

# Reflections

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

DAVIE, FLORIDA

MARCH 2012

## FREE SPIRITS

By Marjie Loring, Board President



There are some who would say that spirituality is a personal endeavor, an intimate relationship with the essence of life known by many names. Meditation, contemplation, and observation are introspective, nurturing us from the inside out. It is in these moments that transcendence appears, when we are aware of and connected to our own uniqueness and individual experience of life and all its complexities. We are nourished by the time we take with ourselves to question and ponder, to accept and reject purpose, meaning, truth, and all that we find holy. It is our human connection to this transcendence that brings us together at River of Grass each week as a congregation.

But it is also the time we spend together that makes us a community. Here on this human plane of existence, we need something that brings us out of ourselves and connects us to each other. Community does not live within us. To be in community, we must let the outside in.

Community lives between us, connecting us and moving through us. Community is nurtured when we are open to sharing our everyday lives. It thrives in the times we spend together and is nourished by the many ways we come together.

Community draws us together in the food pantry of LifeNet4Families, it flickers in the campfires of the Full Moon Daughters and dUUDes, in our small group gatherings, and it calls us to dance together, grow together, dream together, and play together.

It is in keeping with this spirit of community that the Board is hosting a multi-generational community event for our members and friends – and their families and friends. Please plan to join us on Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, for a congregational picnic at Plantation Heritage Park, from 10:00am to 3:00pm. Bring your favorite picnic food to share if you can and, if you have an idea for facilitating a fun game or activity, please contact me at [President@riverofgrass.org](mailto:President@riverofgrass.org) so we can plan it into the day's schedule. We have secured a time and a place – and to gather in the spirit of play is our only agenda.

Will it be an egg race, a water balloon toss, or a marshmallow tower competition? Will we have nature tours, scavenger hunts, or obstacle courses? Whatever unfolds, it will be a day when free spirits celebrate the true joy of this community we call River of Grass. May it be so.

### Save the Date:

Saturday, March 31, 2012, from 10:00am to 3:00pm

### Where:

Plantation Heritage Park - Shelter #7  
1100 S. Fig Tree Lane  
Plantation, FL 33317



Please sign up to bring a side dish or a dessert – or to coordinate an activity! (Hamburgers and hotdogs will be provided – along with vegetarian options of these picnic favorites.) Sign-up sheets are available in the hospitality area. We hope to see you there!

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## DEATH, DYING AND THOSE LEFT BEHIND

By Kathy Jens-Rochow, Women's Group Facilitator

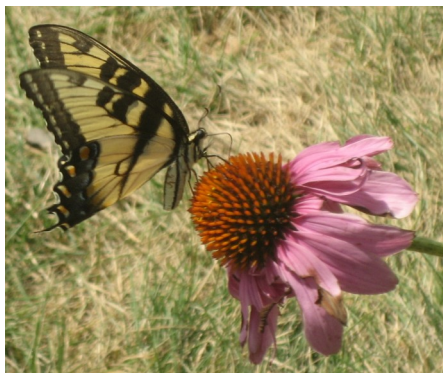
*"It is not death, it is dying that alarms me."*

– Michel de Montaigne

The Women's Group gets serious this month. The topic for discussion is death and dying. We will talk about facing our own death, planning for our death, wills, living wills, and anything else that comes up. It is a difficult topic, but one that needs discussion.

We will meet on March 26 at 7:30pm.

The Women's' Group is open to all women of River of Grass and their women friends. We meet the fourth Monday of every month and talk about things that are important to us as women and friends. For more information, contact Kathy Jens-Rochow at [WomensGroup@riverofgrass.org](mailto:WomensGroup@riverofgrass.org).



### OUR PRINCIPLES

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to 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.

### OUR SUNDAY LOCATION

11850 W. State Road 84, Suite 1, Davie, FL 33325

### EVERY SUNDAY

**Worship Service:** 10:30 to 11:30am. **Hospitality Hour:** 11:30am to 12:30pm.

**Faith Development Classes:** 10:45 to 11:45am

### FRIENDLY REMINDERS FOR OUR MEMBERS

There is plenty of parking outside the sanctuary, but please leave the closer parking spaces for our guests and physically challenged worshippers.

All meetings are held at 11850 W State Road 84, Suite 1 in Davie unless otherwise noted.

## SERVICES

Mar. 4 "Look to this Day" with Karen and Gary Gonzalez

Mar. 11 "Compassionate Communication: Loving the Jackal Within and Without" with Rev. LoraKim Joyner

Mar. 18 "Lighten Up" with Marjie Loring and Esther Sampol

Mar. 25 "Stone Soup" with Rob and Deb Giblin-Davis

## River of Grass

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

Phone 954-723-7877

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### Newsletter

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Worship ..... Kathy Jens-Rochow



## TEENS LEARN IMPORTANT LIFE LESSONS IN OWL CLASSES

By Diane Lade, Faith Development Co-Chair

Let's talk about sex – in our place of worship? But that's what some of our teens are doing in the Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality and spirituality class that began last month. Offered on a regular basis through the Faith Development program, OWL has been a proven favorite with our youth for years. We have 11 students this year in OWL I, including some from families outside our congregation whose teens are friends with River of Grass kids. We welcome them!

Why should Unitarian Universalist congregations get involved with sex education? Because OWL is about so much more than anatomy, AIDS and sexual risks – important topics, of course, that do get covered in public schools. But OWL teens also explores ethical decision making, learning respect for one's self and others, political aspects of sexuality and building healthy relationships of all sorts, not just intimate ones. The OWL approach affirms UU values while giving teens information they need to be healthy and safe.

The OWL series was developed jointly by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ, initially as a response to the decline of sexuality education in schools. It is a lifespan series, with programs that begin in elementary school and run through adulthood. While OWL promotes UU values such as responsibility and respect, it is not connected to any faith and the material is not religious.

Teachers must be certified to teach any OWL sessions. River of Grass is fortunate to have trained teachers for middle school, high school and adult OWL, and we have offered classes for all of these age groups in the past. Faith Development also is fortunate to have the River of Grass board and OWL parents' support that is allowing us to rent a private space on Sundays in a temple located in our center, so our students can speak freely (and be noisy, as OWL is fun!) without disturbing our other classes on Sunday morning.

OWL runs through the end of May. There will be no middle school Faith Development classes the rest of the congregational year, as all of those teens are taking OWL. Visiting youth will be invited to join the high school class. Elementary and pre-school classes will continue as usual.

There will be no Sunday school classes for any grades on Sunday, March 11 and March 18, due to spring break.

Also: Please say hello to Tatiana Acero, our new childcare provider. She will be taking care of our littlest ones in the nursery and assisting the hospitality team.



This section lists small projects which have been identified by committees or small groups. If you have the expertise and time and want to lend a helping hand, one of these may be for you!



**Tablecloths:** Inventory and develop a storage method for all the kitchen tablecloths. This should allow people to easily find the tablecloths they want for events, as well as know where to return them. Contact [Facilities@riverofgrass.org](mailto:Facilities@riverofgrass.org).

**Artist Pictures:** Collect pictures of the artists who have appeared in the cafe concerts, and develop a method to display on cafe nights. Contact [Concerts@riverofgrass.org](mailto:Concerts@riverofgrass.org) or [Facilities@riverofgrass.org](mailto:Facilities@riverofgrass.org).

*River of Grass held its first Empty Bowls workshop on February 25, making bowls and other works of art as part of the Empty Bowls/Stone Soup project to fight hunger. The next step will be the glazing of the bowls on March 11 after services, followed by the annual Stone Soup Lunch on March 25. All proceeds go to Broward County's LifeNet4Families.*



## BOARD MATTERS

By Susan Juncosa, Secretary

**I**t was a dark and stormy night when seven Board members gathered around a table. The lone candle flickered and threatened to go out along with the lights....alright, alright. It was an unseasonably warm February evening (which did get dark!) when the Board met on February 8 in the well-lit Multipurpose Room to consider things the Board considers worth considering.

One of the things considered was the success of the Mid-Year Congregational Meeting. Fifty-five members stayed after service on Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, and had a mini-tailgate potluck lunch. They then received updates on the status of the yearly budget, possible future ministerial options and the results of last fall's Envisioning Day, and then voted to support the Unitarian Universalist Association's Action of Immediate Witness (presented by the Service and Social Justice Committee).

The Service and Social Justice Committee's resolution of support for the "People's Rights Resolution" passed by 52 to 3 votes. A letter of support will be drafted by the SSJC for signature by the congregation President.

The Treasurer reported to the board that the congregation is about \$12,000 ahead of the anticipated budget for the seven-month mark into the fiscal year. After the Finance Committee did all the work for the Mid-Year meeting draft budgets, they are being rewarded with...you guessed it! More hard work! Their project of reviewing some of the larger expenses associated with the remodel and setting up a depreciation schedule should be completed by February. The committee recently received an internal audit report and will complete a formal response to be presented to the Board in March.

The Policy Team has finalized the Memorial Policy and it is now officially noticed and accepted. Next up is a minor change to the cash handling policy to reflect the use of the drop box. The Board had some discussion about the possibility of a formal child-care policy for events other than congregational meetings. More discussion will be held in the future.

The Café Committee reported that four shows are scheduled before summer break and four are already scheduled for next season. The committee may reduce the number of shows next year. The Board noted that cutting the number of concerts might have an impact on the budget, although it was early to say.

The Facilities Management Committee was thrilled with the turnout at the Great Storage Room Cleanout on January 21. The sound frame construction continues. The Sunshine Pre-School has decided to disband and will no longer be meeting at River of Grass.

The Faith Development Committee began Our Whole Lives I (OWL) classes for the middle school students on February 12. In January, the Board approved an unbudgeted expenditure to allow rental of a classroom from the temple (which meets in the office park) in order to ensure privacy. Eleven students have signed up, some from outside the congregation. Affirmation will be offered next year to this age group.

The elementary school class continues to grow, with several new families attending regularly. The committee is requesting funding next year for a 10-hours-a-week Faith Development assistant position. The Board put discussion of this item on the agenda for March.

The Service and Social Justice Committee reported that its theme will be justice for immigrant families impacted by deportation and other hardships. To that end, Jeannette Smith of the local New Sanctuary movement met with the committee on Feb. 16. The next Volunteer Day at LifeNet4Families is March 10. The Guest at Your Table (GAYT) collected \$920 for UUSC from our congregation.

The Worship Committee presented five services in the long month of January! The committee met on January 25 with eight members attending. The Vespers team has decided to take a hiatus for a while and revisit the programming. Per the Board's vote last month, a message has been inserted into the liturgy and Order of Service regarding applause (please don't until the end of the service). Upcoming events include a workshop on March 10 and lay leader training in April. Two service leader openings remain on the calendar in June – now is your chance to share what's on your mind!

The Board remembered that it is presenting an Auction event in June – the "River of Gas Chili Cook Off and Murder Mystery." In order to make this a quality event, planning needs to start! Buy your tickets now, folks, because this is going to be awesomely aromatic – one way or another.

In accordance with our Vision statement, the Board developed action items and the Congregation will be seeing the results soon. One of our goals is promoting the building of community and connection with one another. To that end, a Congregational picnic will be held on Saturday, March 31. More details will be forthcoming.

## 'TIS THE SEASON

By Roy Schwartz, Annual Giving Chair

**A**s we move into the season of our annual giving drive, each Sunday volunteers from our community will be sharing their thoughts and feelings on what River of Grass means to them. On February 26, we heard from one of our newer members, Zena Tucker, and in the five weeks to follow we will be hearing from other members and families. I hope you will join us for these special moments during our Sunday service.

This month members will receive a pledge card and asked to record their 2012-2013 financial commitment after thoughtfully considering several factors. Two of the factors to be considered; "what is it that you or your family value about being a member of River of Grass" and "How important is it to you to add additional professional ministry to our Sunday service?"

Several financial scenarios were presented by our board of trustees during the congregational meeting in February. Each reflected varying degrees of supplemental staff and professional ministry. The presentations were made to assist the members in understanding the associated costs. This information will be updated and made available to you during the month of March.



## BRINGING PEACE TO OUR LIVES, RELATIONSHIPS, AND COMMUNITIES

By Kathy Jens-Rochow, Worship Chair

**T**he Worship Committee and the Speaker Team are hosting an introductory workshop in Nonviolent Communication with Rev. LoraKim Joyner, Unitarian Universalist Community minister in Gainesville,, on Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am to 3:00pm. This special workshop is open to all River of Grass members, friends and the community.

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is based on the principles of nonviolence and was developed by Marshall Rosenberg. Practicing NVC allows the natural state of compassion to rise up as we rid our thoughts, words and actions of violence.

NVC begins by assuming that we are all compassionate by nature and that violent strategies – whether verbal or physical – are learned behaviors taught and supported by the prevailing culture. NVC also assumes that we all share the same basic human needs, and that each of our actions is a strategy to meet one or more of these needs.

People who practice NVC have found greater authenticity in their communication, increased understanding, deepening connection, and conflict resolution.

Price for participation is \$15.00 in advance (postmark March 3, 2012), or \$20.00 at the door. Lunch will be provided. To register, either go to [www.riverofgrass.org/events](http://www.riverofgrass.org/events), contact Kathy Jens-Rochow ([Worship@rivrofggrass.org](mailto:Worship@rivrofggrass.org)) or see our display in the hospitality area after service.

Rev. Joyner will also be in the pulpit on March 11. The title of her service is “Compassionate Communication: Loving the Jackal Within and Without.” She will help us understand and accept human beings even when their communication makes them sound like jackals.



## SERVICE LEADER TRAINING

By Kathy Jens-Rochow, Worship Chair

**H**ave you ever thought about doing a Sunday service? Do you have an idea or a message you want to convey to the congregation?

Volunteers are needed to fill all of the Sunday services for the summer and many of the services during our next year. Please see Kathy Jens-Rochow to explore which services are available. Priority will be given to those who have either given a service before or have taken the Service Leader Training.

The Service Leader Training will be offered by the Worship Committee on Saturday, April 21, from 2:00 to 4:00pm. Please contact Kathy Jens-Rochow at [Worship@riverofgrass.org](mailto:Worship@riverofgrass.org) for further information.

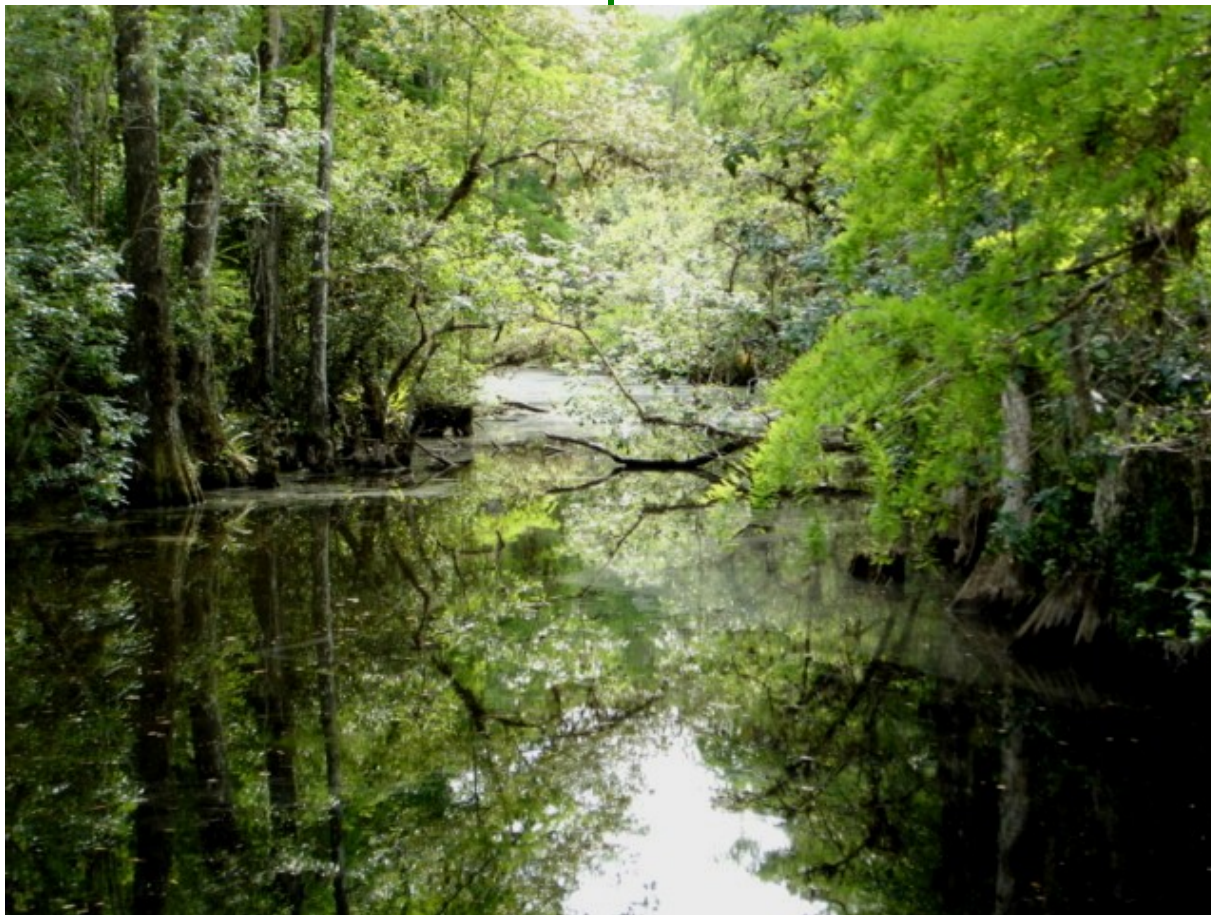


Photo by Hein Mück

## AND SERVICE IS OUR LAW

By Alan Meerow and Judi Oltmans, SSJC co-chairs

Our next LifeNet4Families Volunteer Day is coming up on Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, and we are still in need of volunteers. The signup sheet is located in the hospitality area at the Service and Social Justice Committee (SSJC) Corner. Come help stock the shelves at the LifeNet4Families pantry and get food boxes ready to be handed out to the needy. LifeNet4Families is also in need of canned food donations; there is no meat, beans or peanut butter on the pantry shelves. Please drop donations off on Sundays in our donation basket for LifeNet4Families at the SSJC corner. A special thank you to Steve Jens-Rochow for delivering our canned food donations to LifeNet4Families.

Thank you to everyone who supported the Action of Immediate Witness Supreme Court decision (“People’s Rights Resolution”) program at River of Grass. The letter writing campaign to legislators to support congressional efforts for a constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Courts’ decision was a great success; over 50 letters were written to congressional representatives by River of Grass members. At our February 5<sup>th</sup> congregational meeting, after some discussion, the resolution of support for the “People’s Rights Resolution” passed by 52 to 3 votes. Letters of support from our congregation will be drafted by the SSJC subcommittee for signature by our congregation President.

The MS Bike Ride will be coming up on April 21<sup>st</sup> and we would like to encourage everyone to participate. There will be practice rides on Saturdays for novice to expert bikers who would like to join the River of Grass team; you can contact Allen Giese at [Fiddler4060@yahoo.com](mailto:Fiddler4060@yahoo.com) if you are interested.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Guest At Your Table program! We collected \$920 dollars for Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) from our congregation.

At the SSJC meeting on Thursday, Feb. 16, we heard from Jeanette Smith of Interfaith Worker Justice who spoke to us about the New Sanctuary movement and how River of Grass can get involved in assisting families impacted by current immigration policies. A new subcommittee is being formed to develop an action plan. Maddi Gutfreind, Diane Diaz and Steve Jens-Rochow are current members. If you would like to be involved, please email [SSJC@riverofgrass.org](mailto:SSJC@riverofgrass.org).



## RIVER OF GRASS CAFÉ AND COFFEEHOUSE

By the Music Team

On Friday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, the River of Grass Café and Concert Series is pleased to present **Tim Farrell**, who John Schroeter, Founder of *Fingerstyle Guitar* magazine calls “one of the new trailblazers.” With so many guitarists trying to make their mark, it’s not easy being a “trailblazer.” Yet, that perfectly defines Tim Farrell. His fingerstyle playing and original compositions display an elegant simplicity that celebrates the purity of the acoustic guitar. Tim is a rare kind of musician, with the ability to both entertain an audience and inspire future generations of players. Hear his beautiful music at: <http://www.timfarrellmusic.com/video.cfm>.



Doors open at 7:30pm. Music starts at 8:00pm.

Tickets: \$20 at the door or \$15 paid in advance

You can pay in advance at the River of Grass website ([www.riverofgrass.org](http://www.riverofgrass.org); go to **Events**).

**Come hungry!**

Our creative River of Grass chefs are preparing something delicious!

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR MORE DIVERSE AND ENTERTAINING ACTS

April 20 Paul Zisholtz, Aaron Stang and Gary Gonzalez

May 18 Hunter Altschul and Joel Zoss



Check out our River of Grass Café [Facebook](#) fan page for all the latest news!





# MARCH 2012

	Fri.	16th	7:30-11:00pm	Headliner: Tim Farrell in Concert
	Sun.	18th	10:30-11:30am 11:30am-12:30pm 11:45am-12:15pm 12:30-3:00pm	Sunday Service Hospitality Hour Board Report Back Swamp Rose Covenant Group
Thu.	1st		6:30-8:00pm	Yoga Class (Facility Rental)
Sat.	3rd		9:00am-12:00pm 10:00-11:30am 7:30-11:00pm	Congregational Workday Wildpine Covenant Group Beatles Blast (Auction Event)
Sun.	4th		10:30-11:30am 10:45-11:45am 11:30am-12:30pm 11:30am-1:30pm	Sunday Service Sunday Classes Hospitality Hour Membership Committee
Tue.	6th		4:00-7:00pm	River of GREENS
Wed.	7th		7:00-9:00pm	Leadership Round Table
Thu.	8th		6:30-8:00pm 7:00-9:00pm	Yoga Class (Facility Rental) Men's Group
Sat.	10th		8:45-11:30am 9:30am-3:00pm 6:00-10:00pm	Volunteer Day at LifeNet4Families Workshop: Non-Violent Communication ContraDance (Facility Rental)
Sun.	11th		Daylight Savings Time Begins (change clocks forward 1 hour) 10:30-11:30am 11:30am-12:30pm 11:20am-12:30pm	Sunday Service Hospitality Hour Glazing of Empty Bowls
Mon.	12th		7:00-9:00pm	Finance Committee
Wed.	14th		7:00-10:00pm	Board Meeting
Thu.	15th		6:30-8:00pm 7:00-10:00pm	Newsletter Deadline Yoga Class (Facility Rental) Opera Lover's Party (Auction Event)
	Fri.	16th	7:30-11:00pm	Headliner: Tim Farrell in Concert
	Sun.	18th	10:30-11:30am 11:30am-12:30pm 11:45am-12:15pm 12:30-3:00pm	Sunday Service Hospitality Hour Board Report Back Swamp Rose Covenant Group
	Tue.	20th	4:00-7:00pm	River of GREENS
	Wed.	21st	7:15-9:00pm	bUUKies Book Group
	Thu.	22nd	6:30-8:00pm 7:00-9:00pm	Yoga Class (Facility Rental) Men's Group
	Fri.	23rd	7:00-9:00am	UUA FL District Assembly (Jacksonville) Spiritual Arts Group
	Sat.	24th		UUA FL District Assembly (Jacksonville)
	Sun.	25th	10:30-11:30am 10:45-11:45am 11:30am-12:30pm 12:00-1:00pm	UUA FL District Assembly (Jacksonville) Sunday Service Sunday Classes Hospitality Hour Stone Soup (Empty Bowls Lunch)
	Mon.	26th	7:30-9:00pm	Women's Group
	Thu.	29th	6:30-8:00pm	Yoga Class (Facility Rental)
	Sat.	31st	10:00am-3:00pm	Congregational Picnic
<b>APRIL HIGHLIGHTS</b>				
	Sat.	31st		Marjorie Stoneman Douglas' Birthday
	Tue.	10th		Passover Seder
	Sun.	15th		Wine, Chocolate, and Cheese Tasting Party (Auction Event)
	Fri.	20th		Paul Zisholtz and Aaron Stang & Gary Gonzalez in Concert
	Sat.	21st		Service Leadership Training