

The Chalice Flame

First Unitarian Society of Pueblo

"We are a growing liberal religious community, open and inclusive of all."



Issue VII, July 2013

Sunday Service Themes

July 7th: "How Does That Make Me Feel?"

Speaker: Steve Acker

Lay Leader: Ibsen Birgers

Greeters: Kate and Midge

July 14th: "You Are Not Alone"

Speaker: Rev. Roger Butts

Lay Leader: Don Bruestle

Greeters: Ibsen and Shawn

July 21st: Immigration Story "Why Do They Come? And What Difference Has It Made?"

Speaker: Jayne Milne

Lay Leader: Janice Nelson

Greeters: Don and Steve

July 28th: "Human Responses To Color"

Speaker: Dorie Silverman

Lay Leader: Midge Birgers

Greeters: Dave and Gennifer

What is Unitarian Universalism?

Unitarian Universalism is a religion that embraces theological diversity. There are seven principles that Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.



"Summer afternoon, summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language." – Henry James

Expanded Titles & Descriptions: Sunday Service Themes:

July 7th: Steve Acker will talk about his theme, "How Does That Make Me Feel?". Typically we accept the notion that men are thinkers while women are more emotional. Is this due to our physiological makeup or is it more a matter of social conditioning?

July 14th: Rev. Roger Butts will help us to explore the thought of three philosopher/theologians that help us think about what we mean when we use the word interconnectedness. Those thinkers who will help guide our questions are Henry Nelson Wieman, Martin Buber and Emanuel Levinas. And we'll take a close look at how the feminist theologians have helped us understand the interrelationships of all things and why that matters when we think about what matters!

July 21st: Jane Milne will speak about The Pueblo Immigration Story. Through story and song let's take a look at Pueblo from the 1800's to the present day and visit five families that are a part of Pueblo's history.

July 28th: Dorie Silverman will talk about color and its effects on our lives. Scientists are uncovering astounding revelations on how colors influence the way we think, feel, and behave--often without our conscious awareness.

UUA Food for Thought

“The Flaming Chalice” By Dan Hotchkiss

A Brief Insight on the Primary Symbol of the Unitarian Universalist Faith

At the opening of Unitarian Universalist worship services, many congregations light a flame inside a chalice. This flaming chalice has become a well-known symbol of our denomination. It unites our members in worship and symbolizes the spirit of our work.

The flaming chalice combines two archetypes—a drinking vessel and a flame—and as a religious symbol has different meanings to different beholders. Chalices, cups, and flagons can be found worldwide on ancient manuscripts and altars. The chalice used by Jesus at his last Passover Seder became the Holy Grail sought by the knights of Wales and England.

Jan Hus, Czech priest and forerunner of the Reformation, was burned at the stake for proposing, among other things, that the communion chalice be shared with the laity. More recently, feminist writer Riane Eisler has used the chalice as a symbol of the "partnership way" of being in community. Sharing, generosity, sustenance, and love are some of the meanings symbolized by a chalice.

As a sacrificial fire, flame has been a central symbol for the world's oldest scriptures, the Vedic hymns of India. Today, lights shine on Christmas and Hanukkah, eternal flames stand watch at monuments and tombs, and candles flicker in cathedrals, temples, mosques, and meeting houses. A flame can symbolize witness, sacrifice, testing, courage, and illumination.

The chalice and the flame were brought together as a Unitarian symbol by an Austrian artist, Hans Deutsch, in 1941. Living in Paris during the 1930s, Deutsch drew critical cartoons of Adolf Hitler. When the Nazis invaded Paris in 1940, he abandoned all he had and fled to the South of France, then to Spain, and finally, with an altered passport, into Portugal.

There, he met the Reverend Charles Joy, executive director of the Unitarian Service Committee (USC). The Service Committee was new, founded in Boston to assist Eastern Europeans, among them Unitarians as well as Jews, who needed to escape Nazi persecution. From his Lisbon headquarters, Joy oversaw a secret network of couriers and agents.

Deutsch was most impressed and soon was working for the USC. He later wrote to Joy:

There is something that urges me to tell you... how much I admire your utter self denial [and] readiness to serve, to sacrifice all, your time, your health, your well being, to help, help, help.

I am not what you may actually call a believer. But if your kind of life is the profession of your faith—as it is, I feel sure—then religion, ceasing to be magic and mysticism, becomes confession to practical philosophy and—what is more—to active, really useful social work. And this religion—with or without a heading—is one to which even a 'godless' fellow like myself can say wholeheartedly, Yes!

The USC was an unknown organization in 1941. This was a special handicap in the cloak-and-dagger world, where establishing trust quickly across barriers of language, nationality, and faith could mean life instead of death. Disguises, signs and countersigns, and midnight runs across guarded borders were the means of freedom in those days. Joy asked Deutsch to create a symbol for their papers "to make them look official, to give dignity and importance to them, and at the same time to symbolize the spirit of our work.... When a document may keep a man out of jail, give him standing with governments and police, it is important that it look important."

Thus, Hans Deutsch made his lasting contribution to the USC and, as it turned out, to Unitarian Universalism. With pencil and ink he drew a chalice with a flame. It was, Joy wrote his board in Boston,

a chalice with a flame, the kind of chalice which the Greeks and Romans put on their altars. The holy oil burning in it is a symbol of helpfulness and sacrifice.... This was in the mind of the artist. The fact, however, that it remotely suggests a cross was not in his mind, but to me this also has its merit. We do not limit our work to Christians. Indeed, at the present moment, our work is nine-tenths for the Jews, yet we do stem from the Christian tradition, and the cross does symbolize Christianity and its central theme of sacrificial love.

The flaming chalice design was made into a seal for papers and a badge for agents moving refugees to freedom. In time it became a symbol of Unitarian Universalism all around the world.

The story of Hans Deutsch reminds us that the symbol of a flaming chalice stood in the beginning for a life of service. When Deutsch designed the flaming chalice, he had never seen a Unitarian or Universalist church or heard a sermon. What he had seen was faith in action—people who were willing to risk all for others in a time of urgent need.

Today, the flaming chalice is the official symbol of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the Unitarian Universalist Association. Officially or unofficially, it functions as a logo for hundreds of congregations. Perhaps most importantly, it has become a focal point for worship. No one meaning or interpretation is official. The flaming chalice, like our faith, stands open to receive new truths that pass the tests of reason, justice, and compassion.

Bits from the Board

- ❖ The next board meeting will be on July 9th at 6:15 PM. This will be a joint board meeting with the newly elected Board beginning their work – all are welcome to attend. Ibsen Birgers and Dave Wagoner will be stepping down from their board positions. And sadly, later this summer, Dave and his family are relocating; they will be missed.
 - ❖ A very special thank you to Ib and to Dave for their hard work and dedication to our FUS for the past many years.
 - ❖ Some of the challenges and tasks which will be on the agenda for the new Board include:
 - Maintaining the programs and necessary expenses with an increasing decline of members and revenue by attrition
 - Meeting the needs of current members, and expanding our outreach to others in the community
 - Increasing participation and support of members and friends
 - To continue currently planned revision of bylaws, policies, to update them to meet current practices, and meet UU standards
 - To review our Religious education programs and policies (adult and children) to meet the realistic needs of our current members.
 - To continue to include sustainability and environmental issues in all our programs, and provide programs to raise awareness in UU supported social issues.
 - To continue to offer interesting, informative, educational, and interactive Sunday morning programs that cover a broad variety of subjects.
 - ❖ In short we need to get organized, support our members, increase our membership, increase our revenue, and have fun! We need to continue to explore what brings us together in this special UU community.
-

Loving Thoughts

~ Please hold Louise Burg in your hearts as she mourns the loss of her brother.

~ Please hold all of the families, animals, firefighters, & volunteers affected by the recent wildfires & floods in your hearts.

Social Activities

Fellowship Breakfast:

Friday, July 12th at 9:00 am. We will meet at Romero's Café and Catering (1323 Santa Fe Drive) for fellowship and breakfast. Romero's has been awarded 1st place for its red and green chili and salsa by the International Chili Society and Pueblo Chamber of Commerce.

Happy Bookers:

On Wednesday, July 3rd at 11:30 am, the Happy Bookers will meet for lunch and conversation at Ruby Tuesdays (4150 N. Freeway Rd) not far from Barnes and Noble. On Wednesday, July 17th, 12:30 at FUS, we will review and discuss "Tara Road" by Maeve Binchy. See you there!

Potluck and Movie Night:

Movie Night will be held at FUS in Saturday, July 27th. The potluck will be at 5:00 pm (please bring a dish to share) and the movie at 6:30. The movie is "The Class" (Rated PG). According to Roger Ebert, who gave it 4 stars, "The Class" might have been set in any classroom in the Western world, and I believe most teachers would recognize it.

Ice Cream Sunday:

Ice Cream Sunday will be held on July 28th after the service in celebration of all July birthdays. We serve organic ice cream, coffee, teas and juices. Please donate to the little fish tank to help defray costs.

Socrate Cafe Discussion Group: This is for the early birds on Sunday mornings. We gather at 9am for coffee, and then for conversation from 9:15-10:15 AM.

***The Tao philosophy group will resume in September - contact Steve Acker for questions or to join.**

***We are looking to develop some new Adult Education offerings next year. One suggestion has been a discussion group on UU history. If you would be interested in that, or have other suggestions or needs, please contact Steve or Ibsen Birgers.**





About the First Unitarian Society

The First Unitarian Society is affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association. The religious organization is non-creedal and encourages free inquiry and exploration of ideas; members are not required to share the same beliefs. Members have come from a variety of backgrounds including lifelong UUs, Humanists, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Wiccans, Buddhists, agnostics, atheists, and others. The First Unitarian Society welcomes gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons. For more information, see www.first-unitarian-society.org and www.uua.org. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter, please contact pueblounitarian@earthlink.net or leave a message at 719.561.0880. Our facility is handicap accessible.

First Unitarian Society

110 S. La Crosse Avenue
Pueblo, CO
81001-4429