September 6, 11:00 am – “We Are But a Strand in the Web of Life”
Rev. Meghan Cefalu
The earth does not belong to us; we belong to the earth. Humanity is just one of the many forms of life that make up the web of all existence. It is so easy to lose sight of this and get caught up in the world of our making. This service will help us to remember down to our bones our embedded existence within the whole of creation. When we experience our deeply interdependent connection to the natural world we are driven to make more ecologically sound choices.
Worship Associate: Gail Johnson Vaughan

September 13, 11:00 am – “We Laugh, We Cry” Rev. Meghan Cefalu
This service is a celebration of our coming back together for the beginning of the new congregational year. To help us commemorate this ingathering we will participate in our annual Water Communion ritual. Families and individuals are invited to bring a small container of water from a place that has nurtured your soul: from a lake or river you visited this summer, or even your own garden hose. Our choir will sing today! Worship Associate: Randy McKean

September 20, 11:00 am – “The Quest for Excellence”
Milton Hildebrand
Is human excellence the act of winning a race, being a virtuoso musician or being awarded a Nobel Prize, or all of these? Does excellence rely on recognition by others? What if one has not been afforded opportunities for excellence? Is excellence a place or thing to be attained, is it a process, can it be accumulated? When one achieves excellence, what then, and what are the rewards? Milton Hildebrand, Emeritus Professor of Zoology at UC Davis, and a Charter Member of the UU Church of Davis, will offer insights and answers to these questions. He states, “The highest rewards for seeking excellence are, I believe, renewed faith in mankind and in oneself, and renewed dedication to the value of the life experience.” Worship Associate: Kern Hildebrand

September 27, 11:00 am – “Wrestling With Forgiveness”
Rev. Meghan Cefalu
In honor of the Jewish high holy days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we turn our focus to the virtues of forgiveness and atonement. Forgiving may be one of the most challenging ongoing spiritual practices some of us will face in our lives. May this service inspire you as we explore stories of forgiveness.
Worship Associate: Lindsay Dunckel
Greetings Dear Ones,

Although technically our fiscal year began in July, September always feels to me like the real start to the new church year. Members have returned from their various summer travels and vacations, the kids and teachers are back in school, and our congregation’s committees are back in full swing. And your minister is back! I had a wonderful, restful time off over July and part of August. I hope this summer gave you whatever it was you most needed: some welcome sunshine and long days, a fruitful garden or some time to spend in the outdoors with loved ones.

I’ve only been back a few weeks and already this church year looks like it will be abundant with the joys and sorrows that are part and parcel to congregational life. In the next few weeks I will dedicate a new baby, marry a couple and perform a memorial service - all three rituals for members of UUCM. The spectrum of life will be witnessed within the walls of our chapel.

Several more of our long-time members are gravely ill or recovering from serious injury and are in my daily thoughts and prayers. These men and women are our wise elders, several of whom helped build this institution from the ground up. My heart aches at the thought of losing them.

And yet, there is also so much vibrant, youthful energy flooding our community. I can’t help smiling when I hear our toddlers and babies shrieking with joy, or our children laughing together as they race around the building on Sunday mornings after the service. I am meeting visitors almost every week whose eyes sparkle with joy because they might just have found their true spiritual home. The energy and excitement of our membership is palpable in the committee meetings I’ve attended. Our music program is expanding with the addition of a volunteer Music Director position, filled by Annie Haymaker, and the imminent hiring of our new choir director. The required tasks have been set in motion and the application has been sent off, and now we await our formal accreditation as a Green Sanctuary congregation – a tremendous accomplishment! The Board of Trustees is filled with people with fresh ideas who are jazzed about their leadership role in the congregation. The children’s program is abuzz with inspiration and energy. And the energy has spread beyond our building’s walls. Our garden is flourishing out back and plans for a lovely new landscaped patio in the front are in the works. A vibrant orange banner hangs above our main entrance announcing to all that we are “Standing on the Side of Love.” Our life together is full and rich and overflowing.

And this is as it should be. This is what a religious community is about: celebrating the ongoing cycles of life and death, love and loss, joyfulness and sorrow together. I continue to be awed by how wonderful and tender it is that through our involvement with our congregation we have this amazing opportunity to bear witness to one another’s lives in all their fullness.

Love and blessings,
Rev. Meghan

Water Justice

The Water Justice Study/Discussion Group meets on Sept. 15 and 29, at 6:30 pm. All are welcome to discuss this crucial topic (see August newsletter for details). Contact Sheila Myers at 432-8404 (sheilaj@theunion.net) or Connie Wright (connie@islandata.com).

Green Tip of the Month

A Fresh Start

Take this day to set some goals for a greener year. Resolve to think twice before every purchase you make. Could you borrow it instead? Go without? If it’s a must-have, consider how and of what it’s made, where it came from, and how far it had to travel to you before you open your wallet.
I write these notes in mid-August, and it has been a sad time, with the loss of one of our young members and a founding member in the same week. Yes, it is part of the cycle and circle of life, but it saddens us all. What I have also experienced this week, once again, is the tremendous outpouring of love and support of our church community for those who are in distress. It is a beautiful thing.

Each board president has a cause that is near and dear to their heart. I actually have two: helping leaders emerge and deepening our connections with each other. This year your Board of Trustees is again holding a full day retreat in late September. Our theme is “Finding the Leader Within.” By that I mean finding the leader within ourselves, as well as finding the leaders within our community. One thing that both Reverend Meghan and I would like to do is bring leadership training here to UUCM for all committee chairs and anyone else who is interested. I don’t know quite how, or when, but it is on our minds!

Sometimes it seems that people are hesitant to step up to take leadership roles. Perhaps they feel they don’t have the skills or experience. Perhaps they don’t feel they have the time. Perhaps they are uncomfortable with the idea of sometimes having to make less than popular decisions. If we all felt that way, our church community would never grow or thrive as it does.

Leadership doesn’t just mean “work,” it also brings joy. One joy is the pleasure of seeing others grow into their own potential. There is the joy that comes when you realize you have actually done something you’ve never done before, and done it well. Another joy comes from being able to bring all that we are to the work that we do, to be able to make a difference. For me, one of the greatest joys is that of creating a shared vision and then working together to see it happen. And there is the joy of getting to know each other more truly and deeply, respecting and trusting one another.

These are some of the benefits of leadership that I can see unfold week after week and month after month in our committees and on your Board of Trustees. We learn together, we grow together and we become more closely connected.

Embrace the leader within you; remember that none of us does this work alone and the rewards are many.

Peace,
Kia

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Notes From the President
by Kia Hatch

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Peace,
Kia

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Library Notes
by Custis Haynes, Library Committee Chair

Thanks to super-generous 2009 donors, UU library shelves are now wedged tight with wonderful reads.

Time’s come to make more space, so we are winnowing some tired volumes that haven’t been checked out in a long while. Before they get moved on and out, they’ll sit for a month on the FREE TO GOOD HOME shelf, hoping for adoption. Check it out. The book you’ve always wanted may be languishing there.

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UU Amblers

The hikers have "kicked back" during this past summer - too hot too many times - but do not give up on us. If we have your name on our list you will be contacted when we plan the next one. If you’re not on the list call the church number, 274-1675, and leave your name and number, and Anita will see that you are added to the group. Happy hiking!!!!
CUUPS Group Starting

CUUPS (Covenant Unitarian Universalist Pagan Spirituality) is a part of the UU and encourages the teachings of Wicca, Shamanism, earth-centered spirituality, Witchcraft, Druidism, Asatru, Native American spirituality, Rasta, Stregheria, Toteg Tribe spirituality. In this group we would hold monthly meetings as well as one class per month and a full moon ritual. All UUCM members are invited to attend a chapter meet-and-greet to learn more about CUUPS and what they have to offer. The meeting will be held on Sept. 13 at 12:15 pm in the Alcott room.

RE Summer Highlights

By Rochelle Davison

The RE Summer Program has been and continues to be a resounding success--a big thank you to all who contributed their time and energy to help these kids have a fun-filled and experiential summer. Our UU community did a wonderful job in stepping forward to give these kids a terrific summer program.

By the end of the summer the children will have done drumming, examined fossils, visited with Maggie the Therapy Dog, watched an ocean slide presentation, worked with clay and creative writing, cooked, visited with miniature horses, learned about traffic safety, worked with art and collage, played games, scrapbooked, learned about photography, and visited with an official Safety Dog. Please take some time to check out the new bulletin board in the Alcott Room to see what the young members of the UU community have been up to.

There will be a welcome-back brunch for the returning and new families whose children will be attending this year's upcoming Religious Education program. The brunch will be held from 9-11 am Sept. 13th before the Sunday service.

Olivia Lawrence wrote two poems during the Clay/Creative Writing session. The first one was after they modeled clay with their eyes closed, and the second was after they made a clay animal.

Silken pieces of white earth
Malleable under pressure
Liquid solid just like skin
Linear waterfalls grace the surface
Slowly stalking supper
Nighttime nuances
Don't disturb the Great white whale as She swiftly swims away

Women's Study Circle

What's Cookin'? Everyone is ecstatic about the new Julie & Julia movie. Join the women's group in the UUCM kitchen, as we whip up one of Julia Childs' famous recipes. We'll have fun working together as we create and share a culinary masterpiece.

Meeting date is Thursday, September 17th at 5:30 pm. Contact Clarita Nolan to confirm attendance and find out what ingredient you will be assigned to bring. 530-639-2663

Spirituality Group

by Janet and David Lee

The topic for this month's gathering, at 6:30 pm on Thursday, Sept. 3, is "What is The Purpose of Life's Journey?" The meeting is open to anyone. For further information please contact either Janet or David Lee at 265-0867.
It is with deep sadness that we bid farewell to John Church. John left this plane of existence on Friday evening, August 21, 2009, with his wife Maybelle at his side. His son Steven and daughters Andrea, Jennifer and Michelle had been able to be with him, though his son Val was only able to attend in spirit. Maybelle was supported by her daughter Jackie and son Jim. Her eldest daughter Judy had been with her earlier this week.

John was a key founding member of the Unitarian Universalist Community of the Mountains and we owe him a large measure of gratitude. After a gathering of interested UUs in the winter and spring of 1994, it was John who took the lead in organizing all the people and paperwork needed to apply for recognition from the UUA in Boston as a newly forming UU congregation. His vision and persistence, aided by his wife Maybelle, forged this church into being.

Many of us remember our first visit to UUCM, and being warmly welcomed by John. He contributed to our community in so many ways, serving in many capacities to help us grow into the strong organization we are today. Always an educator, he was the driving force behind the Adult Enrichment Committee, which brought speakers and classes to UUCM. John wanted to share UUCM with the larger community, and negotiated the agreement with the local access cable channel, NCTV, to allow us to air our services weekly. Until about 3 years ago, he could be seen every Sunday behind his video camera, capturing the services both for airing and for our archives. A member of the Writers’ Group, John continued to participate even after he became ill, and got a lot of pleasure from sharing in the work of all of our UUCM authors.

A memorial service celebrating John’s life will be scheduled later this fall.
Farewell Sweet One

Elisabeth Johnson, beloved eldest daughter of Keith and Alice Johnson, and older sister of Rachel, slipped away peacefully in the arms of her parents in their home early on August 17.

Sweet Elisabeth, who started life as a bright, sociable toddler and young child, loved art, books, singing, rainbows unicorns and fairies. This is a huge loss for her family and for all of us. Many of us have watched Elisabeth grow up, seeing her often on Sundays in religious education classes and at church events with her family. Her parents’ favorite recent picture of her was taken here in our chapel with her entire family.

Elisabeth suffered from Batten Disease, a rare, incurable and always fatal neuro-degenerative disease. Since her diagnosis at age 10, her family has been very involved with the Batten Disease Support and Research Association and other Batten families. The family has asked that in lieu of flowers, donations in her memory be made to BDSRA, 166 Humphries Dr., Reynoldsburg, OH 43068 (www.bdsra.org).

A celebration of Elisabeth’s life will be held here at UUCM on Saturday, November 7 at 1 pm.

Green Sanctuary

by the Green Sanctuary Committee

Would you like to help UUCM to help the Earth? The Green Sanctuary Task Force is a group of UUs who believe in working together to protect the earth. This doesn’t necessarily require attending monthly meetings. There are many fun ways to help:

Look for information to add to the Green Corkboard
Write the monthly Green Power Point article for the Mountain Chalice newsletter
Coordinate or help to facilitate RE field trips
Help out at the occasional Green Sanctuary booth to raise community awareness about UUCM and environmentalism
Help to design and/or work on the UUCM altar at the annual Grass Valley Altar Show
Host an environmental film forum
Collect articles and books for our Green library shelf
Help to distribute Fair Trade products at UUCM
Serve as a Green Sanctuary Task Force liaison to another UUCM committee
Serve as a liaison to an environmental organization in the community
Serve as Green Sanctuary’s Information Director to distribute information to UUCM and the community
Think of other ways to practice sustainability or raise awareness that you can share with the Green Sanctuary team. There are an infinite number of little things that can be done to save the planet. And yes, people who want to be on the Task Force and come to monthly meetings are needed, too.

The UUCM congregation voted unanimously to support the idea of starting up a Green Sanctuary Program. The job of the Green Sanctuary Task Force is to inspire and assist people to be more “green”. But it can not do people’s environmental work for them. Active participation is required. There are many ways, big or small, in which you can help. Please consider assisting in any way you can.

We invite you to join us after the Sunday service on September 6 at 12:15 for an informational meeting in the Alcott (red floor) room.
Global Compassionate Candle
by Donald M. Foster

Sometimes, being confronted with horrific statistics about death and human suffering can overload our compassionate UU circuits. For example, reports show that AIDS orphans now total 15 million. To give that number a child’s face, let’s visit a typical African orphanage and meet “Helene.”

Beyond the locked gate of the compound is a door. Behind the bars are many tykes, some crawling, some upright. My first shock is realizing that children who appear six years old are really 12-14. A second shock is the children begging to be picked up; Helene clings to my neck, calling me “papa.” Touring the compound, I see children who are dying from hydrocephalus and AIDS drug-resistant maladies. Their paralysis and sunken, blank stares will stay with me forever.

Leaving brings another nightmare: prying Helene’s arms from my neck while she wails, continuing to plead to “papa.” Now, when I see an AIDS statistic, Helene still haunts me.

PCD Men's Retreat

The 13th Annual PCD Men's Retreat will be held Friday-Sunday, October 16th-18, 2009, with the theme “What will it take for you to be happy?”

Come join men from all around the Pacific Central District for a weekend of fun, community-building, kinship, singing, workshops and more! We will be gathering once again at the Westminster Retreat Center in Alamo (10 miles south of Walnut Creek), a beautiful location for reflection and enjoyment of natural surroundings. We'd love to see you at this event!

The cost for the weekend is $225, with a deposit of $100 at time of registration. The cost will rise to $235 as of Oct. 1. Register or get more information at pcd-uua.org/men/frames.htm. Questions? Contact us: Gordon Smith at 408-393-6182 or gordonsmith100@gmail.com; Harry J. Mersmann at 209-955-0291, pcdmensretreat@gmail.com.
UUSC Coffee Project
By Ann Cullinan

Do you enjoy organic coffee? Would you like to support Fair Trade farmers all over the world? The UUSC Coffee Project links our congregation with small farmers and their families through Fair Trade. UUCM members can enjoy Fair Trade coffee, tea and chocolate while supporting small-scale farmers in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the U.S. Through the UUSC Coffee Project, farmers earn a fair price for their product, have access to credit and have a long-term trading partner with Equal Exchange.

UUCM members enjoy a wholesale price for delicious organic products. We also contribute to UUSC programs that support human rights and social justice work in coffee-growing regions.

How it works:
1. Order coffee, tea, or chocolate on the first Sunday of the month.
2. Pick up your order on the first Sunday of the next month.
3. Pay at time of ordering.
4. Order by contacting Ann Cullinan by phone, 274-7028, or e-mail anncullinan4@yahoo.com.

Jesus Relocates

When we began the remodel of our building a few years ago, we determined that the beautiful, custom designed stained glass window that had been in the Hooper and Weaver chapel was not quite appropriate for us. The window, “Jesus Praying in the Garden of Gethsemane,” has now found what we think is the perfect new home.

Our friends at the Holcomb Baptist Church in Holcomb, Mississippi are the pleased new owners. Holcomb Baptist is a Southern Baptist church and has a membership of approximately 300 members. Each Sunday’s attendance is about 150. Judy Mims, our contact there, tells us that they are an active church with ministries for children, youth, widows, seniors and young couples, and an active outreach program. In the last 2 years they have had a large influx of new members (over 100). For this reason they have begun an expansion of their sanctuary. You’ll be interested to learn that they operated democratically, as we do, with a congregational meeting held to vote on whether to purchase the window.

This beautiful window will be placed above their baptistery as the focal point of the sanctuary. Judy says it is the perfect size and they think it will be so very beautiful with the rest of their décor. She promises to send us a photo of it in place when they complete their project in December. We are thrilled that this lovely window has found what sounds like the perfect new home.

Social Action Fair

The Social Action Fair is coming up on September 27, 2009, after our church service. This is a great opportunity for all of us to learn about the many projects our members are involved in. We can also investigate which areas we might like to participate in. Committees and task forces include Green Sanctuary, Water Justice, Hospitality House, Animal Rights and Health Care Reform, among others.

This event will provide treats at each table not only for your tummy but also for your mind and spirit.

Singing for Peace

Singing for Peace!
Sing-along with: Tom Wernigg
Friday, September 11, 5:30 to 8:00 pm

This month’s theme: International Peace
$10 suggested contribution (sliding scale). Includes an organic dinner, sing-along, Peace Center info and activities—an evening of peace and unity.

Sponsored by the Peace Center of Nevada County and UUCM Social Action (Global Task Force). Funds go to PCNC.
Art Show
Eileen Adele Hale

The art show at UUCM for August and September is work by UUCM member Eileen Adele Hale. Of her work, she says:

"I love the richness of color and texture, animals and plants, myths and the imagery of dreams, stir and motion and energy; lines fluid and shifting, full of restlessness and harmony at the same time. I take my tools and my paints and my materials, and begin to build: a new home in my inner world for my deepest self.

"I see the way a creative spirit shone into all the dark places, in all but the darkest of years: the look of that new sheaf of multi-colored papers, fanned out for the first time, and how one color looked next to another; silk threads and string, and some tissue paper; and the shape of the paper that was left around the other shapes I cut out.

"As I work, a path starts taking shape and the trees spread their leaves across it; the strokes of paint, the scraps of paper and the glue start whispering to one another, and after a while, I can almost understand what it’s saying."

She is largely self-taught, without a degree in art, but has taken classes here and there. She enjoys sharing her work, and welcomes comments and questions. eileen-hale.fineartamerica.com

Caring Notes
by Robin Hart

September again brings the change of seasons from Summer's last warm glow to the amber days that transition into Fall. Time for going back to school. Thinking about harvesting all of those fruits and veggies that have been ripening in the garden. Also time for the gathering in all of our UUCM members and friends after the long days of Summer.

Many of UUCM's brightest lights are seriously ill at this time. Please light candles of concern for those in our community who need special healing thoughts and good wishes at this time.

Also light a candle of concern and keep a special place in your hearts for all those others in our UUCM community who are not named but who need prayer and healing energy at this time.

If you need to bring something to the attention of the Caring Committee, please contact one of our members: Rev. Meghan, May Lawrence, Robin Hart, Corrie Silva, Leal Portis, Gwen Eymann, Ann Cullinan, or Ernie Jackson, or email us at caring.committee@uugrassvalley.org

"The Horse's Ass Painting: a Self-Portrait"
Watercolor, 1999

"Chickenfoot Serpentine"
Watercolor, 1999
Music, Music, Music

Choir News
Are you a "closet singer"? You know - only sing when no one is around to hear you or only warble when you're in the shower? It's time to "come out" and join the UUCM Choir! We're not professionals - just folks like you who like to sing and enjoy wrapping our voices around new and exciting music!

Our regular rehearsals are at 7 pm on the first three Mondays of the month – Sept. 7, 14, and 21. If you've sung with us in the past, come on back, and if you'd like a fun musical evening, come on over. You will never be bored! And best of all, you'll get to meet the applicants for our new choir director position. It's going to be an exciting musical year! Come and be a part of it!!!

Drum Circle
Hello Drummers! The Drum Circle resumes this month following our summer hiatus. Come drum your stories of summer adventure and discovery.

Fall Drum Circle dates are Sept 1 and 16, Oct 6 and 21, Nov 3 and 18, and Dec 1 and 16. Regular circles meet first Tuesdays and third Wednesdays from 7-8:30 pm. Bring your own drums and percussion if you have them. Some instruments will be provided.

These drum circles are for community fun and vitality and no prior musical experience is needed. The specific format varies. Simply come prepared to have a good time! Donations welcome so the circle can be self-supporting. Contact Susan Sanford, susan@empoweringjourneys.net or 530-265-8289.

Special Solo Piano Concert
George Winston will be giving a special solo piano concert on Monday, September 21 at 7:30 pm in the Don Baggett Theater at Nevada Union High School as a fundraiser for the new Greenhouse School of Music. George's concerts are usually sold out, so see the poster at UUSM for details.

Jim Lowe at Kane's Restaurant
You can hear more of Jim Lowe's wonderful jazz interpretations during the month of September at Kane's Restaurant from 6:00 - 9:30 pm on Fridays and Saturdays.

Melodious Accord
by Annie Haymaker

Through UUVM's long-range visioning process last spring, the Music Committee realized that meeting its goals of increasing the diversity of music, developing a children's music program, and reaching out to the larger community through music would require more staff. The board funded its proposal for a paid choir director position, which will begin in October after rehearsal auditions during September. And it created a volunteer music director position, similar to the RE Director, to do the growing amount of coordinating, communicating, and record-keeping. I will be filling that role, as part of a cooperative team with the music committee, the choir director, and our minister. Leah Lossner is now music committee chair, and we can both be reached at music@uugrassvalley.org.

In August I went to my second UU Musicians Network conference. It began with a whole day devoted to "Musician as Pastor," a nurturing day for people in varied music ministries. Rev. Jennifer Crow talked about the theology of pastoral care, including listening to our deepest selves, opening to life’s gifts, and serving needs greater than our own.

Then came four days of workshops, clinician sessions, worship services, and concerts. I went to workshops on guitar use in services, choir covenants, the unsung hymnal, children's music, and congregational singing resources. Featured clinician Rodney Eichenberger showed us in daily sessions how to improve our choral conducting through gestures that enhance vocal production and focus. He did this by asking guest conductors to do a gesture differently, and letting us listen to the huge difference it made in the singing – a very visible, auditory demonstration! My favorite service was the contemporary worship led by Jeannie Gagne, outstanding UU vocalist and composer. Highlight of the Friday night talent show was a “handbell” choir using pot lids - in perfect tune.

I have been part of UUMN’s credentialing program for the last year, and had two required classes before the regular conference started, on songleading and multicultural concerns. I will be completing assignments for those here at UUCM this year – more about that next month. I look forward to musicking with you all this year!
**September 2009**

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**UUCM BBQ**

**Sunday, Sept. 13**

It's about that time, again, to bring the whole family out to our annual UUCM BBQ, which will be held at the Condon Park Large BBQ area. Bring something edible to share, such as meat to cook, appetizers, salads, side dishes, or dessert!

The event will take place following the Water Communion service at the chapel so let's think carpool! Come one come all, and don't forget your guitar!
The purpose of our Community is to foster liberal religious living through worship, study, service and fellowship. We seek the enjoyment of religion founded upon devotion to individual freedom of belief. Relying upon reason as our guide, and upon freedom as our method, we seek to grow in understanding of ourselves and of our world, to promote and serve the universal human family.

New to UU? Comprehensive information on our principles, beliefs within our faith, history, worship practices, congregational life and more is available on the denominational website at www.uua.org. Click on “Visitors.”

Membership in UUCM is open to all who see this community as their religious home and the principles for which it stands as their own. To join UUCM, one signs the membership book and supports the community through a financial contribution and regular participation.

Visitors are invited to attend an introduction and orientation to the UU denomination and this congregation, a four-part series offered three times a year. For more information about the orientation or membership, please talk with Rev. Meghan Cefalu or with someone from the Membership Committee.

Office phone: (530) 274-1675
E-mail: uucm@uugrassvalley.org

UUCM Board of Trustees

President: Kia Hatch
Vice President: Keith Johnson
Treasurer: Beth Freedman
Secretary: Bev Lyon
At Large: Jerry Jacoby, Carol Ann Jones, Daniel Lossner, Randy McKean

Minister: Rev. Meghan Cefalu
Hours: Tues-Wed-Thurs, 11 am – 6 pm
Please call ahead for an office appointment
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