

The Beacon

South Valley Unitarian Universalist Society



Volume 34, Issue 1

January, 2014

In This Issue:

January Services	1
Leadership Directory	2
Minister's Message	2
Board Message	3
Caring Circle	3
Transition Team	4
Worship Closet	4
REGAL Monday Menus	5
Rev. Behrend Workshop	6
REGAL Schedule	6
UUSC	7
South Valley Goes Solar	7
Social Action	8
Interweave	8
UU Day at Legislature	8
Donation Drive	9
CUUPS	9
Library	10
Healing Circle	10
Get to Know....	11
John Bennett	
Save the Date	11
Grocery Card Program	11
ACA Recovery Group	12
South Valley Snapshots	13

January Theme: Peace



January 5th: "*What Did/Will You Do with Your One Wild and Precious Life*"

Lay leaders: Brenda Voisard & Sutton Morgan

January 12th: "*The Road Ahead*"

Rev. Patty Willis

The stunning events of the end of the year affirm the power of both our imagination and our actions towards transforming the world. As we bask in renewed hope, let us envision how we can bring more justice to the world. The Unitarian Universalist Association is urging us to take a closer look at poverty and injustice in the restaurant industry through the two UUA Common Read books: *Bridges out of Poverty* and *Behind Kitchen Doors*. If you have time, prepare for Sunday by diving into these books for ideas of what we can do!

January 19th: "*Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Power of Standing Together in Love*"

Rev. Patty Willis

Dr. King knew that love was the only way to bring about change. What did he mean by "love?" Let us re-claim this word through the eyes and ministry of a man who was able to bring about peaceful transformation. Looking through his eyes, what can we see?

January 26th: "*Finding Our Spring*"

Rev. Patty Willis

Our beautiful mountain lakes depend on snow fall and springs for clear, abundant water that replenishes and nurtures life. Join us for a lively service that explores the spring that we need in order to be sustainable in this world. Bring your ideas, your voice and your dancing shoes!

LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

**For urgent issues please call the main office or the Caring Circle (listed further below)

DEVELOPMENTAL MINISTER

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Email: minister@svuus.org

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Tuesday: 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
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CARING CIRCLE

Denna Wright (Chair) 801-274-0756
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SVUUS Web Site

www.svuus.org

SVUUS-NEWS Email List

South Valley maintains a news listserv to facilitate announcements and other communications for the congregation.

If you wish to sign up to receive messages, send a request to Lyn Worthen, listserv administrator, at lynw@xmission.com.

To send a message to the list, simply address it to svuus-news@mailman.xmission.com

*From the Minister's Desk**Open the Window, Let the Dove Fly in!*

I'm writing to you the day after Christmas, a day Lou and I spent together with family basking in what feels like a new dawn breaking. During our Solstice Service, I spoke of feeling stunned when I heard the news that same-sex marriage had become a possibility. I needed evidence! The next days were amazing times of evidence-gathering down at the County Clerk's Office. All around me, people were speaking their love to each other and making vows that would give them the protections of legal marriage. I felt the good will of all the workers at the county building. Certainly, not everyone agreed with what was happening but we wouldn't have known. There was unexpected kindness all around.

The next Monday, on the way to the County Clerk's Office at 8:00 a.m., excited about the prospect of officiating at the marriages of many South Valley couples that day, we were also worried. There was the possibility of a "stay" that could go into effect as early as 9:00 a.m. As we traveled towards the office, Lou and I each had a thought that we didn't reveal until later. It seemed like the perfect timing for a hate crime. We knew the well of hatred that was underlying the arguments against same-sex marriage. When I officiated at weddings on Friday, I had reminded couples of the acts of courage that had gone before this big change. We had paused together for a few moments to give thanks for all the people (both LGBTQ and their straight allies) who had spoken their truth knowing that it could mean the loss of friendships, family, employment, and church affiliation. I remembered walking into restaurants and hotels with Lou during our many years together, fearful that we would not be welcomed. I also remember walking with her late at night and wondering if someone who saw that we were holding hands would try to injure us. After all, such crimes happened all the time. Over ten years ago, when we were laughing and talking together on a bus in Pittsburgh, someone collared me and hissed expletives into my ear. Yet, we were privileged to have only experienced the edges of hatred---looks of disgust and long stares of disapproval in our direction, whispers.

Amid all the good will, we remembered the path to that place. This place of pioneers in covered wagons has been a place of other pioneers, many of whom live among us in the South Valley congregation. The pioneers I am speaking of braved the looks of disgust, the possible loss of jobs, and the fear that someone might commit a hate crime against them. Other pioneers stood up for the humanity of people who had become friends and through those friendships, you forged a broader connection with all those suffering humiliation in the interconnected web of life. Now, however briefly, we are glimpsing the Promised Land. This is the place that we dreamed and often thought impossible. Unbelievably, the window opened and the dove flew in!

One of my favorite parts of the service last week was when I spoke of the possibility of this door of opportunity closing and one of our visitors said that she would throw her whole body in that door. And all of you cheered!

This renewed hope coincides with a renewed mission statement. In December, I worked with our wordsmiths, Julie Vesely, Joe Gates and Sandra Roach, to refine the rough drafts that we forged in community gatherings in October. This is what we came up with on December 15th, 2013:

We are a community of hope for religious explorers who wish to transform our world into a more just, compassionate and sustainable place. We embrace diversity and provide opportunities for creativity, spiritual growth, and celebration of life.

Could these words inspire you to be willing to throw your bodies into that door of justice if it begins to close? I invite you to say these words out loud and ponder them. Do they describe our community and the difference we want to make and are making in the world? Not all of our wordsmiths liked all parts of the statement because we are all different! In the end, we felt that we could each claim most of what was written. If you feel the same way, let us know and if you think it needs more work, let us know that too. This is our gift to you as we head into the New Year!

In love and community,
Rev. Patty Willis

From the Board of Trustees

January is always a time when we reflect on events of the past year. As I look back over the last year at South Valley, I see the wonderful progress we have made as a congregation, with even more milestone events that mark the progress of our congregation.

Our minister, Rev. Patty Willis, has brought attention to our need to establish and implement plans if we are to attain our goals. She has managed to add a new spirit and life to South Valley and to make us a more Welcoming Congregation. Her wonderful sermons and her compassionate attitude and service are very welcome. Our entire SVUUS congregation feels privileged and honored to have her as our minister. Visits from newcomers at our worship services continue to increase, and we have gained new members and pledges.

We also gained a new Director of Religious Education, Liz Martin, who has proven to be an essential asset with our youth. We thoroughly appreciate her dedication and the enthusiasm she brings to our younger generation.

We have a new Adult Religious Education Leader, Christine Hirrill, who has introduced to us "Monday Menus", a kind of UU-style Family Home Evening. After sharing a simple supper, we are able to choose from an array of potential offerings for children, youth and adults. We all look forward to these classes beginning again this month.

Our building is seeing more changes and improvements. Our annex got a wonderful facelift as well as new paint in the classrooms and improved lighting in our Cottonwood Cafe. We have a new water fountain in the Social Hall thanks to the generosity of Cheryl Altman. The grounds around our building are being tended to and improved with our "Adopt-a-Space" program. Through the "Pave Rave" dances we were able to raise enough money to do some much needed repairs on our parking lot. There are many more places that need attention so this fundraiser will continue throughout the year. Also, thanks to Robyn Taylor-Granda, we now have a recycling bin in our parking lot.

Our Auction and Stewardship Campaign (formerly called the Pledge Drive) were very successful. These funds will really help sustain us through the coming months.

In looking forward to 2014, I have faith that more new and wonderful things will continue to happen because I believe in each and every one of you to make it happen. This spring we look forward to having new Solar Panels installed. This is such a huge milestone for us. Who would have thought a year ago that this would even be a possibility for our beloved church? Here's to moving forward with more dreams coming true!

Cynthia Dobbs
Board of Trustees

South Valley Caring Circle

The members of the Caring Circle provide practical support and/or pastoral care. Please contact the chair of the committee if you need or know of someone who needs our support. To ask for help you may also use the Caring Book by the name tags. The Caring Book is also for joys and concerns; we hope you will share moments from your lives.

CARING CIRCLE Contact Information

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From the Transition Team

The New Year is here and it's a good time to reflect on the past year and look ahead to 2014. My resolution is often to do more volunteer work or join social action groups. There are many different ways to be of service at church including the various committees that need help. I have to be careful though, If I try to do too much, or something too far out of my comfort zone, I can experience feelings of burnout. So, how do I balance my time outside the church, and feel like I'm devoting enough time to support the community I love?

I try to remember that I don't necessarily need to take on the commitments that demand a lot of time. If I can, that's great, but the less time consuming jobs can be just as important and rewarding. I can do my part, even if it's only a little bit, to support the larger whole. If being on the front lines is not your thing, just shoveling the walkway or doing the dishes helps maintain an environment for all kinds of opportunities to do good. Don't underestimate how important it can be to invite a newcomer down to the social hall for a cup of conversation! Our church, our city, our state, our country and our planet as a whole, can all benefit from one small act of kindness!

Yours in service,
Travis Potter

From the Worship Closet

January is the month of peace after the hectic pace of the holidays. The Worship Committee hopes you all had a wonderful holiday season and that you took some time out to revel in the wonder of this time of year. The earth is quiet, many of the animals and plants are asleep, sending their roots deep into the earth, curling up in warm dens and waiting. It is the calm before the rush of spring, which isn't as far away as you might think.

The sun has started its journey back to the north. Slowly the days will get longer. But for now all is calm and peaceful. Now is the time for reflection. What went right for you with services in 2013? What could be done differently in 2014?

The worship committee is always open to suggestions from our fellow congregants. Find any of us after services and tell us what you think. If you want to help bring about 'change' of some sort or have just decided you want to get more involved, then please talk with us. We are always happy to have as much help as possible. Help in the sound booth and doing the altar is especially welcome. If you want to try to become more of a full-fledged member, don't panic. We will offer training and mentoring so that you don't feel you are skating on the thin ice of not knowing what to do.

Thank you for your enthusiasm and support of our various changes in 2013. The committee looks forward to what this new year will bring.

Religious Education, Growth, and Learning

MONDAY MENUS ARE BACK!

The second session of Monday Menus will begin again on Monday, January 13th. Classes begin at 6:30 p.m. and typically end at 8:00...but don't forget to join us for soup and crackers at 6:00 p.m.! You are invited to bring your own brown-bag dinner as well.

Classes for January

January 13th:

Prayer 101: Taught by Rev. Patty. In our new proposed mission statement, we describe ourselves as "religious explorers." When some of us leave our childhood faiths and embark on a journey into the unknown, we often find that the old words we used in prayer no longer fit our beliefs. Come explore different words and ways that can be used in prayer and ponder what fits for you. You will no longer be at a loss when asked to give a blessing over food at a family gathering! And, you may discover ways that prayer can articulate your love and concern for people around you and be a conduit for your gratitude.

The Artist's Way: This is a monthly gathering for the attendees of last semester's class or others who have experience with Julia Cameron's twelve step program for artistic freedom. Mel Gunderson will be facilitating.

Bridge with Paul Barron: Whether you're a beginner or have been playing for years, join us for a friendly card game. We'll have bidding 'cheat sheets' available. Learners may be asked to Kibitz (look over shoulders) so we have 4 playing per table.

January 20th

Magic of Conflict: Taught by Linda Reed and Rev. Patty Willis; based on the work of Tom Crum and others. This workshop will explore the nature of conflict and develop new ways of responding with balance, grace, and effectiveness. Based on the principles of harmony and connection from Aikido, the martial art of peace, we will practice ways of speaking and moving to make conflict productive. Through a combination of facilitated dialogue and safe, non-strenuous movements, we will physically experience moving through conflict in ways that don't resist, escalate, or give in to it, but rather use it as a creative force. This class will continue on January 27th.

Glacial Geology: Taught by Joe Gates. Learn about the glaciers that once filled Little Cottonwood canyon and how global warming is melting glaciers worldwide.

January 27th

Magic of Conflict, taught by Linda Reed and Rev. Willis, continues for a second week.

Chalice Readers with Connee Gates and Susan Eyzaguirre -- ***Bridges out of Poverty***

A number of compelling quotations from *Bridges out of Poverty* were given to a group of us SVUUS volunteers during a recent orientation at the Homeless Youth Resource Center. Many of us have lived privileged and insulated lives, and this book provides humbling insight into what it is like to live in the constant-survival mode of poverty, outlines the "hidden rules among classes", discusses the culture of poverty, and provides a framework for us to help those in need.

SAVE THE DATE: On Monday, February 17th: *Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change: Toward Right Relationship with America's Native Peoples,* is coming to South Valley. This transformative program was developed by the Indigenous Peoples Concerns committee of the Quaker Meeting in Boulder, Colorado, with advice and encouragement from Native American educators. Come experience this land from a new perspective of justice as we reflect on our relationships with the Native Peoples of Turtle Island, this land that we now call the United States. We are fortunate to welcome them to South Valley. We welcome ages 5 to 95. Childcare will be provided for small children.

Religious Education, Growth, and Learning (cont.)

*** Special Retreat and Class for Monday Menus! ****

We have a very special offering coming up -- and sign-ups are now open!

“Reclaiming the Feminine Face of God: Jung, Judaism and Judith” with the Rev. Dr. Silvia Behrend (former Minister at First Unitarian Church and current therapist, life coach, and visiting professor based in Olympia, Washington). This class will consist of 4 webcast sessions (Feb 3, 10, 24 and Mar 3), culminating in a Retreat at Aura Soma Lava Conference Center in Lava Hot Springs, ID, March 7-9.

Registration requires a \$30 deposit to hold your spot at the retreat. Limited scholarships will be available. Total cost of retreat for two nights' accommodation at the lodge, food, and class time at Aura Soma Lava will be \$120 for SVUUS members and friends. We will hold off on opening this class up to people outside of the SVUUS community until January 12th to ensure that everyone here gets a chance to be included!

Class Description: “Reclaiming the Feminine Face of God: Jung, Judaism and Judith”

According to C. G. Jung, humans are religious by nature. We experience joy, terror, and awe and we need rituals and dogmas that help navigate the vicissitudes of life. Religion can contain and help us make sense of life and death, rebirth and destruction. Or it can turn into dry and stultifying orthodoxies that kill the spirit and deaden our souls. Many of us have been cut off from the nourishing roots of our various religious traditions by the destruction of the feminine as well as by the overly rigid interpretation of dogma and ritual.

This class and retreat will seek to recover that which has been lost, a live connection to what is available behind the crusty outmoded ritual and dogma. To this end, we will explore:

The psychological function of religion based on Jungian archetypal perspective

The recovery of the feminine aspect of God/Psyche initially through the study of the Hebrew Scriptures, specifically found in the elements of:

- Covenant
- Shekinah
- Wisdom or Sophia
- The Book of Judith as a model of relationality
- New Testament stories of the Fierce Feminine
- Other traditional stories

***** Sunday REGAL Schedule *****

January 5:	Children's Chapel/Youth Worship for Sacred Travelers (K-5th) Peace Youth Worship (6th-12th) Peace, then classes (“Intro to Christianity” for Junior High, “Workshop 4: It Matters What We Believe” for High School)
January 12:	Regular Sunday Classes: High School (9th-12th) - “Difficulties in Interfaith Work”; Junior High (6th-8th) - “Exploring Christianity”; Seekers (4th-5th) - “Power - Hammer”; Trailblazers (2nd-3rd) - “Seek Truth (Ethelred Brown)”; Pathfinders (K-1st) - “The Gift of Families”; Butterflies (Preschool) - “I Can Smell”
January 19:	Intergenerational Service: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Service (All ages stay upstairs, child care available in Nursery room for infants and toddlers)
January 26:	Regular Sunday Classes: High School (9th-12th) - “Difficulties in Interfaith Work” Junior High (6th-8th) - “Exploring Christianity” Seekers (4th-5th) - “Spirit of Life - Canteen” Trailblazers (2nd-3rd) - “Ask Questions (Clyde Tombaugh)” Pathfinders (K-1st) - “The Gift of Mutual Caring” Butterflies (Preschool) - “I Can Taste”

UUSC Guest at Your Table

TIME TO RETURN YOUR GIFTS FOR UUSC GUEST AT YOUR TABLE!

The annual Unitarian Universalist Service Committee fundraiser is drawing to a close. Please try to return your UUSC banks and/or donation envelopes as soon as you can after New Years. And, if you want to have your gift designated for the Philippine effort, put a small note in the bank. Otherwise I will assume your money goes to the usual Guest at Your Table Program. As I explained earlier, all the Guest at Your Table brochures and posters were printed before the typhoon. The Philippine donations will go to UUSC for a special Joint Effort of both UUSC and the Unitarian Universalist Association. UUSC will use their already-established team to assess needs and administer assistance in this terrible disaster.

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee consistently receives high ratings among all non-profit organizations because of their use of small groups of workers who are on-site residents in the disaster areas.

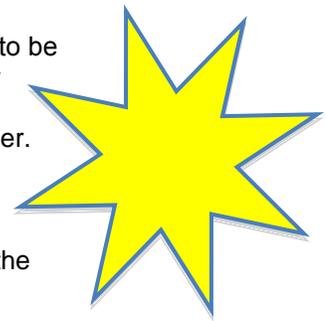
Thanks for supporting this important UU humanitarian operation. It has a long history of social action around the globe and was South Valley's first social action outreach.

Connee Gates,
Local UUSC representative

SOUTH VALLEY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY TO GO SOLAR

South Valley Unitarian Universalist Society recently received a Blue Sky funding award to place solar panels on their roof next spring.

"This is the first renewable energy project in Cottonwood Heights to be awarded Blue Sky funding and will provide opportunities for many people in the community to learn about solar energy," said Alene Bentley, Rocky Mountain Power customer and community manager. "Our Blue Sky program provides an easy and convenient way for customers to support renewable energy development in the West, and since 2006 has helped bring dozens of community based projects come to fruition throughout Utah." (To sign up for the blue Sky program, or to learn more, you can visit www.rockymountainpower.net/bluesky.)



South Valley Unitarian Universalist Society also supports wind energy by participating in the Blue Sky program as a business partner. In addition to the Blue Sky funding, seed money for the solar project was provided by the church's endowment fund and by Utah Interfaith Power & Light. The solar array will be net metered, enabling the church to receive full value for the electricity it generates.

To celebrate this energy-saving opportunity the church congregation gathered on Winter Solstice, Saturday December 21. Rev. Patty Willis led the ceremony with special music presented by the church choir and director Mary Lou Prince. Guest speakers included Jack Matsen of Intermountain Wind & Solar, Jeff Hymas of Rocky Mountain Power, and Susan Soleil of Utah Interfaith Power & Light who each provided information about the project. Members of the church's Covenant of UU Pagans (CUUPS) led attendees in a brief solstice ceremony to conclude the service.

Social Action Committee

Meals for Homeless Youth Update

Thank You! We had a fabulous Thanksgiving Feast at the Homeless Youth Resource Center (HYRC), thanks to so many of you as well as Harmon's grocery stores. We had an abundance of food (a true loaves and fishes story!) as more than 20 members and friends of South Valley prepared and delivered menu items, tables, chairs and décor, and served the meal. There was so much enthusiasm for this project that our bake sales raised enough to also purchase 60 refillable water bottles for the HYRC's holiday backpack program, and we have leftover funds on Harmon's gift cards to help fund upcoming meals at the center. (Note that Harmon's grocery is a generous and accessible contributor to our local community, so I encourage you all to shop there. And remember that SVUUS sells Harmon's grocery cards, a program that gives a percentage of sales back to our church.)



What's Next? Though daily breakfasts and dinners have been canceled at the HYRC due to Federal funding cutbacks, we will continue to provide hot lunches twice a month, an occasional hot dinner (they've recently reinstated Friday dinners), and bagged "to-go" dinners once or twice a month. Watch the weekly Happenings e-news and the bulletin board at church for more information on upcoming volunteer opportunities. If you have questions or are interested in getting involved, contact Susan Eyzaguirre at eyzsooz@gmail.com or 801.278.8130.

Interweave

Interweave Potluck
Sunday, January 19, 5:00 p.m.

Kevin Alvey and Peter Verschoor will host the next Interweave potluck on Sunday, January 19th at their home at 5:00 p.m. Their address is 1903 East 7160 South, SLC, UT 84121. Their telephone number is 801-944-1653.

Their home is about two blocks directly west of SVUUS, south of Ft. Union Blvd.

Peace,

Peter Verschoor

UU Day at the Legislature

February 11, 2014

Get involved in change:

The Coalition of Religious Communities has set Unitarian Universalist Day at the State Legislature for February 11th at the Capitol.

If you are a little nervous about participating, there will be a Legislative Orientation on Friday, January 24th, 2014 at the State Capitol. Here you will learn how to make a difference in the government, how best to approach your legislator, and how to best get your message across. We will be hosting 2 identical sessions. Session 1 will be held from 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM and Session 2 will be held from 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM. Each session will be gathering on the 2nd floor of the Capitol Rotunda to begin.



Sacred Travels Donation Drive

for Crossroads Urban Center and Homeless Youth Resource Center
November 24-January 12
Look for the Christmas tree upstairs at SVUUS

SVUUS Children and Youth are coordinating a donation drive for the Homeless Youth Resource Center and Crossroads Urban Center. HYRC is the organization that Youth have selected for focused social action this year. SVUUS has a long-time and consistent interest in Crossroads Urban Center. See details at the donation tree upstairs at SVUUS. The drive will run through Jan. 12th. Contact Annika Surles with questions or to help with the drive. 801-295-2612, Kristin.m.berg.92@alum.dartmouth.org

Homeless Youth Resource Center Donation Drive

Donate necessities to the Homeless Youth Resource Center to help "Fill the Pack." HYRC provides backpacks of necessities to homeless youth. Donate new, school-sized backpacks, \$5 gift cards/certificates, hand warmers, small first-aid kits, reusable water bottles, dark-colored beanies, dark-colored gloves, new socks, new underwear, fleece blankets.

Crossroads Urban Center

Donate necessities to the Crossroads Urban Center. Seeking children's clothing, women's clothing especially large sizes, shoes and work boots, jackets and coats, new underwear/socks, jeans and work pants, blankets, towels, sheets, dishes, silverware, pots, pans, crockpots, small appliances.

Again, find more details about both of these opportunities at the donation tree upstairs at SVUUS. Contact Annika Surles with questions at 801-295-2612 or at Kristin.m.berg.92@alum.dartmouth.org

News from the South Valley Covenant of UU Pagans (CUUPS)

CUUPS has some fun things planned for the Month of January.

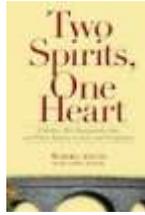
The Three Rays Meditation Group: January 7th at 7:30 pm in the Jr. High room. We will discuss Christopher Penzak's Three Rays of Witchcraft. The group is still open to anyone who wants to come.

Pancake Breakfast- The next pancake breakfast will be on Sunday January 12th. We hope that everyone can join us in the new year for a fabulous way to connect with the community over food. David really appreciated all the help that was given last time for the breakfast. We at CUUPS really need help with the set-up, preparation and clean-up for the breakfast. Please contact David Lane to volunteer. The cost is \$7 per person or \$15 per family.

Equinox Ritual- Look forward to more details about our upcoming ritual in March to celebrate the coming of spring.

From the Library Committee

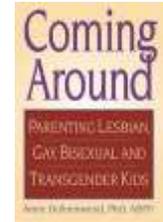
We have several new books in our collection dealing with helping parents of children who are LGBTQ. Here are reviews of the newest additions:



Two Spirits, One Heart by Marsha and Aiden Aizumi 2013

The author (Marsha) shares her journey from fear and uncertainty to acceptance and support of Aiden as he struggles with his gender identity. Aiden lived as a female for 20 years and then decided to change to a male. Marsha was instrumental in helping to establish the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center which is the largest of its kind in the U.S. Aiden currently works for the Center.

Coming Around—Parenting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Kids by Anne Dohrenwend 2012



This is another good book for parents of LGBT kids. Coming out for LGBT youth is a vulnerable time and respecting your child's decisions isn't always easy. There is a wealth of practical information and guidance for families. It could also be used as a reference for clergy and educators.



The Transgender Child—a Handbook for Families and Professionals by Stephanie Brill 2008

This book is just what the title indicates—a manual of helpful information and suggestions for parents of transgendered youth. From asking the question, "Is my child transgendered?" through the stages of acceptance and empowerment and ending with the legal ramifications of being transgendered, the book would be a good choice for

parents who are dealing with a possible transgendered child.

Helping your Transgender Teen: A Guide for Parents by Irwin Krieger 2011



Mr. Krieger is a clinical social worker with many years experience helping transgendered teens. There is basic information here that families will need as well as addressing the fears and concerns most parents have in this area. This book should be very helpful in answering questions about adolescent gender identity.

Healing Group

Out of the Shadow, from Loss to Bliss

If you have ever felt stuck, anxious, numb, stressed, repressed, etc., but would prefer to feel flexible, resilient, and at peace, join us for this opportunity to claim our birthright, our essential unconditional worth.

The idea for this pilot group was born out of information found in a book titled, *Language of Emotion*, by Karla McLaren. She describes tribal cultures' initiation ceremonies as strengthening to the psyche because they contain three phases: 1) Separation from the known world; 2) A brush with death; and 3) Being hailed by significant others as an initiated person.

Our healing circle vision is of a powerful journey during which we can each identify what old beliefs or behaviors no longer serve us, and, if we choose, replace them with those that let us reclaim our essential spirit.

We invite you to join us on Wednesday, January 8, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM, in the Senior High room, for an exploratory session. The seven sessions, thereafter, will be open only to those who have participated in the January 8, session. If this interests you, please sign up to explore with us.

Contact: Cheryl altman.cheryl@gmail.com
Erin emmk1987@yahoo.com

Jaime jaimie.onigkeit@gmail.com

Get to Know....

John Bennett



John Wells Bennett is a native of Salt Lake City, Utah. As with many members of our congregation, his family pioneered here in the mid-1800's and became a part of the historical tapestry of this valley. He came to us first as a pianist to accompany the South Valley choir and congregational hymns. His presence at the piano has made it possible for the choir to perform three Sundays a month. Thank you, John!

With a mother who played violin and piano for the Utah Symphony, and a father who played the viola and loves chamber music, John naturally turned to music studies in both piano and French horn as a young boy and man. Our South Valley choir had a chance to meet John's parents recently, when we visited their home and sang "Wind in the Desert" to John's father who is suffering from the final stages of Parkinson's disease.

At some point, however, John decided not to pursue a career in music and his working career is full of interesting work managing a center for the homeless in San Francisco and a senior center in Salt Lake City. He is a champion of human rights and has been a public figure in the LGBTQ movement for more understanding here in Salt Lake City. A few years ago, he was in an ad in which he said that even though both his grandfather and uncle were senators, he could be fired for being gay.

Recently, when both his parents faced severe illnesses, he decided to take on their care management. The three of them live together in a beautiful old house that is filled with music and smells of good food cooking! Along with being a gifted musician, he is a stained glass artist. Ask him about his current commission. He also loves to rescue dogs and is the happy caretaker of three small ones, loves to go to movies, play tennis, and bowl!



Save the Date

Jan. 7	CUUPS Mediation Group 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 8	Healing Circle 7:00 p.m.
Jan. 12	Last day for donation drive
Jan. 12	CUUPS Pancake Breakfast
Jan. 13	Monday Menus classes begin 6:00 p.m.
Jan. 19	Interweave Potluck 5:00 p.m.
Jan. 20	Monday Menus
Jan. 24	CORC Legislative Orientation
Jan. 27	Monday Menus

Upcoming Events

Feb. 11	UU Day at the Legislature
Feb. 17	Roots of Injustice Workshop

GROCERY CARD PROGRAM

Come downstairs to the Social Hall every Sunday after the service to purchase grocery card coupons to Smith's, Harmon's, and Sprouts Markets.

You can use these coupons for purchases at each store. You can also use them to purchase fuel at the Smith's and Harmon's fuel centers.

Using these gift cards creates additional income for SVUUS as these businesses donate 5% of all purchases back to South Valley.

So if you shop at any of these grocers, please take advantage of this opportunity to help South Valley financially by purchasing grocery cards. Thanks for your support

Get the Elephant Out of Your Living Room

In 1980 I was dragged kicking and screaming to my first Al-Anon* meeting. I was embarrassed, humiliated, angry and scared. I wanted nothing to do with the entire process. The bottom line was, I had no idea I was drowning in denial.

The foundation of *dis-ease* for an individual locked in a family system that includes substance abuse, mental illness, sexual abuse, religious abuse or a combination of those issues (and others) is **denial**. The addict or abuser is the obvious source of suffering and is simultaneously the target of blame and protection within the family system. We believe that the abuser, therefore, is the one with the problem, not the spouses, children and adult children in these dysfunctional families. But in a family held hostage by an addict/alcoholic or other abuser everyone is affected and locked in a game of enabling dysfunctional behaviors.

A family system like this gives rise to the “elephant in the living room” syndrome. Everyone knows the elephant exists. They can see it, touch it, and they walk around it every day. But no one talks about it. Everyone waits with anticipation for the abuser (addict, alcoholic) to remove the elephant by becoming sober (or healthy) some day.

Without recovery, the effects of being raised in dysfunctional families are carried, more likely than not, with us throughout our lifetimes. We are left to feed and care for the elephants in our living rooms, ensuring a legacy of dysfunction that can be passed on to the next generation.

“Back in the day” I continued to attend Al-Anon meetings in spite of myself and after a couple of years discovered ACA**. ACA is a 12-Step based support group that addresses the issues of codependency, substance abuse, mental/emotional illness, sexual abuse, hypercritical parenting, religious abuse and more in our families of origin. Many folks who attend AA (Alcoholics Anonymous), NA (Narcotics Anonymous), CoDA (Codependents Anonymous), etc. have seen dramatic, positive changes in their lives after they enter ACA recovery. And adult children who have not experienced substance abuse issues also recognize they have a recovery home in ACA meetings.

It isn't possible to convince anyone that recovery can change one's life for the better, but I, for one, know that to be true. We have a saying in recovery that sums this up much better than I ever could: “To those who truly want recovery, we can say nothing wrong. To those who don't, we can say nothing right.”

Since I have experienced over 30 years of ACA recovery, I stopped being “anonymous” a couple of decades ago! However, an important part of 12-Step recovery is the safety of anonymity. If anyone would like to speak with me concerning 12-Step recovery issues, feel free to contact me via email or telephone (Leave a message if I do not pick up right away!). Our conversation will be completely confidential.

Caren Smith: smitharies@yahoo.com / 956-655-8372.

*Al-Anon is a 12-Step based support group aimed at helping friends and family members of alcoholics and addicts deal with the issues around the dysfunction created by substance abuse. It was started soon after AA began, circa 1935.

**ACA or ACOA = Adult Children of Alcoholics, circa 1978. Website: www.adultchildren.org



Joyful Happenings at South Valley



Child Dedication Ceremony
(12/22)



South Valley couples exchange vows on an historic day!



Brenda and Maureen



Lory and Marcia



Luci and Claire



Kevin and Peter