



United Church of Gainesville

# NEWSLETTER

WHOEVER YOU ARE, WHEREVER YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY, WE WELCOME YOU.

LATE JANUARY 2008

Larry Reimer & Sandy Reimer  
Ministers

Andy Bachmann  
Associate Minister

Ellen Louis  
Editor

## WORSHIP THEME FOR JANUARY: *THE MENDING CIRCLE*

As people of faith, as a congregation, we are called to be a community of healing, of mending what is broken and torn in ourselves, in one another, in the world. How do we repair what has become unglued? How do we put together what is incomplete, carrying on the dreams of someone like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.? How do we go on when we reach the impasse, the place that cannot be stitched back together?

Join us for worship!



### CALL TO WINTER CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, January 27 at 10:30am in the Sanctuary



- Agenda:
- To approve the final 2008 budget.
  - An update on Ministerial Transitions Plan

**Ministerial Transitions Informational Session, Sunday, January 13,**  
in the Sanctuary from 12:15 to 2:00pm. Child Care provided. Details on page 2.

“As we move about this world and as we act with kindness, or perhaps with indifference or hostility toward the people we meet, we are setting the great spider web atremble. The life I touch, for good or ill, will touch another life, and that in turn another, until who knows where the trembling stops or in what far place my touch will be felt.” ~ *Frederick Buechner*



# *What's Happening in January and beyond...*

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## **Information Session on Options for UCG Ministerial Transitions Sunday, January 13 from 12:15 to 2:00pm in the Sanctuary Child Care Provided**

### **Led by the Congregation-Ministry Review Board (CMRB) and the ministerial team**

Have you heard about the ministerial transitions that lie ahead for our church as Larry Reimer and Sandy Reimer move toward retirement? Do you know what our options are? Do you know how traditional ministerial retirement plans work? Are you wondering what the “phased plan” is all about? Do you have questions about what these plans would mean for the church and for Larry, Sandy, and Andy? Here is your chance to find out and to ask questions.

On Sunday afternoon, January 13<sup>th</sup>, the Congregation-Ministry Review Board, along with Larry, Sandy, and Andy, will present information about the options for ministerial transitions, including a “phased plan” and traditional retirement plans. Come and learn about the details of these options and what they would mean for our church. After the presentation of the plans, we will break into small groups for discussion, led by CMRB members, to answer questions and to listen to your feedback. These options will come for a vote before the congregation in the early spring, so we need your participation, your input, and your concerns now!

### **Come Help Us Celebrate Rick Johnson...**

As many of you know, Rick Johnson, UCG Adult Choir Director, will be preparing for sabbatical abroad. Because of the sabbatical, he will no longer serve as the Adult Choir Director. To commemorate his 10 years of service to UCG, the Lively Arts Program will host a party in his honor on **January 26 at 6:00 PM in the UCG Fellowship Hall**. We are planning a covered dish party with a cash bar for wine and beer; sodas will be provided at no charge. We hope for a large turn out, so as always, anyone who has heard the choir sing or has heard music in the Sanctuary is invited to participate. There will be no charge for attendance; however, beginning in January, there will be a sign up sheet with tickets as a reminder of the covered dish you have agreed to provide. We look forward to your participation in a fun filled evening of celebration and merriment.

### **“Coming Home to Ourselves”**

#### **Annual Women’s Overnight ~ Saturday, February 2, 10am to Sunday, February 3, noon Episcopal Conference Center, Live Oak, Florida**

Come away with us to the Episcopal Conference Center near Live Oak for a week-end in the company of women of all ages. Enjoy the beautiful setting, the delicious food, the comfortable facilities, as we gather to relax, to connect, to share, to laugh, and to reflect on our lives and our spiritual journeys. Through meditation and writing, through a simple craft and conversation, through singing and worship, through quiet time and play, we will each visit the house of our souls, create a vision of our future, and discover the ways we are not alone.

There is room for 42 participants. The cost includes program, supplies, facility charge, 3 meals, and a motel-type room with a private bath: \$135 for a single room; \$95 for a double room; \$75 for a triple room. Five scholarships, at \$55 each, are available.

Registration this year is at the church office, with Lisa Goldstein, between 9:30am and 4:30pm on January 8, 9, 10, & 11 or at church on Sunday, January 13<sup>th</sup> between 10:15 and 11:15. Please bring your checkbook or money when you register.

# What's Happening in January and beyond... <sup>3</sup>

## Patticake Potluck – January 20

This month's Patticake will be January 20th, 3:30p.m., at the home of Summer and Joe Hartley. The Hartleys have a great backyard for getting a little rustic. There will be a bonfire in the back of the property, so bring anything you might want to roast or toast. Please bring something to add to our potluck and dress appropriately if you want to sit on a log by the fire. Open to families with newborns through first grade (and their siblings). The Hartleys live off Williston Road., across from Idyllwild Elementary. Call for more directions. 4700 SW 20th Terrace, phone # 335-7909.

## Visitors' Lunch – January 20

If you've been visiting UCG, we'd love to have you join us for lunch at 12:15 on Sunday, January 20. This is a time for you to ask any questions you have about UCG, for Larry and Sandy to get to know you a little better, and for you to meet a few UCG members in a smaller setting. Child care is provided as well as lunch. Please sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office or call the office, 378-3500.

## New Members Orientation – January 30

If you have been visiting UCG and are ready to join the church, we will be receiving new members on Sunday February 10, at both services. The orientation meeting for joining is Wednesday, January 30, at 7:00 p.m. Please let us know if you need child care and we will provide it. Sign up on the bulletin board at church or call the office, 378-3500. Membership in UCG is based on your acceptance of the church compact and your willingness to be part of the UCG community.

| Sun  | Mon       | Tue  | Wed   | Thu                       | Fri       | Sat  |
|--|-----------|--|---|---------------------------|-----------|--|
| <b>13</b><br>Worship 9:30 & 11:00am<br><br>Ministerial Transitions Info Session 12:15pm  | <b>14</b> | <b>15</b><br>Budget Summit 1:30pm<br><br>CIA 7pm<br><br>BOB 7:15pm<br><br>BAP 7:15pm | <b>16</b><br>CMRB 12pm<br><br>Church Council 5:30pm | <b>17</b>                 | <b>18</b> | <b>19</b><br>Jones-Laboy Wedding 5pm             |
| <b>20</b> Worship 9:30 & 11:00am<br>Art in the Library reception 10am<br>Book Club* 12pm<br>Visitor's Lunch 12:15am<br>Aware, Care, Share 5-6:30pm | <b>21</b> | <b>22</b><br>February Newsletter Deadline 12pm                                       | <b>23</b>   | <b>24</b>                 | <b>25</b> | <b>26</b><br>Celebration for Rick Johnson 6:00pm |
| <b>27</b><br>IHN Hosting begins<br>Worship 9:30am<br>Congregational Meeting 10:30am<br>Evening Worship 6:15pm                                      | <b>28</b> | <b>29</b><br>Middle School Team 7:30pm   | <b>30</b><br>New Members Orientation 7pm            | <b>31</b><br>Choir 7:30pm |           |  |

## ***Ten Tips for Getting Married at UCG*** **– from Larry Reimer, Sandy Reimer and Andy Bachmann**

Anne Lamott says, in her book Plan B, “*Building a wedding is a recipe for muddle. You are attempting to make something beautiful out of unruly and unpredictable elements: the relatives, the guests, the dreams, the rivalries, the weather, the food. Out of a wild assortment of family and friends, you hope to create something harmonious. You do so as an act of faith, hoping that for a brief time, the love and commitment of two people will unite everyone, and the day will sort of work.*”

In order to assist you in reducing some of the muddle - if you or any member of your family imagines the possibility of getting married or having a commitment ceremony at UCG – Sandy, Andy and Larry, hereafter known as UCG ministers, offer these recommendations from their experiences in officiating at weddings.

1. The UCG ministers are ready, willing, and able to officiate at weddings and commitment ceremonies for UCG members and active visitors. Members and active visitors have priority simply because of the constraints on our time and on scheduling the Sanctuary.
2. If you want UCG ministers to perform your ceremony, **the very first thing you need to do before you reserve a reception hall, ceremony site or photographer, is to contact the ministers.** We can work with you to find a suitable date, but that can be very difficult, and sometimes impossible, for us if a couple already has settled on a date and other arrangements without talking to us first.
3. We highly recommend using the UCG sanctuary for your wedding or commitment ceremony. It is beautiful, convenient, and ready to go, with a sound system, a wonderful piano, a foyer, rooms where the wedding party can gather, and seating for up to 275 guests.
4. If you choose to do an outside wedding, be sure to reserve a back-up site in case of rain, such as the church. We do not recommend outside weddings after May or before October. What seems like a great idea for an outside wedding while you are planning in January can turn out to be pretty brutal in Florida’s July heat. Consider the direction of the sun at the time of your wedding, how to get a sound system in place, and how you will make the decision to change sites in case of bad weather. Most of all, be sure you are comfortable with the change if it is necessary.
5. The fellowship hall and west wing of UCG are available for wedding receptions. They connect to make a large, comfortable and beautiful room at a very reasonable price.
6. There is a limit to how far the UCG ministers can travel for off- site weddings, especially since we do work on Sunday mornings. We may not be able to accommodate an out-of-town location.
7. We typically meet with a couple at least three times prior to the wedding. This is for us to get to know the couple, hear your story and offer some pre-marital counseling, which consists primarily of tools you will be able to use throughout your marriage.
8. If you are marrying someone of another faith, we are happy to invite a clergy person from that faith tradition to take part in the ceremony. It’s appropriate for us to do the inviting and to work out the part this clergy person will have in the ceremony.
9. We have several UCG members who are ready to help coordinate the wedding procession and assist with some of the details, if you do not have someone to take on this role.
10. No matter which of us you ask to preside at your wedding - Andy, Sandy, Larry, or a combination thereof – we all do a similar ceremony that is personal, meaningful and spiritually grounded. We view marriage as a sacred covenant between two people before God and in the presence of their family and friends

## **RETREAT! RETREAT! RETREAT!** **April 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>**

It's time to start planning, dreaming, and getting excited! I'm going to be gathering a Retreat committee in the next weeks, so if you'd like to be part of a wonderful group planning a terrific inter-generational event, please let me know. We need folks to organize adult workshops, children's programs, snacks, recreation, the Talent Show, lifeguards, and the sponsorship of first-time attendees. Just e-mail me or call me at the church office if you'd like to be on the Retreat team!

~ **Sandy Reimer**

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### **Three short notes from Larry Reimer:**

**On February 3 we will have the second in the series "Gifts of the Spirit"** during which my friend Rabbi Michael Joseph of Gainesville's Reformed Temple Shir Shalom will share the key stories and abiding shadows in Judaism. At our last "Gifts of the Spirit" service on November 25, with Muslim representatives from the Silk Road Community, attendance was embarrassingly light. I know it was the Sunday after Thanksgiving, and there were many excuses, but I believe these opportunities to hear leaders of different faith communities are not to be missed.

**Don't Miss the Hippodrome Film "The Bible Tells Me So"**. From January 25-February 1, a remarkable film, "For the Bible Tells Me So" will be playing at the Hippodrome. Through the stories of families who have a gay family member, this film reconciles scripture and homosexuality, revealing that religious anti-gay bias is based largely on misinterpretation of scripture. This film offers healing and clarity for anyone caught in the crosshairs of faith and sexual identity. We may schedule a UCG night.

**Larry and Sandy Off to a Preaching Conference** – Larry and Sandy will be taking continuing education time from January 21-23 at the Methodist Retreat Center at St. Simon's Island, Georgia. The program is on "Spiritual Maturity in Times of Conflict and Change" with one of America's finest preachers, Barbara Brown Taylor, and UCC biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann.

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### **- Upcoming Dates and Details for Youth Ministry - from Andy Bachmann**

#### **MSG - Middle School Group**

- Jan. 6 Intentional Games, with Andy, Kit and George
- Jan. 13 Walk to Starbucks (Please bring some cash)
- Jan. 20 Special guest leader, Chris Coates, with The Gospel According to the Simpsons!
- Jan. 27 Rock Climbing to the Gainesville Rock Gym!
- Feb. 3 Kick ball at J. J. Finley!

#### **Youth United - High School Group**

- Jan. 6 Sex, Drugs and Rock n' Roll discussion with Larry Turner and Andy
- Jan. 13 MLK Jr. in Focus
- Jan. 20 Special guest speaker, Sheriff Sadie Darnell!
- Jan. 27 6:15 Worship

Please note: All forms and payments for Ski Trip, Feb. 14-17 due by Jan. 27

#### **Aware, Care, Share - UCG Confirmation**

- Jan. 6 and 20, 5 pm to 6:30 pm

## A Little Child Shall Lead Them

### UCG Children's Program ~ Director, Heidi Stein

#### **What's Next? A Peaceful New Year**

I am really looking forward to the New Year and trying out a new approach to the rotation model. The Board of Children's Ministry set a goal to have some structured multi-age activities. This rotation will be offering a wide range of opportunities designed to encourage the growth of the children's peaceful caring spirits. Each child will take the lead in choosing the activity they would like to complete. This will create a multi-age group in each class.

As usual these classes will be taught by some incredible volunteers. The theme for this unit is Peace and, although much of the work of peace can be ominous, oppressive and serious, our teachers will show the children by their actions, by smiles and activities that peacemaking is fun. It is a life-style filled with joy, hope, and humor. Specific activities include:

**Outdoors-** Live in harmony with nature. Children will learn to protect and care for nature in the process of exploring and enjoying the natural areas surrounding the Church.

**Physical Play-** Explore self image. Children will describe themselves in a variety of ways. Activities will reinforce positive evaluations of the diversity among people and then children will begin to explore social identity and social justice issues by address issues of bias based on group differences.

**Drama-** Discover the different ways to deal with conflict. Children will examine different ways to deal with conflict. Then they will role play everyday situations of conflict and different ways to respond.

**Drumming-** Experience the peaceful world of drums. Children will learn about playing their own rhythm while joining in the group rhythm.

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| 01-13-08 | <i>Peaceful Play*</i> Rotation Begins                  |
| 01-20-08 | MLK Holiday Special Event<br>hosted by Larry and Sandy |
| 01-27-08 | Continue <i>Peaceful Play*</i><br>Choices Rotation     |
| 02-03-08 | Continue <i>Peaceful Play*</i><br>Choices Rotation     |
| 02-10-08 | Continue <i>Peaceful Play*</i><br>Choices Rotation     |

\*Parents, please be sure your 2nd-5th grader brings their bible to church during this rotation.

#### **Where is your child?**

As you can imagine keeping track of everyone and keeping them safe is one of our top priorities. We really need the parents help with this new style rotation. It is very important that parents make sure the teacher or childcare aides know they have taken their child home after church school or activity time. Also if you arrive late for church school, it is important that you walk your children back to the West Wing and check them into a specific activity.

#### **Where did it go?**

Both December and November seemed to speed by in a blur of family, friends and fun. Thank you so much to all the volunteers and staff who made the season merry and bright for the families at UCG.

**Board of Membership:**

Have you ever been puzzled about how things work at the United Church of Gainesville? How to be a member of the choir? How to sign up for Small Groups? What do they mean by “God however known”?

The first thing you do is call up someone you know or find someone you know on Sunday morning. Some new members may not know many people at UCG or may feel uncomfortable asking too many questions.

So the Board of Membership has established a program of “Contact Persons”, people who make a special connection with a new member assigned to them. Beginning immediately after New Members Sunday, special contact persons will call each new member and identify themselves as their new UCG contact persons for the next four months.

The contact person helps the new member make connections at UCG. Specifically, the contact person looks for the new member on Sundays and sits with them at least twice. They should call once a month to check in. They invite the new member to an upcoming church activity, such as the Oxfam fast dinner, or Lessons and Carols. The contact person is available for questions about how things work at UCG or how to get involved with various groups. The contact person could also help the new member become involved with Church Retreat.

In most cases, the contact person is someone the new member already knows. The Board of Membership then calls each of the contact people, explains the program and asks if they are willing to participate.

We hope this new program will make it easier for new members to feel at home at UCG and to feel connected and included with all that goes on at UCG.

(If you are interested in being a contact person for a new member, contact the church office and they will forward your name to Darrell.)

**Adult Small Groups - February through April:**

There are 15 adult small groups being offered. The brochure describing these groups and the registration forms are available at the church. You can pick one up this Sunday or stop by the church office during the week.

You must register in order to participate in these groups. *The registration deadline is Sunday, January 27 at noon.* Here is a list of these groups and their meeting dates:

**The Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond**

**Yourself** - Sunday, February 24 & March 2

**Lunchtime Meditation Group** -Thursdays, from January-May

**Full Moon Drumming Circle**- Tuesday, January 22

**Dreamwork**- Wednesdays, February 6 & 20, March 5 & 19, April 2 & 16

**Beginner's Mind: The Heart of Homecoming** - Saturday, February 23

**Shaping the Truth of Your Life: A Writing Workshop**- Monday evenings, February 11, 18 & 25

**Crystal Bowl Meditation**- Sundays, February 10 & March 16

**Spring Flower Hike along the Suwannee River-**

Saturday, March 8

**Ah Chocolate!!!**- Saturday, February 9

**Mostly Fiction** - Second Monday of each month

**More Fiction Book Group** - Third Sunday of each month

**50's Plus Group Activities** - Sundays, February 10, March 16, April 13

**Party Bridge However Known**- Second Tuesdays of the month

**Sunday Afternoon at the Movies** -Sundays, February 17, March 2, April 13

**Walking Catfish** - Saturday, March 1

# Sundays in January

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## REGULAR SUNDAY SCHEDULE

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 9:15 - 12:15 | Nursery & Toddler Care                       |
| 9:30         | Worship with Children's Story                |
| 9:45 - 10:45 | Church School - after the children's story   |
| 10:30        | Fellowship Time                              |
| 10:45 - noon | Children's Activity Time                     |
| 11:00 - noon | Worship, Adult Seminars, Middle School Group |
| 12:15        | Youth United                                 |

### *Worship Theme: The Mending Circle*

#### **Sunday, January 13**

8:30 – Sunday morning Meditation in the Chapel, led by Bill Alexander

9:30 and 11:00 Worship Services – “Forgiveness: The Freedom to Be at Peace,” Sandy Reimer. Special music by the adult choir. The 11:00 service will include Communion.

11:00 – Adult Seminars:

- “Shaolin Cosmos Chi Kung for Health and Vitality” with Anthony Korahais. Shaolin Cosmos Chi Kung is a rare and ancient Chinese healing art that was a precious secret for centuries. The exercises are simple, easy to remember, gentle and fun. Athleticism is absolutely not required. Best of all, students quickly notice tangible results, like better sleep, more energy, less pain, smoother emotions and a clearer mind. This workshop will provide an introduction to this practice. Anthony Korahais is the senior American disciple under the world-renowned teacher Grandmaster Wong Kiew Kit of Malaysia and used this practice to cure himself of a debilitating case of clinical depression.

- “Top 10 Ways to Talk to Teens about Spirituality” How can you encourage your teens to come to church when they'd rather sleep in on Sunday morning? How can you be a spiritual mentor to them? Join UCG member David Dean, director of UF's Presbyterian & Disciples of Christ Student Center, in a lively Q&A/information sharing session about teenagers and issues of spirituality.

12:15 to 2:00pm – Information Session on Ministerial Transition Plans – in the Sanctuary

#### **Sunday, January 20 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend**

8:30 – Sunday morning Meditation in the Chapel, led by Mark Burlingame

9:30 and 11:00 Worship Services – Andy Bachmann

10:30 - Art in the Library with Allison LeBaron-“Florida Landscapes”

11:00 – Adult Seminars (*bulleted below*)

- “Secrets of the Heart Craft Workshop” Facilitated by Margaret Johnston. As Rhonda Byrn's book “The Secret” suggests, intentionality can be a very powerful instrument of change and transformation in your life. Focus on what you most desire and you will work to make it happen. In this hands-on workshop, you'll decorate a heart-shaped box that expresses who you are and how you wish to be, and create an ideal place for keeping your heart's desires safe. Heart-shaped boxes and decorative materials provided, or bring your own, along with an open heart.

- “Safe Living without Environmental Toxins” Dr. Elizabeth A. Guillette, from the UF Department of Anthropology will be speaking about common residential chemicals we might bring intentionally or unintentional into our homes. She will share ideas and current research about how these toxins affect us and how to avoid them.

12:15 – Visitors Lunch

5:00 – Aware, Care, Share Group

## Sunday Schedule Continued

### Sunday, January 27

8:30 – Sunday morning Meditation in the Chapel, led by Catherine Berg

9:30 – One Worship Service- “Let Me Amend That,” Larry Reimer

10:30 – Winter Congregational Meeting

5:00 – Interfaith Hospitality Network Hosting begins

6:15 – Worship

### Sunday, February 3

9:30 and 11:00 Worship Service – “Gifts of the Spirit: Judaism” with Larry Reimer and Rabbi Michael Joseph

### PASSAGES...

- ★ Autumn Lenora Frenchman born November 13, 2007, 7lbs 12ozs and 21 inches. She is joyfully welcomed by her parents Brandt and Heather and her brothers and sisters, Chelsea, William, Joseph, Anna Lena, and Tessa Frenchman
- ★ Jamie & Ian Baldwin announce the birth of their son Beckett James Baldwin, born Friday, January 4, 8lbs 6ozs. He joins his sister Caryss and brother Zach. We send blessings and a happy welcome.
- ★ Blessings to Matthew Daniel Atkins, son of Robert Olin and Lucie K. Atkins, who was baptized on December 23 by Larry Reimer and Sandy Reimer.
- ★ Jeanette Bell, Ron Nutter’s mother, died of congestive heart failure on Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup>. Jeanette had lived with Ron and Mary for the past thirteen years; she had been in hospice care for about three weeks. We send our prayers and our sympathy to Ron and Mary.

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#### A note from a church member regarding parking:

I'm wondering if you could remind people that the west parking lot is for handicapped tags only. I had to drive around the block three times last night, because people were blocking those spaces to drop people off or were parked illegally. Even though I arrived early (I knew there would be many people attending), I missed the first 10 minutes of the service.

Thanks,

Diana Karol-Nagy

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### Community News

**What:** Lecture/Discussion “Speaking Out: About the Mental Health System”

**Where:** Downtown Branch of the Alachua County Library

**When:** Thursday, January 24, 2008 from 7 to 8:30 PM

**Who:** Frank Blankenship, psychiatric survivor and community activist, will talk about treatment alternatives and the mental health system. Frank is the chair of Mindfreedom International Affiliate Support in Charlottesville, VA, and contact person for Mindfreedom Virginia. He will speak against forced treatment and human rights abuses in the mental health system, and for treatment alternatives, better jobs and decent housing for those who have had their lives disrupted by hospitalization.

**Contact Person:** Jackie Davis, 352-219-3789

UNITED CHURCH OF  
GAINESVILLE

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Hours: Monday 8:30 - 1:30

Tuesday - Friday 8:30 - 4:30

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**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: TUESDAY, JANUARY 22**  
**FOR FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS**

## Looking Ahead:

- ◆ February 6– Ash Wednesday-Services at noon & 7:00pm
- ◆ February 10- New Members Joining
- ◆ Thursday Evenings– February 14-March 13– Taize Services - 6:30pm
- ◆ February 16– UCG Supper Club
- ◆ February 17 through 22 - Labyrinth in the Sanctuary
- ◆ March 23– Easter – Services at 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00am
- ◆ April 25-27– Annual Church Retreat at Lake Yale

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: TUESDAY, JANUARY 22**  
**FOR FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS**