



# NEWSLETTER

Shelly Wilson-Senior Minister, Andy Bachmann-Associate Minister,  
Vince Amlin-Associate Minister, Lisa Goldstein-Editor

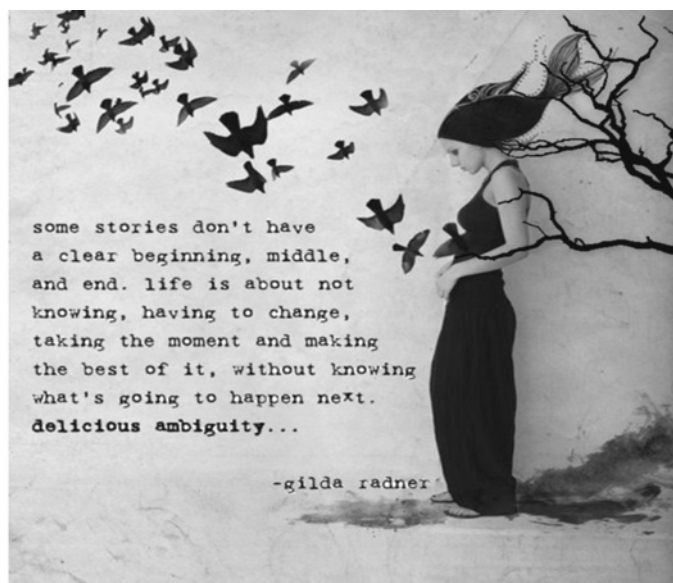
WHOEVER YOU ARE  
WHEREVER YOU ARE  
ON LIFE'S JOURNEY  
YOU ARE  
WELCOME  
HERE

## NOVEMBER 2015

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**Third Annual  
Church and Picnic  
on the Prairie  
Sunday, November 15  
10am - 1pm  
Prairie Creek Lodge**  
See page 2 for more  
information.

**Advent Begins** on  
Sunday, November 29



Join us for our  
November worship  
theme,

### **"Delicious Ambiguity."**

Experience the stories,  
live the questions, antici-  
pate, and be surprised.

Many opportunities for  
delight and learning will  
be part of these new wor-  
ship experiences! Be at  
UCG on Sundays!

## Enlistment Update

Thank you to everyone who has submitted their 2016 pledge card!  
We have reached more than 50% of our goal, but still have a long way to go.  
If you have not yet submitted your 2016 pledge, you may:

- Submit a pledge card (available in the office), OR
- Email your pledge amount to [catherinec@ucgainesville.org](mailto:catherinec@ucgainesville.org), OR
- Follow the "Give Online" link on our website to pledge by setting up automatic payments from your checking account or credit card

## DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1

Set your clocks back one hour before you go to bed Saturday night.

## Upcoming Outreach Opportunities

- Food First Food Collection, Sunday, November 1
- Angels and Home Van Socks
- Mini Grants

See page 8 for more information

# What's Happening in November

- ❖ **LifeSouth Blood Drive, Sunday, November 8 from 10:00am-1:00pm. Please give the gift of life!**
- ❖ **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Mill Dam Camping Trip - November 6-9-** Join us for a relaxing, fun-filled weekend November 6-9 at the Mill Dam Lake group camping area in the Ocala National Forest. No electricity or showers, but there are grills, picnic tables, flush toilets, and drinking water. Tent camping only. Children welcome, but no pets. Come as early as 2:00 pm on Friday, November 6 and stay as late as 1:00 pm on Monday, November 9. Cost is \$25.00 per family unit (however known). Please pay at the office. Contact Jane Emmerée, [emmerée@gmail.com](mailto:emmerée@gmail.com) or [352-317-5593](tel:352-317-5593) by **November 4 if interested.**
- ❖ ***Walking the Sacred Path, a Labyrinth Experience...* Tuesday, November 10** at 7:00pm. Join us for a contemplative worship service with candlelight and special music. All are welcome! The labyrinth will be in the Sanctuary and available for walking Monday, November 9 - Thursday, November 12 from 8:30am-4:30pm and Friday, November 13 from 8:30am-12:00pm.
- ❖ **Parents' Night Out - Friday, November 13 – 5:30-9:30pm** - PNO is for parents of babies through 5th graders. The kids go to the UCG church school wing where they eat pizza, play games and have fun with their friends and our child care staff. The cost is \$11 for the first child and \$6 for each additional child. RSVP **by Wednesday, November 11** to [summerh@ucgainesville.org](mailto:summerh@ucgainesville.org). Pizza and apple wedges\* are provided. \*Due to life - threatening food allergies, we ask that no outside food be brought in.
- ❖ **Third Annual Church on the Prairie - Sunday, November 15th from 10am - 1pm**  
**Where:** Prairie Creek Lodge, 7204 SE County Road 234, Gainesville (about 30-40 minutes travel time from the church). **If it rains we will picnic at UCG! Bring:** outdoor chairs/blankets, your own picnic food and utensils (no foods for grilling), sunscreen, and bug spray (just in case!). Water/Lemonade will be provided. The day will include a 50th birthday celebration for UCG, a creative and family-friendly worship service, live music, wonderful fellowship opportunities and FUN!
- ❖ **The UCG Supper Club** is a great way to meet members and share a meal and fellowship. We meet in groups of 8-10 in the homes of members. Recipes are provided so that each group shares the same menu. The next Supper Club will be **Friday, November 20** and will be an **Italian vegetarian menu featuring a spinach lasagna entrée** (working people will be assigned easy or make-ahead recipes). Please contact Anne Casella ([annecasella@gmail.com](mailto:annecasella@gmail.com), 378-0505) or Kimberly McCollough ([Kimberly.mccollough@sfcolllege.edu](mailto:Kimberly.mccollough@sfcolllege.edu), 378-8371) if you would like to participate. If you are able to host one of the groups, please let them know. **The deadline to sign up is Sunday, November 8.**
- ❖ **New UCG Website Has Launched** - A new look and abilities to update and inform have been created by our own member, Tracy Bachmann, at our new UCG website! Check us out at [www.ucgainesville.org](http://www.ucgainesville.org).
- ❖ **Second Annual Alternative Thanksgiving Holiday Hangout, November 26, 2pm– 10 pm**  
Enjoy an informal, relaxed, playful Thanksgiving Day with the UCG event elves. We'll offer spirited tournaments in bocce ball, horseshoes, UNO and more. (Don't worry, we don't really know how to play them either.) Finger food and beverages will be available all day, as well as conversation and music. Drop in for a game and a snack or stay all day. Everyone is welcome. Bring a snack to share if you like and a ukulele if you have one. Where? 3806 NW 16<sup>th</sup> Pl. Maps will be available in the church office. Watch the bulletin for further details.

## Other Church News...

**Lessons and Carols Update:** Lessons and Carols rehearsals started on October 18<sup>th</sup> with the Kick-Off lunch followed by the first sectional rehearsals. If you were unable to attend these first three practices, it is not too late to participate. An attendance policy is in effect requesting no more than 3 absences; if more than 3 absences are accrued, participation is dependent on approval from the choir director, Tané DeKrey. With prior request, child care can be provided. We hope to see you as we have fun while deepening the celebration of Advent.

| <u>Sundays at 12:45</u> | <u>Thursdays at 7:15</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Nov 01                  | Nov 05                   |
| Nov 08                  | Nov 12                   |
| Nov 15 - None           | Nov 19                   |
| Nov 22                  | Nov 26 - None            |
| Nov 29                  | Dec 03                   |
| Dec 06                  | Dec 10                   |

The final rehearsal is Saturday, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00am. The worship services are on Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am and 7:00pm.

**Lessons and Carols Reception** - Our annual Lessons and Carols reception is coming up on December 13 after the 7pm Lessons and Carols service. We need a coordinator and volunteers to assist the coordinator with set-up, serving, and/or clean-up. Sign up on the board outside the office on Sundays or contact [info@ucgainesville.org](mailto:info@ucgainesville.org) to help.

**The All Church Band** will play its medley of sing-a-long Christmas carols at both worship services on December 20. If you do now or ever have played a band instrument, please pick up music in the foyer which will be available mid-November and plan to participate in this great UCG tradition.

**January Adult Small Group: Discover Your Spirit Animal** - With Larry Reimer and Sandy Reimer on Saturday evening, January 9, 2016. Limited to 30 adult participants. Native peoples believe that each of us has a spirit animal that embodies the gifts and powers deep within us. On a sabbatical at Ghost Ranch in Abiquiu', New Mexico, we learned a Native American ritual for discovering our spirit animals as well as how to facilitate this journey for others. We look forward to sharing this spiritual experience which involves guided meditations, drumming and chanting. This vision journey must be done at night, so we will gather at 6:45pm in the Sanctuary and finish around 10pm. To register please call (378-3500) or e-mail Sara ([saram@ucgainesville.org](mailto:saram@ucgainesville.org)) at the church office.

**Chamber Music However Known** - Before modern times people often joined together in their homes to play and enjoy live music. Some of us still do! **On Sunday, Jan. 17, 2016, Lively Arts will host an informal afternoon of chamber music.** If you enjoy classical music, play an instrument or sing, and would like to be a part of this informal musicale please contact Sally Simonis at [sarahsimonis@bellsouth.net](mailto:sarahsimonis@bellsouth.net) for information. All ages and levels of expertise are welcome. You will find a supportive and appreciative audience with us!

**Did you receive your 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Giving Statement by email?** - We're excited about this time-saving, money-saving, and paper-saving option. **Statements for family units were emailed to the primary email address on October 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup>;** if you/your family did not receive the email, or you wish to know/change that primary email address, contact [lisag@ucgainesville.org](mailto:lisag@ucgainesville.org). If you have any questions about this process, please contact Catherine Cake [catherinec@ucgainesville.org](mailto:catherinec@ucgainesville.org).

## Fifty Years and Counting! November is a Month of Celebration Sundays!

### **November 1:**

Worship services will include a retrospective slide show of UCG collected/created by Lizzi Nehls.

### **November 8:**

UCG History book will be unveiled, dedicated, and distributed. Created by Darrell Hartman, Diana Tonnessen, Marj Hauptman, Sean Ochal, Sandy Reimer, Anne Casella, and written by nearly one hundred UCG members and friends.

The labyrinth will be dedicated and donated to UCG by Diane Farris and Ted Runions, in honor of UCG's 50 Years. A special labyrinth workshop will be led by Ted and Diane at 2:30pm and is open to all. The workshop will include history and how-to install the labyrinth. The labyrinth will be open for walking during the week of November 9-13 and a special meditative worship service will be held on Tuesday, November 10 at 7:00pm.

To enhance opportunities for connection, **FELLOWSHIP SUNDAYS** will be offered once a month, starting on Sunday, November 8! Between the services, snacks will be served to go with the coffee hour, and special opportunities for conversation will be possible—so! Come early (if you usually come to 11:15 service) OR stay late (if you usually come to 9:15 service) and enjoy the time TOGETHER!

### **November 15:**

Church on the Prairie! 10:00 AM! Meet at Prairie Creek Lodge! Bring family, friends, lawn chairs, and a picnic lunch! The day will include a giant UCG birthday cake, special music, worship led by Shelly, Andy, Vince, Sandy, and Larry, activities for the children, plus the joy of celebrating together!

### **November 22:**

Gratitude Sunday: both services will include thanksgiving themes as we wrap up our year of celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and our successful Enlistment Campaign. Past UCG Moderators will be recognized, and general joy will ensue!

### **November 29:**

The First Sunday of Advent! We begin the holy and beautiful Advent season at UCG!

## Youth United & Middle School Group Calendar

|                                |                                                    |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Wednesday, November 4</b>   | YU Leadership Team Meeting 6:30-7:30pm             |
| <b>Sunday, November 8</b>      | Fight the Hate Part IV; Church on the Prairie Info |
| <b>Sat-Sun, November 14-15</b> | Church on the Prairie Youth Overnight              |
| <b>Sundays, Nov. 22, 29</b>    | No group                                           |

## From Shelly...



As we enjoy this beautiful, cool, and sweetly inviting autumn, I share with you one of my favorite food blessings. There are many wonderful blessings one may say or think at Thanksgiving time, gathered around the table of bounty with family and friends. I hope you will look around you in this time, and be reminded of all the blessings that are yours this day, every day--and may this lovely prayer by Alla Renee Bozarth be yours. She names it, "Blessing of the Stew Pot."

Blessed be the Creator  
and all creative hands  
which plant and harvest,  
pack and haul and hand  
over sustenance —  
Blessed be carrot and cow,  
potato and mushroom,  
tomato and bean,  
parsley and peas,  
onion and thyme,  
garlic and bay leaf,  
pepper and water,  
marjoram and oil,  
and blessed be fire —  
and blessed be the enjoyment  
of nose and of eye,  
and blessed be color —  
and blessed be the Creator  
for the miracle of red potato,  
for the miracle of green bean,

for the miracle of fawn mushrooms,  
and blessed be God  
for the miracle of earth:  
ancestors, grass, bird,  
deer and all gone,  
wild creatures  
whose bodies become  
carrots, peas and wild  
flowers, whose bodies  
give sustenance  
to human hands, whose  
agile dance of music  
nourishes the ear  
and soul of the dog  
resting under the stove  
and the woman working over  
the stove and the geese  
out the open window  
strolling in the backyard.  
And blessed be God for all, all, all.

### ***PASSAGES:***

- ❖ Congratulations to Jess and Rob Campbell on the birth of their son, Oliver Douglas on October 2.
- ❖ Congratulations to Sarah Evans and Neil Lorenzini who were married on September 26 at Otter Springs with Vince Amlin officiating.
- ❖ Congratulations to Melvin Lopez and Donn Smith who were married on October 10 in the Sanctuary with Vince Amlin and Shelly Wilson officiating.
- ❖ Congratulations to Jose Jaimes and Chime Swetland who were married on October 30 in Clearwater, FL with Vince Amlin officiating.
- ❖ We celebrate the baptism of Elizabeth Catherine Poe and Beatrice Grace Poe, daughters of Lauren Poe and Emily Monda Poe, by Vince Amlin and Shelly Wilson on October 11.
- ❖ We surround with loving sympathy:
  - ❖ Nancy and Wilson Bell on the death of their son, Travis, on October 15.
  - ❖ Nancy Day on the death of her mother, Grace, on October 17.
  - ❖ Family of Allen Kalishman who died on October 22.

# IN VINNY VERITAS

VINCE AMLIN

## **Celebrate my birthday...and work for justice!**

On January 25, 2016, I will turn 35. I plan to celebrate by lobbying for justice for LGBTQ people as part of Equality Florida's Lobby Days, and I hope you will join me.

Two years ago, our church made its first trip to Tallahassee to advocate on behalf of legislation to protect people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and their families.

**A lot has changed** for LGBTQ people in America over the last two years. **AND we still have a long way to go to full justice and equality.**

In many areas of Florida, a person can still be fired from her job or denied housing or public accommodations based on her sexual orientation, gender identity or expression! That should shock us and move us to action on behalf of the statewide nondiscrimination act for which Equality Florida and members of UCG will be lobbying.

For me, attending Lobby Days is an act of faith, a way I follow the God who welcomes all and demands justice for the oppressed. It's also a lot of fun, and a great way to get to know some of your fellow church members while working for a good cause. I hope many of you will join us! Here are the details from Tim Martin, who is heading up the Legislative Subcommittee for our Open and Affirming (ONA) Ministry Committee:

The work for full LGBTQ equality and non-discrimination continues on our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Equality Florida Lobby Days trip, fondly termed the "Tally Rally". Hosted by UCG's Open and Affirming Committee in coordination with Equality Florida, participants will travel overnight to Tallahassee from Sunday, January 24 to Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>. There we will receive an update on the current climate of the Florida legislature, learn lobbying techniques and meet with state legislators to advocate for LGBTQ justice through appropriate legislation.

If you have questions or wish to register, contact Tim Martin, [tamartin@ufl.edu](mailto:tamartin@ufl.edu). The cost per participant will be approximately \$80 which includes round-trip transportation to Tallahassee on Sunday afternoon (returning Monday evening), 2-person shared hotel lodging at the Baymont Inn and Equality Florida's registration fee. The group will also share a meal together Sunday night at Kacey's Buffet (meal is optional so the cost is separate).



**2014 Tally Rally**

## ~ United Tribes ~

UCG Children's Program ~ Director, Keri Trosper

Welcome families to the November children's newsletter which will cover all of our Holiday Happenings! Please be sure to mark your calendars!

**Sunday, November 1st-** Christmas pageant preparations begin! This is the day we assign the roles to our fourth and fifth graders who take the leading, speaking, and stage hand parts of the play. This is also the day when all of our children make their costumes for the play and when they begin to learn the songs that they will perform for the Christmas Pageant and Lessons and Carols. Please make sure your child can join us!

**Sunday, November 8th-** We wouldn't be UCG if we didn't offer more than one opportunity to do all things fabulous... So, we do an extra week of pageant costume making, role assigning, and song preparations. If every child could be here for both weeks, our play would run that much more smoothly! We will also learn the story of the little drummer boy, which happens to be the song we will perform for Lessons and Carols! This is a meaningful Sunday! Please let them join us!

**Sunday, November 15th-** Join us at Church on the Prairie! All children are invited to attend the full service with their families. However, if you have a child under the age of three and you need them to be in care for the service portion of the morning only, that option will be available inside of the building. We will have plenty of outdoor toys available after the service- frisbees, hula hoops, jump ropes, bubbles, and giant balls. Also feel free to bring any outdoor toys your child will enjoy sharing during this special family time.

**Sunday, November 22nd-** Christmas Pageant and Lessons and Carols Full Rehearsals! This is a super important day if your child will be in the Christmas pageant or Lessons and Carols. We will run through all of our music and all of our parts. Please have your child join us!

**Sunday, November 29th-** Activity Time Care for Thanksgiving Weekend- This day will have outdoor play time and indoor crafts in a relaxed and loving atmosphere.

We will provide many more details in the December newsletter on the important holiday traditions below. But for now, please mark your calendars to save the date!

**Saturday, December 5th-** Grades 4 and 5 only rehearse their parts of the Christmas Pageant in the Sanctuary from 2-3pm. From 3-5pm all children and their friends are invited to attend the Children's Christmas Craft Fair where they can make cherished Christmas gifts for their loved ones.

**Sunday, December 6th-** Children's Christmas Pageant during the 9:15 service only.

**Saturday, December 12th-** 9am. West Wing rehearsal of our Lessons and Carols song "The Little Drummer Boy" followed by a 9:30am rehearsal with the full Lessons and Carols choir in the Sanctuary. Children should be done rehearsing by 10am. Please join us for this important rehearsal!

**Sunday, December 13th-** Lessons and Carols at 11am and 7pm. Our children always love being a part of these special performances.

As always, thank you for sharing the gift of your children with our church.

Blessings,  
Keri Trosper



# Boards and Committees

## Council Corner - Nancy Dana, Moderator

Church Council serves as the coordinating body for all of the great work that is done by individual boards and committees every year, and its members are voted into Council by the congregation at each spring congregational meeting in May. This year's Council was introduced at our October congregational meeting to help members of the congregation connect a face with the people they voted for at our spring congregational meeting.

This year's council includes (alphabetically): **Vince Amlin** (Minister), **Andy Bachmann** (Minister), **Rebecca Beachy** (Family Promise), **Sanford Berg** (Endowment), **Anne Casella** (Open and Affirming), **Nancy Dana** (Moderator), **Tom Dana** (Board of Business), **Will Dougherty** (Moderator-Elect), **Dick Elkins** (Council Member At Large), **John Eyler** (Congregation Ministry Review Board), **Kathy Funke** (Lively Arts), **Tricia Gregory** (Board of Adult Programs), **Shelby Havens** (Board of Parish Ministry), **Rachel Howard** (Youth Programs), **Gary Kirkland** (Board of Membership), **Janet March** (Board of Adult Programs), **Lizzi Nehls** (Council Member At Large), **Hannah Norton** (Social Justice), **Steve Pennypacker** (Board of Business), **Pam Smith** (Compassion in Action), **Marthe Walters** (Board of Children's Ministry), **Kitty Williams** (Clerk), and **Shelly Wilson** (Minister).

Highlights from our October meeting include:

- ❖ Review of the fall congregational meeting and approval of meeting minutes,
- ❖ Discussion of communication strategies council and boards/committees can use to provide updates to the congregation,
- ❖ A reporting on the plans for the 50<sup>th</sup> year anniversary service and first Fellowship Sunday, and
- ❖ Updates on the three-year plan survey and enlistment campaign.

## Enlistment Campaign 2016!

Our theme for our congregation's stewardship campaign this year is **"Invest in the Vision!"** Our very own member Joe Stein is the model for the campaign's photo and our very own member John Bollinger is the photographer who took the picture! Making a pledge to UCG is an opportunity for us to commit a generous portion of our financial resources to the support of our beloved congregation.

We began our pledge drive on October 5 and look forward to receiving **YOUR** pledge card as soon as possible. Our total budget for 2016 is \$770,435 with a pledge goal for 2016 of \$722,185. As of Wednesday, October 28, we have received \$408,886 and 167 pledges. If we all help as we are able, we will successfully achieve our goal of pledging this budget by the end of November! Thanks for your help!

## Compassion in Action

**Food First Sunday is November 1!** Our goal is to donate 250 lbs of food each month for November and December. It is said one (1) can make a difference, but let's see if one times six cans makes a huge difference! Remember BOGOs at the supermarket and bring your donations on November 1st!

**Angel Tree**---The Christmas tree will arrive in the foyer on Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> and will be covered in Angels for you to take, buy the child's gift that is printed on the Angel and place it, **unwrapped**, under the tree by Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>. The gifts will be taken to our Gift Market at Rawlings Elementary on Tuesday, December 15<sup>th</sup> where parents can purchase a gift for their children for a very small amount of money, around \$3 to \$5. All the proceeds then go to Rawlings school for a fund to help with emergencies. So it is a win-win-win! The parents get an inexpensive gift, the child gets a nice gift, and the school gets a good bit of money. We'd like our gifts to be in the \$25 to \$30 range but if something is more expensive, perhaps two UCG families could go together.

*Cont'd on next page*

## **Boards and Committees, cont'd.**

**Home Van Stockings** - This year we are again placing tube socks for the homeless beneath our Angel Tree, **beginning November 29**. Take a pair of tube socks. One sock will be rolled inside the other. Fill the sock with useful and fun things for the recipient. Each set of socks will come with a list of suggested items. BE SURE TO INCLUDE BOTH UTILITARIAN AND FUN THINGS IN THE SOCKS. Tie the end of the sock and **return to church by December 13<sup>th</sup>**.

**Mini Grants:** Please consider submitting a request for a mini-grant for someone you know who is in financial need this Christmas time. **Request forms will be available in the front office beginning Friday, November 20. The deadline to submit a request is Monday, December 7.** We are limiting our grants this year to people who are referred by someone in our congregation. Applications must be completed by a UCG member.

## **Summary Report from the Fall Congregational Meeting**

### **United Church of Gainesville Fall Congregational Meeting Summary**

**Kitty Williams, Council Clerk**

The UCG Fall congregational meeting took place on October 4, 2015, from 10:30-11:30 AM. There were 133 attendees. After Moderator Nancy Dana called the meeting to order, Shelly Wilson helped to center the group with a prayer. The minutes of the May 17 meeting were approved, and we proceeded through five agenda items:

**The Face of the UCG Leadership:** Nancy introduced the board chairs and executive officers and gave a brief description of the role of each board.

**Budget Presentation and Vote:** Tom Dana and Steve Pennypacker, BOB co-chairs, presented the proposed 2016 enlistment budget and described the budgetary process. After a few questions from the floor, the Congregation voted to accept the enlistment budget.

**Enlistment Kick-off:** The motto for the campaign is "Invest in the Vision." Enlistment Chair Bill Hoppe urged all UCG members to fill out their pledge cards promptly, saying that his pledge and donations to UCG are "the best money I spend."

**Parking and Sunday Service Time Survey:** Nancy presented the results of the survey about church service times, especially as related to parking availability.

**Three-Year Planning Process:** CMRB Chair John Eyler briefly described the survey leading to the next 3-Year Plan. He stressed the importance of the survey and urged all UCG members to participate.

A copy of the minutes from this meeting, detailing all of the above agenda items, is available in the church office, and will be on the agenda for approval at our next Congregational Meeting, January 24, 2016.

## Fifty Years of History at UCG: Andy, Vince and Shelly

Over the 50 years of UCG's existence, we have been fortunate to have the right minister(s) available each time a new minister is needed. In previous articles we reviewed the ministerial histories of Larry and Sandy Reimer. It is time now to acknowledge the current minister, each of whom took an unusual path that brought them to Gainesville and to UCG at the time we needed their talents the most.

**Andy Bachmann** joined the staff of UCG as an Associate Minister in 2003, but that wasn't the first time he was at the church. One story says that he first came as a member of a youth group. We know that later he did come as a Youth Minister, bringing a group of youth from his home church outside of Chicago. The advertisement in 2003 for a Youth Minister brought Andy's application because of what he knew about UCG from his previous visits and the match he saw between his theology and ours, especially in the depth of congregational involvement in outreach. The search committee reviewed his application and quickly arranged for him to interview. Discussion in church meetings centered on the need to interview and hire him before someone else did. As an ordained minister, Andy brought us someone who could help with the more formal responsibilities of the church (baptisms, weddings, funerals) as well as working with the youth and planning worship. His work at Camp Highlands for Boys, his family's camp in Wisconsin, spoke to his experience with youth. His work with the youth groups has been serious, fun, challenging and personable. New service projects have been added that bring youth and adults together in the Work Tours each spring. The Mystery Trip in February is another great mix of fun and service. His theatre background and love of music have enriched our worship services and other activities. Andy's role has expanded to include coordination of the many outreach projects that UCG sponsors through the Social Justice, Family Promise and Compassion in Action committees as well as through the youth groups (think Chili Lunch!). While the interviewing and hiring in 2003 took place more hurriedly than expected, we have never looked back or regretted the decision. Andy's focus on outreach and service continues to enrich UCG's impact on the community. We have come to appreciate the challenge given in the worship closing: "Now that the worship has ended, let the service begin."

**Vince Amlin** joined the staff of UCG as an Associate Minister in 2009. Though his father is a UCC minister, Vince was not headed in that direction early in his plans for the future. Vince's college work was in dramatic writing and voice. As happens sometimes, life doesn't go the way one plans. Fortunately for UCG, the plans changed and Vince was graduating from seminary in Chicago when we needed him. He saw the advertisement for the position and checked our website in January of 2009 and identified this as the church where he wanted to minister. UCG's stand as an Open and Affirming congregation was particularly important to Vince and his theology emphasis on diverse spirituality was important to us. Vince has brought his creativity and passionate energy to the coordination of adult programs such as Adult Small Groups, Sunday Seminars, and All Church Retreat, as well as to other committees and planning worship. There was much discussion in the search committee meetings about Vince being so young and inexperienced. As a member of the search committee, a friend reminded me that Larry Reimer was young and inexperienced when he was hired and look how that turned out! Again, we have only looked forward and been very grateful for all that Vince has brought to us by his presence here.

**Shelly Wilson** came to UCG as Senior Minister in 2013. Shelly was an experienced minister and just what we needed for our transition from the long-term ministry that preceded her. She had heard about UCG prior to the advertisement, having read a blog about our experience with the camp at Lake Yale refusing to allow us to continue to hold our retreat there because of our ONA policy. In a service in January this year, Shelly told us she had said to herself "If I were living in Gainesville I would want to attend that church." And now she does! Perhaps the most important competency sought by the search committee for the Senior Minister position was that the candidate should "be personally grounded, profess an inclusive faith, and demonstrate openness to and acceptance of spiritual diversity within the congregation." This was the basis of the church Shelly founded in Boone, North Carolina, so it was said that she already spoke "our" language.

*Cont'd on next page*

## 50 Years, Cont'd

In the transition of ministers, we needed someone who could bridge the gap between the Reimers' ministry and her own ministry without feeling threatened by the preceding patterns or by constructive feedback. Shelly came here wanting to work collaboratively with the previous ministers and with the current ministers. She has been very successful in doing that. She brought visions with her of new arenas that might be possible which are now being implemented – support for the Gainesville Peer Respite Center and the work being done to address health needs in the congregation and in the community. In her application for the position, Shelly said "I believe that healthy churches include emphases on physical health and wellness, nutrition and food justice, community building, creative and life-giving educational opportunities, music, art, and other creative expression, excellent worship experiences, and shared spiritual practices." She does speak our language and she shows us new paths that can open for us. We are fortunate once again that the right minister has joined in our journey.

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## November Seminars

**Check out the amazing seminars offered by the Board of Adult Programs in November!**

### **November 1**

**How to Overcome Our Biases, Walk Boldly Toward Them** - Larry Reimer will show the 17 minute TED talk by Verna Myers, followed by an opportunity to share response to the video in small groups. Myers is also the author of "What if I say the Wrong Thing? 25 Habits for Culturally Effective People", and we will lift up some of these insights as well.

**Empowering African Girls, One Hygiene Kit at a Time** - Celeste Mergens who founded Days for Girls International will tell us about her experiences in Africa where after more than a year spent working with a Kenyan orphanage, she realized girls in Africa were unable to attend school when they were menstruating because they lacked sanitary supplies. She started a global effort to provide "comfort kits" which include washable, reusable sanitary pads to allow the girls to stay in school. She now periodically travels to Africa educating girls on the "often taboo" subjects of menstruation and reproduction. Visit <http://www.daysforgirls.org/> for more information.

### **November 8**

**What's New in Medicare and the Affordable Care Act?** - Unless there are some interventions by Congress and/or The White House, the "Hold Harmless Law" of 1988 will this year carry some ominous implications for new Medicare recipients in 2016. Will it affect you? And now that the Affordable Care Act has been in effect for over four years we are beginning to get a sense for how well it works, how much it costs its beneficiaries, and how it is affecting providers. Allan March and Fred Gregory will answer your questions.

**A Florida Living Wage and Pay Equity** offered by Walt Barry

### **November 15 - No seminars**

### **November 22**

**Climate Reality Update** - Susan Nugent will examine both climate changes and possible solutions. Nations together can create a healthy, sustainable and prosperous future by making a planet-wide shift from fossil fuels to clean, reliable, and affordable renewable energy. Yet, in Florida, at present, our solar choices are limited. Susan has worked with several environmental groups and will be reporting on information she heard from the three-day international conference in Miami headed by Al Gore.

**Getting Ready for the Holidays** with family therapist Lisa Wolcott - Planning to make space for what is important to you during this holiday will help you enjoy this special time of year.

## We welcome our New Members who joined on October 11

**Natalie Andrews** was raised in the Catholic Church, confirmed and then never returned. She says she had tried every church in Gainesville, and came to UCG for the first time last year, knowing she was home as soon as she walked in. Natalie loves how open UCG is and that everyone is accepted for exactly who they are. She says she loves working with kids and wants to be involved with the Youth here. She is a teacher at PK Yonge and in her spare time loves being outdoors.

**Isabel Coutts** grew up as a Catholic; her mother was Catholic and her dad a non-practicing Lutheran. She comes to UCG seeking better communication with people in a spiritual community and says that as a visual person, she really appreciates the Sanctuary and how warm it feels. Isabel was raised in Florida but lived in southern New England for 33 years and feels a loyalty to both places. She is retired and enjoys music, dancing, and gardening.

**Michelle Einmo** has been part of the UUA in Gainesville and Arkansas and also adheres to the Celtic Pagan belief system. She loves diversity and comes to UCG seeking a spiritual family which will guide and support her through her life journey. Michelle is a registrar at City College and is very talented with interior and fashion design. She has been designing and making jewelry since age 13. Michelle has three school-aged children and also enjoys a variety of outdoor activities including camping, hiking, canoeing, and gardening.

**Elizabeth Franco** had no religious affiliation growing up and has been visiting UCG since last year. She joins the church seeking community and spiritual inspiration and loves that UCG is liberal and inclusive. Elizabeth is a Yoga teacher and massage therapist and also facilitates workshops for women. She says she is shy by nature but can be gregarious in a small group.

**Carin Handsun** has been part of UUA from East Lansing to Ocala. She also attended the Episcopal Church where she says she enjoyed the ritual but not the theology. As a seeker, she joins UCG for community and spiritual development and loves the acceptance here. Carin is self-employed doing web design and digital marketing and also enjoys gardening and drumming.

**Keith Kelly** grew up in the Southern Baptist Church and began visiting UCG last year with his partner Doris Kalishman. Here, he says, he found a new spiritual path and camaraderie, and is proud to be affiliated with UCG and its commitment to being open & affirming. Keith loves the outdoors, hunting and fishing, and ran a charter service in the Keys that served underprivileged kids. He hopes to get involved in something similar here.

**Geraldine Klarenberg** was raised in the Netherlands and says that although she attended Catholic school it was really quite secular, and she has had no religious affiliation since high school. She started visiting UCG with her partner Chris Ribe, and she joins UCG seeking community and connectedness and says she enjoys the variety in the sermons offered. Geraldine is in the process of finishing her PhD and works as a statistician at Suwannee River Water Management district. She has two elementary school aged children, lives together with Chris and his two children, and she loves sports, reading, and yard work.

**Jess Muron** was raised in the Catholic Church. She visited UCG with her partner Sue O'Brien and joins seeking to connect with others on a spiritual path and to give back. Both of her parents were musicians and she can play flute, bass and guitar and can paint and draw. Jess is a paralegal for a family law firm, she loves animals, and is the event coordinator for the St Francis pet clinic, which serves the homeless community.

**Rachel Osborne** has a diverse religious background which includes the Quaker church, Catholic school, Buddhism, and a father who was Cherokee. She joins UCG seeking community and social support and loves the kindness and acceptance she finds here. Rachel teaches social studies at Lofton High School and she and her husband Warren have two school aged kids, Portia, 13 and Ivan, 8. Rachel's interests include religious studies, sociology/anthropology, crocheting amigurumi figures, and reading.

*Cont'd on next page*

## New Members, cont'd.

**Nicole Perez** grew up Southern Baptist and says she is very happy she found UCG, where her authentic self is loved and valued, and where she can continue growing her faith. She is a psychiatric nurse practitioner at the VA medical center and has a passion for social justice issues, especially related to health care and mental illness. Nicole enjoys reading, yoga, music, Zumba, and cooking. Her husband, **Victor Perez**, also has a Southern Baptist background as well as Evangelical Christian. He comes to UCG seeking continued development of a faith that seeks unity and enjoys the inclusiveness at UCG. Victor does marketing and brand development and is also a self-employed artist who, besides painting, also enjoys playing guitar and cooking.

**Karin Polifko** grew up in New Jersey in the Catholic Church and has attended the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship as an adult. She came to UCG for the first time on Christmas Eve two years ago, looking for a place for her family to feel connected. As the mother of two teenaged daughters, she loves the family focus here, however family is defined. Karin is the VP of Operations and Academic Affairs at Remington College, and previously was in hospital administration. She enjoys anything beach, traveling to new places and used to race J 30 sailboats with an all-woman crew in the '80s.

## Invest in the Vision...



### Here are 10 of the thousands of reasons to pledge to UCG...

10. Thinking of the times when a sermon or a quotation from the bulletin speaks directly to what you needed to hear.
9. Experiencing music in the service that gives you chills.
8. Going to a Family Promise meeting and hearing someone say, "We could not have gotten back open and on our feet again without UCG."
7. Having someone pray for and visit you when the worst thing has happened or rejoice with you when the best thing has happened.
6. Learning and finding connections in small groups.
5. Knowing visitors will always be warmly welcomed, no matter.
4. Seeing the joy when food is delivered to those in need from folks at UCG.
3. Knowing that someone who has lost his job has been helped by funds from UCG.
2. Insuring UCG will be thriving for my children and grandchildren.
1. Because I am UCG.

# Sundays in November

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## REGULAR SUNDAY SCHEDULE

|                |                                                                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8:15           | Meditation in the Chapel                                                        |
| 9:00 - 12:30   | Nursery & Toddler Care                                                          |
| 9:15 & 11:15am | Worship                                                                         |
| 9:30 - 10:15   | United Tribes - after the children's story                                      |
| 10:15          | Fellowship Time; Children's Activity Time;<br>Middle School Group; Youth United |
| 10:45          | Adult Seminars                                                                  |

## ***Worship Theme: Delicious Ambiguity***

**Sunday, November 1 - Daylight Savings Time Ends - Fall back one hour**

**Family Promise hosting begins**

**9:15 & 11:15 - Worship - "The Name Drawn from the Names" Vince Amlin**

**11:15 - Friendship Group - Room 8**

**12:30 - Picnics in the Park\***

**Young Adult Lunch - meet by the Fountain**

**12:45 - Lessons & Carols rehearsal**

**Sunday, November 8 - LifeSouth Blood Drive**

**9:15 & 11:15 - Worship - "The Ambiguity of the Sea and the Certainty of the Harbor" - Sandy Reimer**

**10:15 - Fair Trade Coffee, Tea, & Chocolate sales - Courtyard**

**Anniversary Book Sales - Courtyard**

**History Book Reception - Reimer Hall**

**Board of Children's Ministry - Seminar A**

**12:45 - Lessons & Carols rehearsal**

**2:30 - Labyrinth Workshop & Installation - Reimer Hall and Sanctuary**

**7:00 - Crystal Bowl Concert with Cindy Bergbower in the Sanctuary**

**Sunday, November 15**

**Church on the Prairie**

**Join us at 10:00am for our annual church service and picnic at Prairie Creek Lodge.**

**See page 2 for more information.**

**Sunday, November 22 - Decorating for Advent & Christmas**

**9:15 & 11:15 - Worship - "Grace and Gratitude" - Shelly Wilson**

**10:15 - Anniversary Book Sales - Courtyard**

**Fair Trade Coffee, Tea, & Chocolate sales - Courtyard**

**12:45 - Lessons & Carols rehearsal**

**2:45 - Afternoon Hymn Sing - West Wing**

***Advent Worship Theme: Waiting in the Wings***

**Sunday, November 29 - First Sunday in Advent**

**9:15 & 11:15 - Worship - Andy Bachmann**

**12:30 - Picnics in the Park\***

**Cook/Serve Dinner for Grace Marketplace\* - Kitchen**

**12:45 - Lessons & Carols rehearsal**

**Looking Ahead**

**Sunday, December 6- Second Sunday in Advent**

**Children's Christmas Pageant at 9:15am & YU Annual Chili Lunch at 10:30am**

\* *Pre-registered Adult Small Group*

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***DECEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17***

**LOOKING AHEAD AT THE UNITED CHURCH OF GAINESVILLE:**

- ❖ **Tuesdays, Dec. 1, 8 & 15** - Advent Contemplative Prayer from 6:00 to 7:00 in the Sanctuary. Contact the church office by Nov.12 to register.
- ❖ **Saturday, Dec. 5** - Children and Family Christmas Craft Fair from 3:00-5:00pm in Reimer Hall. Family Pizza Picnic dinner at 5pm.
- ❖ **Sunday, Dec. 6** - "Follow That Star" annual Christmas Pageant at 9:15am, followed by the YU Chili Lunch.
- ❖ **Sunday, Dec. 13** at 11am and 7pm - Lessons and Carols Services. Reception follows the Sunday evening service.
- ❖ **Sunday, Dec. 20** - Worship at 9:15 & 11:15am. Both services include the All Church Band.
- ❖ **Wednesday, Dec. 24** – Candlelight Christmas Eve services at 4:30pm, 7:30pm and 9:30pm
- ❖ **Sunday, Dec. 27** - One Worship Service at 10am followed by a brunch.
- ❖ **Sunday, Jan. 24** - Winter Congregational Meeting
- ❖ **Feb. 13-14** - Women's Overnight
- ❖ **Apr. 15-17** - Annual UCG Retreat at Warren Willis Camp

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