

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

Dec 2010

Volume IX, Issue 12

Religious Freedom — Diverse Perspectives



## From Your Intern Minister . . .

I don't want to write about the December Holidays much, but I want to remind you of the many events we'll have as the month moves on. We begin by being part of the Black Mountain Christmas parade on Dec 4th—if you can't ride on the float, come cheer for our ecumenical singing, led by choir director Linda Metzner. Also this holiday season, we will light our usual Advent wreath, stage a hilarious musical about the several winter Holidays, observe Hanukkah, and have a candle-light Christmas Eve service.

One of the things I realized by being part of the UUSC/UUA Just journey to Uganda is that Unitarian Universalism is truly an international movement. Its easy to think that Unitarian Universalism belongs to the United States, since both Unitarian and Universalist denominations were created and fostered here. However, in other parts of the world, Unitarian and or Universalist movements have also grown, and sometimes completely independent of American UUs. Most of us have heard that there are about as many Unitarians in Hungary/Romania (Transylvania) as in the US, but did you know that there are strong Unitarian and/or Universalist groups and churches in India, the Philippines, Indonesia, and many other countries?

# India has the largest population of Unitarians in the world outside of the US—there are 10,000 or so who live in the Khasi Hills region of North East India, and there is another, smaller population, who converted to a form of Hindu Unitarianism in southern India.

# In addition to the congregation of 200 that I visited in Uganda, neighboring Kenya has some 600 members in Unitarian congregations.

# In the Philippines, there are several thousand Unitarians.

Many American Unitarian Universalists might have a difficult time with the theologies of some of these groups. It is clear that they tend to be much more Bible-centered than we are. However, what we share is the believe that Jesus was a great teacher, not a god, and that the world gets better through the work of our own hands. In my visit to Uganda, I was amazed to visit the school for 500 children and the home for 20 HIV-impacted orphans that the small congregation in Kampala has created in less than 3 years. What we share is the belief that our actions speak louder than our words, and the confidence that, the work of bettering the world is ours to do. The challenge is for us to continue to work together for common goals, and not be put off by differing views about god. I think that the Unitarians and Universalist groups that are emerging in other countries (often after learning about American Unitarian Universalism on the internet!) will have a lot to teach us about being faithful people in the years to come, and that, if we are serious about our goal of creating world community, we must continue to reach out to them.

If you'd like to learn more about the trip I took, and even explore the possibility of joining the UUSC for a future trip (a spring JustWorks trip is being planned for Haiti) , go visit [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org).

—Sally Beth



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**Board Meeting: Monday 20 December, 6 p.m.**

Send Newsletter Information to  
Norm Kowal, *Editor*  
[normankowal@bellsouth.net](mailto:normankowal@bellsouth.net)

Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 21 December,  
10 a.m., covering January 2011

## From the Board

But first... a Special Comment from me: This is our last month to have Sally Beth as our intern minister. I have personally grown from her being here and feel she has supported our congregation in that same tender and thoughtful way. I will miss her dearly. I encourage each of us to write a note or make it known in some special way how she has touched your life.

#Our Treasurer will be sending out the 2nd quarter pledge report soon.

#A BIG Thank you goes to Friend for so far donating \$650 from the sale of a portion of his books to us!

#The board has answered the questions that the Ministerial Search Committee asked.

#The board accepted a Fund Raising Policy as follows:

1. Distribution of proceeds from any proposed fundraising must be declared before submission to the Board.
2. All fundraisings must be approved by the Board.
3. Money raised should be spent within 12 months unless approved otherwise by the Board.

#We are forming a Fund Raising Committee. Please see Teresa if you would enjoy serving in this way.

#Tina Rosato needed to resign as Membership Chair due to her out of town schedule. Thank you Tina for your active role in the last several months!

#Angie has agreed to be Chair of Membership. Thank you in advance Angie.

#We approved a more usable Building Use Policy.

#In relation to this we previously approved allowing Byron to rent the building for a Mother Grove fundraiser on December 10.

See you at our great services and in or at the Holiday parade!

—Heidi Blozan, Board President

### Dear Church Family,

With the close of 2010 Sally Beth Shore will also close her internship with us here at UUCSV. We will miss her and the many contributions she has generously and consistently given us over the past months.

The Board and the ICOM (Intern Committee on Ministry) have asked me to inform you of plans to present a farewell gift to her from our congregation. If you would like to contribute to this gift, please make your check out to UUCSV and be sure to mark it "SBS farewell" so that it will go for her gift. You may mail it to church or put it in the offering plate by SUNDAY DECEMBER 5TH!

We appreciate your support.

—Mamie Hilliard



## Sunday Programming

**Sunday, 5 December 2010, 11 a.m.**

**All Are Architects of Fate**

**Intergenerational Beginning**

**Child Dedication Service**

The title of today's service is a favorite in our hymnbook—which speaks to a common UU belief that we can, if not be masters of our fate, at least have a hand in its creation. As my internship at UUCSV draws to a close, I offer my observations of, learnings from, and gratitudes to, this congregation. I know many of you are concerned about the next steps on your path, but I believe that, as, Julian of Norwich put it, “all shall be well.” As you move ahead into a new stage of your evolution as a religious community, what is bright and beckoning? What would you leave behind?



**Sunday, 19 December 2010, 11 a.m.**

**Winter Solstice**

**Women's Spirituality Group**

In the eyes of the Goddess, one experiences the Divine in all the multifaceted aspects of creation. There is beauty in both the darkness and the light. Near the Winter Solstice, we will meditate on the healing beauty of the darkest nights of the year, and then welcome in the rebirth of the Light. Women who connected through Goddess studies this past Spring, along with the UUCSV Choir and some of the children, will present a joyful Holiday service with music, singing, artwork, and an appearance of Saint Lucia, an embodiment of the Sun Goddess who brings sweets and good cheer to Swedish families at this time of year.

**Sunday, 12 December 2010, 11 a.m.**

**Intergenerational Holiday Service**

**Pagans, Jews, and Jesus, Too!**

**Sally Beth Shore**

Today's service features an original musical written by Ellen and Chuck Bordman, daughter and son-in-law of members Sue and Geoffrey Stone. The UUCSV players, a cast of all ages, will perform this production which takes a humorous look at how we Unitarian Universalists envision the sharing and celebration of the winter season's holidays.

At the end of the service we will take a few moments to offer our thanks to Sally Beth for her service as our Intern Minister, and present her with an appropriate gift from the congregation. We will also enjoy a Coffee Hour reception for Sally Beth with special food and drink. All are invited to this farewell celebration!

**Friday, 24 December 2010, 5:30 p.m.**

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

Celebrate the holiday with your UUCSV candlelight service featuring beautiful music, story, and carols for all ages. Share cookies and hot cider before you head home to wait for Santa (or anyone else who might be visiting!)

**Sunday, 26 December 2010, 11 a.m.**

**Reflections on Change**

**Sally Beth Shore**

Former President Bill Clinton used to say, “we must make change our friend.” As we end the year, it is a good time to reflect, let go, and look ahead to what is next, in our own lives and the life of the Congregation. All ages are invited to this service, which will include stories of Ganesha, the Hindu god-incarnation of beginnings. This will be the last service of UUCSV Intern Minister Sally Beth Shore.

## Sunday Programming

**Sunday, 2 January 2011, 11 a.m.**

**Tim Perry**

### **A Time to Forgive**



The start of a new year is a great time to leave old wounds behind and move on to healing and wholeness. We all agree that forgiveness is a good thing, but we often seem to be a little fuzzy about exactly what we mean by it, and even fuzzier about how to do it in difficult circumstances. Let's take a fresh look at the concept, break it down, take it apart, analyze it, and see how it works. Then we'll see if we can put it back together in working order and figure out how to make the best use of it in our day-to-day lives.

Tim was preaching in Fundamentalist churches before he was old enough to drive. He passed through several conservative denominations over the years, usually as a minister, until the day his faith suddenly evaporated. He now considers himself a liberal, a "hopeful agnostic," (another sermon for another day) and a grateful member here at UUCSV.

## Religious Education Corner



As we joined together this past Sunday to share our Thanksgiving gratitude, I couldn't help but be awed once again by the amazing group of children and youth in our religious education program. As I looked around the sanctuary, I saw the eager young faces who so willingly and comfortably shared in our intergenerational gathering. I could see the youngest of our elementary group, who in the recent past had been such fireballs of energy as preschoolers, and were now listening, being present, and singing along with all of us. I saw the ones who are more shy, the ones who are outgoing and always willing to participate in front of a crowd of people, and I saw graduates of our Coming of Age class who are now actively participating in our church community. These are my gratu- tudes...every eager happy face in that service and all of the families that share in our congregational life. As we enter into this holiday season, I will carry these gratu- tudes with me every day. Here's wishing to all of our RE families and teachers the most joyous of holiday seasons!

### Classroom Activities and Attendance

Our littlest UUs spend their time in cooperative play, both inside and outside. We've had two regular attendees in this class, and lots of visitors and returning families over the past month. The K-4 class, gener-

ally five to seven children each week, in their *Picturebook UU* curriculum, have focused on Judaism and Earth-based faith traditions over the past month, including a visit from Byron Ballard. When you have a minute, step in to the classroom and see some of our quotations and artwork we've created! The grades 5-8 *Neighboring Faiths* class, comprised of five to six youth, visited the Basilica of St. Lawrence as part of their unit on Catholicism. They took part in a guided tour of the church followed by some social time for lunch in downtown Asheville. The high school youth gathered on November 14 for a covenant group focused on the Islamic faith, with a great discussion about what to do when you witness any type of social injustice. We're planning some movie and pizza nights (see calendar below) and will be participating with the larger congregation in service work with Habitat for Humanity.

### Intergenerational Beginning December 5

In keeping with our tradition of the first Sunday of every month having an intergenerational beginning, we will offer this on December 5. This beginning for everyone will focus on a child dedication service, guided by Sally Beth Shore. Our youngest UU, Campbell Brown, will be part of this ceremony. There is still time to be part of this if you let me know by

December 2.

### Christmas Parade

Children and adults began practicing their songs for the Black Mountain Christmas parade, scheduled for December 4. Even if you don't walk along with us, come watch the parade and cheer us on! Parade begins at 4 p.m. in downtown Black Mountain.

### Important Dates to Remember

- December 4 Black Mountain Christmas Parade
  - December 5 IG beginning—CHILD DEDICATION; youth covenant group meeting
  - December 11 Pizza and movie night for senior high youth; movie "Let's Get Real", focusing on bullying issues; discussion follows
  - December 12 IG Holiday Service and pageant
  - December 24 Family Christmas Eve service with Sally Beth at 5:30 p.m.
  - December 26 IG service
- Sybil Argintar, RE Coordinator  
(sybil.argintar@yahoo.com, 230-3773)

### **Bouquets from SOLS (Sisters of Lucy Stone)**

This past month was a fun and busy one for SOLS, our women's group that any woman in UUCSV is invited to join. I want to give a bouquet to Barbara Rogers for spearheading the effort to present to the congregation the story of Margaret Fuller. From what we heard, it was a successful presentation. Furthermore, Barb made it possible for us to have the panels about Margaret Fuller to hang for awhile in the church building.

Connie Krochmal deserves a big bouquet too. This woman is just too clever! Those of us who were able to be at the church on Tuesday the 16th gladly braved the elements to learn from Connie how to make paper. So much fun was had that it looks like some of us may take this craft seriously. We envision "Fundraiser."

—Jane J. Carroll, Chair

### **Hospitality News**

We wish to thank Harry and Elaine Hamil of Black Mountain Farmer's Market for the tasty coffee we enjoy each Sunday morning. The coffee they provide us, at a generous discount, is a shade-grown organic blend from Costa Rica and Africa, fair traded and locally roasted—representing many UU values in one little cup. So if you see them or stop by their store, let them know how much you enjoy this special treat.

### **Congregational Care Needs You! – Calendar Year 2011**

The Congregational Care Committee is once again updating our list of volunteers.

Are you willing to "every-once-in-a-while" provide a casserole or simple meal, and/or transportation for members and friends of our congregation in times of need?

If you could help during any time in 2011, please fill out the form that will be available on Sundays in the Order of Service this month. Volunteers will be contacted by the Coordinator if/when the need arises. For more info: Barbara Rogers 828-333-2721 or boardwalk-barb@yahoo.com. Thanks for helping our community of friends!

### **Birthdays in December**

December 3<sup>rd</sup> Phil Fryberger

December 5<sup>th</sup> Sarah Gilmour

December 6<sup>th</sup> Annie Hall

If you would like your birthday posted in the church bulletin, please fill out the form located on the table in the foyer.

### **Friday Fling**

December's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on 17 December at 6:30 p.m. at the church. Refreshments (red and white) will be provided. Bring some simple food, so that we can make a potluck supper out of it. The movie "Fiddler on the Roof" (1971) will be shown. For further information call Norm Kowal (333-4925).



### **Choir for December**

On December 19th, the choir will be part of the "Winter Solstice" service presented by Linda and the Women's Spirituality Group. We will sing a song of the Solstice, "Light is Returning," and also a four-part version of "Santa Lucia" in honor of the Swedish (originally Sicilian) saint and Sun Goddess. Please come sing with us!

—Linda Metzner, Choir Director  
(annelinde@hotmail.com)

### **On the Death of Rita**

It is time to say hallo, it is time to say goodbye.  
Our small church community  
has seen its share of final goodbyes.  
I am saddened by this . But also aware that as we are born,  
we also must die  
The problem lies in the going before we are ready to say goodbye.  
The problem is that so many have left within such a short time.  
The problem is to grasp the inevitable truth  
that death is a normal part of life.  
In this fall season we see this all around us,  
the dying of annuals and other tender plants and even of our friends  
Let us hold on to one another as we yet again say goodbye,  
this time to Rita, too soon taken by an all consuming disease.  
Let us hold each other, cry and go forth with our lives  
as she would have us do.

—*With love, Ann*

### **Building on the Dream Opportunity**

A hearty and hardy group of UUCSV volunteers have been helping build the twelfth interfaith house for Habitat this summer and fall. Like all Habitat projects this is an energy efficient and HealthyBuilt home. Thirteen diverse faith congregations have participated in this project. Many thanks to all of our participants, especially to Susan Culler for her coordination and leadership. Our Social Action Committee has endorsed this project again for 2011.

Plans are underway to launch the 2011 Building on the Dream Home on Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. I have agreed to serve as the UUCSV point person for volunteer recruitment and project coordination. Volunteers are carefully supervised by Habitat's professional project managers. You just need to be willing and able bodied. A big heart, work boots and warm pair of gloves are recommended! More specifics will be released later in December. If you are interested in getting involved, please give me a call at 664-0082 or email at lreading0082@charter.net.

—*Lee Reading, Building on the Dream Coordinator*

### **Women's Spirituality Group**

The UUCSV Women's Spirituality Group is holding a pot-luck holiday party! All women are welcome to join us Dec. 1, 6:30 pm at Judy Curtis' home, 806 Holly Ave. We're also having a "white elephant gift exchange" so bring a wrapped (used is fine) gift if you wish to share in this hilarious game. Please let us know if you plan to attend so we can plan drinks, plates, etc. You don't need to contact us if you can't come. Judy Curtis, 828-669-6290, judecurtis@bellsouth.net.

### **UUSC Holiday Card Sales**

Make your money count this holiday season. Support social justice projects around the world by purchasing UU holiday cards. All proceeds go to the UU Service Committee. We're offering a free gift with every purchase.

These cards are available in the foyer before and after services on Sunday. They're \$10 per pack. In addition to holiday cards, we have lovely blank note cards that can be used year-round. Do bring a check if you don't plan on paying cash.

—*Connie Krochmal, Social Action Holiday Cards Coordinator*

**SPIRIT OF SOLSTICE CONCERT**

A magical musical evening of seasonal Celtic and original folk music and song celebrating the Goddess, with Ruth Barrett.

Friday evening, December 10th, 7:30pm (doors open at 7) at UUCSV

Ruth Barrett is an award winning musician, fretted dulcimer artist, singer, songwriter, and author of *Women's Rites*, *Women's Mysteries: Intuitive Ritual Creation*. She is one of the pioneering pagan recording artists of original Goddess songs and Celtic traditional music.

Tickets are \$15-\$10 (sliding scale), available at the door or in advance by going to [www.mothergroveavl.org](http://www.mothergroveavl.org).

Proceeds are to benefit the "Mother Grove Goddess Temple" in Asheville.

(Please bring an object that represents global peace and community for the Peace on Earth Community Altar.)

**UUCSV Seniors' Trip to Folk Art Center/ Blue Ridge Parkway**

The date isn't fixed yet, but the UUCSV seniors are planning to get around again, this time to the Folk Art Center and the Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center in Asheville. Please contact Sally Beth at UUCSV for more information. You don't have to be a "senior" to join us, just free during the day!



**From the Editor—The Last Word**

Because of a recent change in UUA policy many phone numbers and e-mail addresses have been eliminated from the newsletter. If anyone wishes their phone number and e-mail address to be used in the newsletter in the future, please send me an e-mail ([normankowal@bellsouth.net](mailto:normankowal@bellsouth.net)) with your express permission. (Hey, I just work here. I don't make policy.)