I was pleasantly surprised at not only how much I remembered from my studies, but also at the insights of comparing Unitarianism in New England during its heyday with Mormonism in Salt Lake City. I asked the youth what it must have felt like to not be Unitarian when all the major institutions and influential figures were dominated by that faith. Ask the youth sometime about their journey but I can tell you Walden Pond, the New UUA headquarters and Arlington Street Church on Pride Sunday (imagine our chapel decked out in rainbow bunting and tinsel!) were highlights for me.

Later in June I was blessed to travel with Youth Coordinator, Jillian O'Karma, Steve Quinn, Lori Shields and twelve 9th-11th graders to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. We spent the night on the floor of our sibling UU congregation in Cheyenne, WY on the way and also took in Crazy Horse and Mount Rushmore for some contextualization. This was another experience of doubt turning to delight

Rev. Matthew Cockrum

and gratitude. Our preparation for this trip had oriented us to the histories of injustice in the treatment of Native peoples along with the poverty and addiction we might encounter. I was not prepared for the joy and beauty of the people and the land, though I grew up just 75 miles from Pine Ridge. Half of us labored throughout the week as helpers in an arts camp that included native crafts taught by tribal members. The other half of us worked with a local resident whose organization, Earth Tipi, is bringing sustainable living and development (locally sourced, affordable housing, orchards, etc.) to the communities there. It was a powerful exercise in being of service and getting outside our comfort zones.



Overall, I see these two trips as opportunities for youth of First Church to engage in what UU theologian Rebecca Parker has named a uniquely UU spiritual discipline: learning. We ask questions about who we are, where we have come from, what we are called to do and be in the world. Hopefully these trips have been important experiences in the lives of these young people (and their adult traveling companions). Hopefully what we have seen and done, heard and experienced has invited us to become more curious about the world where we live. Hopefully we can begin to wonder about how we can engage in issues of injustice right here in Salt Lake City. Hopefully we can remember that there are beautiful, powerful roots and seeds right where we are...and that we are responsible for their nurture.

Here's to The Work, Friends!
Peace, Faith & Passion,
Matthew



The Coming of Age group's Boston Heritage trip - visiting sites of UU history and interest

The High School group's mission trip this year was to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.



Post General Assembly Potluck & DeBrief - Thursday, July 28, 6:30-8:30 p.m. in Eliot Hall. - Join UUA Staff (and First Church Alum) Jenica Hocket Davis for a review of happenings at June's General Assembly. Youth leadership made some significant strides around racial justice issues. Come join us and bring some food to share!

More photos from the youth trips available on our church's Facebook page www.facebook.com/First-Unitarian-Church-of-Salt-Lake-City-116011744733/

General Assembly Resolution Report

-submitted by Barbara Taylor

General Assembly held in Ohio the last week of June. The Unitarian Universalists meet yearly in assembly to discuss church matters, renew our strength and vote on serious issues. I asked to be a delegate because I am involved with the Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East and they were presenting a business resolution to the Assembly.

If you remember last January during coffee hour many of you signed a petition asking our church to divest from four corporations who were making a profit from the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian land. The petition being signed by Unitarians across the country easily got 1700 signatures. Then the UUA surprised us by divesting from the four corporations before the General Assembly could vote on the resolution

I am going to tell you about my experience attending the

requesting it. Therefore, UUJME rewrote the resolution, thanking the UUA for divesting and requesting that we continue to screen all investments for human rights issues paying particular attention to the illegal occupation of the Palestinians.

There was a historic vote in 2014 at General Assembly to divest from companies that sustain Israel's 50 year old military occupation and an endorsement of a boycott of goods made in settlements. At the General Assembly there was a 70% vote to continue to study the global grassroots of the BDS (Boycott, Divest and Sanctions) movement for Palestinian rights and freedom. But STOP. That was June 2016, at the Presbyterian GA, not at the Unitarian GA.

Despite fierce opposition strong measures were passed calling an end to Israel's unjust practices toward Palestinians including a resolution which

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GA Resolution Report (continued from page 4)

calls on Israel to correct the unequal distribution of water and demands that Israel recognize existing titles to land owned by Palestinians. But STOP. That was May 2016, at the Methodist GA, again, not at the Unitarian GA.

So now, let's get down to business. What went on in Columbus, Ohio last week at the Unitarian Universalist GA.

The General Assembly heard two resolutions. (The other was questioning the traditional celebration of Thanksgiving.) The resolution UUJME presented to the assembly turned out to be emotional and contentious. It was like being in a battlefield in the middle of a whirlwind. The floor gave the assembly thirty minutes to debate the issue. There was a "pro" microphone on one side, and "con" microphone on the other, and a "procedural question" microphone in the middle. (The timer was turned off when the procedural microphone was in use).

The next thirty minutes were contentious, stressful and chaotic. (You can view the entire event on Facebook if you want.)

The first person at the con microphone said, "I move we reject this resolution and end debate permanently." That motion was voted down.

Next person wanted to amend the resolution to include the sentence "Israel has the right to exist, Israel has tried hard to achieve peace and Israel has a right to defend itself." That may all sound very good and familiar but UUJME purposely didn't include those words because there is lot of baggage that goes along with it. The phrase "a right to exist" isn't part of international law. Israel is the only country that claims it has a right to exist, and by agreeing to that right are we agreeing that they have the right to expanded borders? Are we saying they have a right to take indigenous people's land? Are we saying they have the right to commit ethnic cleansing? Those are the cautions one must be aware of when voting for this amendment. This motion passed.

The next speaker wanted the word "Palestinian" removed from the title of the resolution and

replaced with "oppressed peoples everywhere." This is reminiscent of white supremacists changing "Black Lives Matter" to "All Lives Matter." UUJME, of course, objected to that.

That motion failed.

Two times during this entire process the speaker had to ask the chaplain to come to the mike, and by speaking soothing words and reminding the assembly that we were doing "holy" work, tried to keep order.

The next speaker claimed it wasn't a "balanced" resolution. He went on to claim that all the rabbis that he knew were sending him messages saying that relations with Israel would be damaged if the Unitarian Universalists passed this resolution. There is Jewish fragility when their white privilege is at risk.

The "pro" microphone replied that the resolution wasn't meant to be balanced. It was meant to point out that Israel was a military power that was oppressing people living in occupation, ignoring the Geneva Convention, ignoring UN resolutions and ignoring international law. These are harsh words to hear and it hurts. Sometimes resolutions create discomfort. Change is hard. The resolution was not intended to be "balanced." It was intended to correct the "imbalance" that has existed for over fifty years. UUJME responded accordingly.

Thirty minutes expired and the assembly voted. The vote was so close that the chair couldn't discern the outcome so they followed with a hand count. It takes a while to count 1100 hands. Hurrah. UUJME got 54% of the vote. But, resolution failed. The rules state the resolutions need 67% to pass. That appears as a very high threshold. Could this resolution ever achieve that? But as the saying goes, "try again next year."

Would any members of our congregation be interested in pursuing a deeper discussion of the issue? You also can learn more by going to www.uujme.org.

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