



# OUR CHURCH LIFE



FEBRUARY 2014  
CHURCH CALENDAR

**Feb. 2 Sunday 10:00am: Service *What is Faith?*** with the Rev. Mark Skrabacz. For Unitarian Universalists this can be a challenging question as faith is often equated with belief in unseen things. It might come as a surprise that many leaders of religious cultures do not think that faith is first and foremost a collection of religious beliefs handled down to us by tradition.

**Feb. 3 Monday 1:30pm: Centering Group** meets in the Sanctuary

**Feb. 7 Friday 11:30am: Men's Fellowship Lunch** in the Annex

**February 8 Saturday 10:00AM-4:00PM *Hot Worship in the Free Church*** Comal County UU Society in New Braunfels, TX

**Feb. 9 Sunday 9-9:45am: in Annex. Discussion:** Let's take a look at the idea of Compassionate Communication as it relates to our congregational meetings. Linda Smith Moderator

**10am Service:** To Be Announced: Information not available at time of publication. Contact June Hartley, Service Chair 896-5131 for details. **Special Congregational Meeting to follow service**

**Feb. 12 Wednesday 6:30pm: Board Meeting** in Annex

**Feb. 14 Friday 2pm: Needles** a crafting group open to all, meets in Annex

**Feb. 16 Sunday 10:00AM Service *Community in Our Own Way*** with the Rev. Mark Skrabacz. How is it that we wish to be identified as community? What kind of community are we? Let's gather to look at these questions and others about how we wish to show up as community. **POTLUCK SUNDAY**

**Feb. 17 Monday 1:30pm: Centering Group** meets in the Sanctuary

Feb. 18 **Newsletter Deadline**

**Feb. 21 Friday 11:30am: Men's Fellowship Lunch** in the Annex

**Feb. 23 Sunday 9-9:45am:** in Annex U.U Magazine Discussion; Winter Edition p24 Political Empathy- Demonymizing your political opponents doesn't change anyone's mind but empathy does'? Led by John Schlosser

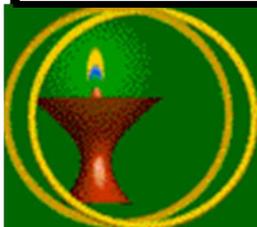
**10am Service:** To Be Announced: Information not available at time of publication. Contact June Hartley, Service Chair 896-5131 for details.

**Feb. 28 Friday 2pm: Needles** a crafting group open to all, meets in Annex

**March 2 Sunday 10:00am: Service *Covenant - The UU Glue*** with the Rev. Mark Skrabacz. Six years ago I gave my first sermon at our Church. Today I'd like to revisit it. In it I describe what I think Unitarian Universalism is. Let's see what you think.

## WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

In the Annex are maps of the US and World. We invite you to indicate with a push pin where you are from. Please not where you've been but where you were born or raised. It'll be surprising and fun to find how we've come together from different parts of the world. *Joyce Randle, Membership*



The Ministerial Search Committee, through our Board, is asking all interested members of the Congregation to join with us in a special meeting on Sunday, February 9 following our normal Sunday Service. We would like to have a discussion on the wishes of the Congregation as to the type of future ministerial services desired.

# February 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Service 10am Rev. Mark Skrabacz	3 1:30pm Centering Group	4	5	6	7 Men's Fellowship 11:30am JCHC	8
9 9am Discussion in Annex Service 10am Special Cong. Meet.	10	11	12 6:30pm BOARD MEETING -ANNEX	13	14 Needles 2pm JCHC	15
16 Service 10am Rev. Mark Skrabacz POTLUCK SUNDAY	17 1:30pm Center- ing Group	18 Newsletter Deadline	19	20	21 Men's Fellowship 11:30am JCHC	22
23 9am Discussion in Annex Service 10am	24	25	26	27	28 Needles 2pm JCHC	

# From Our Minister's Desk

By Rev. Mark Skrabacz

## Working Together in a Lay and Clergy Partnership

As our Church explores the possibility of hiring a minister, I thought it would be timely to share a few observations from my five years with you. Most of you know I am serving as your first minister and this is my first ministry. Hence we have had a lot to learn, and have learned a lot, made a few mistakes, discovered together both our strengths and weaknesses, and made some good progress. There's nothing quite like a relationship for putting life to the test! Please know that I feel and have felt very supported by this Church. You are a unique group of intelligent and caring people with many lifetimes of practical and hard-won experiences. My life with you has been blessed...and challenged, especially these past couple of years; who's isn't? I deeply appreciate the opportunities you have given me to support you. Yet, as a congregation you have had my back through my recent marital demise, divorce and significant deaths, for which I will always be grateful. Thank you! I feel a strong sense of accomplishment coming from the work we've done together, and will continue to do

What might UUCHC anticipate in a Lay-Clergy relationship as it moves forward as a Church? Ideally a minister and the laity hope to work together happily, disagree without drama and feel supported in their roles for the betterment of the Church without the need to diminish each other. With an emphasis on mature social skills and a healthy dedication to the Church's core values and mission, lay members and a minister can find their way through any and all challenges. Hopefully we all learn from our past. This past five years of lay-minister partnership give proof of sustained positive relationships, movement through the challenges of dealing with change, adaptation of our ByLaws, development of practical policies and other milestones of maturation. It's important to showcase our successes to influence the entire Church positively. It'll be a beneficial and manageable process for our Ministerial Search Committee when our Church stands together in its desire to welcome a new minister, if that is what you choose to do.

Lay leadership is not the same as governance, just as clergy leadership is not the same as ministry. That said, we are always deeply grateful to our lay leadership for coming forth to lead. Still, the development of new and diverse leadership is important to the progress of any organization. Since UUs are an association of congregations, rather than a denomination with a hierarchy of top-down support, it is vital that our autonomous Congregation find new and adaptive ways to govern itself. I encourage our governing Board to welcome the influence of the next minister, even though in her/his *ex officio* status s/he will not have a vote. This united and forward movement of laity and clergy will make a vital difference to our future.

Ministry (meaning service) includes all the daily practical work of the congregation, no matter who does it. Our Church's ministries are shared ministries. Sometimes in a committee-based congregational structure, like we have, there can be conflicts both between lay leadership of a committee and the minister, as well as between lay leaders. A willingness to engage conflict together and not to avoid it is helpful and essential. It is also always advisable to provide clear job descriptions and divisions of duties, as well as checks, balances and evaluations. Our stated principle of the use of the democratic process may be messy and challenging, yet it can promote healthy and respectful congregational conversation, diversity in discussion and values-centered voting that helps us lean into the future together. Indeed it is our Church's best way forward.

The idea is to have clear roles, responsibilities and sufficient authority that leaves space for independent action and initiative, and fruitful interdependent partnership. Ideally all leaders, whether lay or ordained, will have firm boundaries, with some flexibility and clarity as to what to do and what to delegate. They will engage each other directly and not form triangles in order to go around each other and through someone else. That is not healthy. Firm boundaries are distinct from rigid boundaries or fuzzy ones. Rigidity breeds exclusion and secrecy, while fuzziness begets anxious checking in, checking on and checking back. Firm boundaries require clear guidance, willing accountability and unshakable respect for each other and each other's roles.

We all know it is not easy being a UU. Much is required of us in searching our hearts and minds to develop our own beliefs and practices. Many of us have had to reconcile past religious backgrounds, and in some cases families who do not understand our choices. Finding each other and this oasis in Kerrville has meant so much to us. This is to be celebrated! I know many of you also do not envy a UU minister, for we are UUs, too, and are similarly challenged in every way, as well as called to support other UUs in their lives, loves and learning. UUCHC is a wonderful sanctuary for liberal religion in the Hill Country. Being good at that is a challenge in itself. I write this article to inform and inspire, not to criticize or complain. I sincerely wish our Church much success and clarity in navigating a ministerial search, if that is what it chooses to do, and for progressing through all transitions into further growth as a loving and caring spiritual community. Please feel free to ask me should you have an interest regarding my experiences in serving as your minister. It has been, and continues to be, my honor.

## CHURCH CONTACTS

### Board of Directors 2013-2014

**Pres.** Diane McMahon 896-3195 [dianelm@windstream.net](mailto:dianelm@windstream.net)  
**VP** June Hartley 896-5191 [juneh@ktc.com](mailto:juneh@ktc.com)  
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**Past Pres.** Steve Galland 634-7668 [sgalland@afgimail.com](mailto:sgalland@afgimail.com)

### Minister

The Rev. Mark Skrabacz  
890-5784, [markskrabacz@hotmail.com](mailto:markskrabacz@hotmail.com)

### Other Key Contacts

**Service Committee—June Hartley (see above)**  
**Newsletter—**Joyce Randle-257-2346, [rjpa47@stx.rr.com](mailto:rjpa47@stx.rr.com)  
**Book Club -** Kevin Hartley [kevinh@ktc.com](mailto:kevinh@ktc.com) 896-5191  
**Music Director –**Meredith Hensley 830-522-0802  
**Director of Children’s Religious Education-**Joyce Randle (above)  
**Lifespan Faith Development** Marie Brown 895-5138  
**Care-**Shari Gore 367-3142, Marie Brown 895-5138,  
**Chalice Lighter-**Judy Ashcraft (above)  
**Chalice Table Coordinator–** Shari Gore (above)  
**Librarian–** Shari Gore (above)  
**Maintenance–** Jerry Best 210-633-7553 [bestjerry@hotmail.com](mailto:bestjerry@hotmail.com)  
**Publicity-**Judy Ashcraft (above)  
**Chat & Chew-**Joyce Randle (above)  
**Community Outreach -** Laurie Pesez  
**Membership -** Joyce Randle (above)  
**Men’s Fellowship Lunch -** Steve Galland 634-7668  
**Ministerial Relations Committee -** Donna Schloss 830-792-6189  
[dschloss@ktc.com](mailto:dschloss@ktc.com)

Address: 960 Barnett St,  
Kerrville TX 78028  
Church phone: 830-792-3626  
Webpage [uuchc.org](http://uuchc.org)

## Chalice Table/Greeter

Following is the roster for decorating the chalice table and greeting members and guests. If you cannot participate on the Sunday listed, please contact Shari Gore, 367-3142

Feb. 2 Hartley Family      Feb. 9 Haydel Family  
Feb. 16 Hensley Family      Feb. 23 Jackson Family

## Spring Garden Clean Up

February 15th 9-3



It is time to spruce up our front garden. Lets have a big turnout of earth loving U.U's. It will be fun and satisfying.

Pizza and salad will be provided for lunch, bring your own drinks, sturdy gloves, your favorite clippers and tools.



Questions?? Call Marie Brown 895-5138

Congratulations to all those generous folks who made our Guest At Your Table drive such a success this year. 19 people contributed to our total of \$1530.00. Much of this was doubled because of matching funds from the Shelter Rock U.U. Church in Long Island. N.Y. Thanks to all who were able to be a part of this worthy cause.

Marie Brown Local Coordinator

## UUCHC

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