



Unitarian Universalist

Congregation of the Swannanoa Valley

A WELCOMING CONGREGATION

Religious Freedom • Diverse Perspectives

**500 Montreat Road
Black Mountain, NC 28711**

*For more information about our
congregation, call*

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BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, February 17 • 6:00 p.m.

UUCSV Newsletter

Send newsletter information to

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NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009 at 10 a.m.

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From the Minister

Today (as I write) Barack Obama was inaugurated. I gathered with about 50 other Meadville Students and staff here at Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago to watch the event. My current class, which is about storytelling and oral tradition, was asked to notice the various “narratives” being told or implied, with and without words, as we watched and listened. We found much to analyze: in what the networks chose to say, in Rick Warren’s appearance, in Barack Obama’s lone passage and entry, in the musical selections and even Mrs. Obama’s dress. In his speech, President Obama told a story of national identity, of unity, greatness, overcoming adversity, shared destiny and promise.

Sometimes the word “language” is used as a verb. “Languaging” the world, declaring our thoughts to others out loud, in public, creates the possibility of interpretation, agreement, action, and thus the spoken word is the first step to changing it. Words matter.

I encourage you to the same exercise I did: look up Obama’s speech, what are the stories about reality he is creating, where might we go with such narratives? Then it’s our turn. What are our stories as a religious community? What are the stories that we as Unitarian Universalists offer to the world, and how can we continue to evolve them?

Sincerely,

↪ *Sally Beth*

Board Notes...

At our board meeting last Tuesday we discussed lots of interesting reports. Our new Search Committee reported on their early meetings and recommended that it may be time again to do a current needs assessment from the congregation. It has been nearly 3 years since the last one was done and the board fully supports another systematic look at what our ministerial needs are to inform the work by this important committee. Stay tuned in the months to come and be thinking about your own views on our ministerial needs so you can share your ideas with this committee.

The board heartily approved a proposal by Deb Vingle to teach a Yoga class at our church. See the related article in this newsletter and sign up soon before some of us on the board take all the available slots!

We also reviewed an update from the Committee on Ministry on the progress and good work of our interim minister, Sally Beth Shore. Should you have any feedback on how you see things going, praise or suggestions, please contact any of three members on this committee – Angie Underwood, Scott Conklin or Kim Taylor. They are working closely with Sally Beth to make her work at UUCSV as successful as it can be.

The RE committee will this month be establishing a vision for our various Religious Education efforts. We on the board added a few ideas. If you’d like to contribute your ideas, please contact Sybil Argintar or Heidi Blozan right away. Or maybe YOU would like to teach a class?

Barbara Rogers and Dawn Wilson will soon be gathering names of persons who might be interested in serving on our Board for new 2-year terms starting July 1 of this year. If you’d like to join us in helping to make some of the key decisions for our church community, please let Barbara know. She’ll have details on what commitments a board member has.

Finally, once a year we submit to the Unitarian Universalist Association how many members we currently have. The Membership Committee recently double checked our list and we are submitting that we have 95 members this year. How many of the 95 do you know personally? If you’d like to get to know more people, join a committee, be a greeter, take a yoga class, join a covenant group, or help in RE. Ask any of us on the board and we’d be glad to help

↪ *Jim Carillon, Board President*

Sunday Programming

Please join us for Social Hour after each program

Sunday, February 1, 2009 11 a.m.
"Reflections on Black History in Unitarian Universalism"

Sally Beth Shore

Observance of Black History Month, we will spend a few minutes honoring some of the African-American pioneers in our denomination, as well as those who pioneered in our local community. These accounts are sometimes heartbreaking, but learning more about those who fought for an equal place in Unitarian Universalism and in our country, we become inspired in our commitment to being a religious community that welcomes all skin colors.



Sunday, February 22, 2009 11 a.m.
"A Press Conference with God"

Jeff Hutchins

We need your questions for God!

You read that correctly. Jeff Hutchins, a UU speaker who recently moved here from Pittsburgh, PA, will present today's program, which he calls "a bit of theological theatre." Jeff has led this service at many other UU churches and societies, and is bringing it to the Swannanoa Valley. The premise of the service is that Jeff will portray God's press secretary, come here to answer your questions for God.

So... what would you ask God if you had the chance? Your questions may be serious, silly, or anything in between, and UU's of all ages are encouraged to join in. Jeff will pick about a dozen questions that he will "submit to God" before the service. This service is meant to be satirical and thought provoking, but not blasphemous or offensive. There will be an opportunity for discussion for those who wish to comment or continue the dialogue.

Please write down your name and your question(s) and send them to Jeff by regular mail (6 Red Plum Lane, Black Mountain, NC 28711), or by email (jeff@jeffhutchins.com), or simply hand them to him at church on Sunday. Try to keep each question to less than 25 words. Jeff will use your name unless you request anonymity.

Jeff is a man of many talents who has squandered most of them. He has lived 61 years against all odds, thanks primarily to the good sense of his wife of 37 years, Diane, and his daughters Rachel and Nell. A list of Jeff's accomplishments suggests he has been successful, yet we all know he could have done so much more. Born in Da Bronx, he was raised (as a Unitarian, no less) in Saudi Arabia and Lebanon till age 18, when he "attended" Boston University and got a degree in Broadcasting and Film. For most of his career, he "worked" in the field of TV captioning, but has now been mercifully sent into retirement. He moved to Black Mountain last October from Pittsburgh, where for 16 years he was an active member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the North Hills, no matter what they tell you.



Sunday, February 8, 2009, 11 a.m.
"Keeping Sacred Time: Text, Prayer, and Ritual in the Home"

Deborah Miles

Deborah Miles will share her journey growing up in southern Arkansas as a Methodist PK during the 50's and 60's and coming to a place of community and of family-raising that contribute to "tikun olam" or repair of the world.

Deborah Miles is the Executive Director of the Center for Diversity Education at UNC Asheville. The Center works to "start a conversation" with students, teachers and community members that will help build relationships for a equitable and inclusive community. Each year programs at the Center are attended by over 25,000 school students throughout WNC. In 2005, she received the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation's Nancy Susan Reynolds Award for Race Relations, often called North Carolina's Nobel Peace Prize. In January 2009, she received the Grace Lee Peace Award from Warren Wilson College. For more about the Center for Diversity Education, visit, www.diversityed.org.

Sunday, February 15, 2009 11 a.m.
Volunteer Appreciation Sunday

Sally Beth Shore

The British Author and philosopher James Allen wrote that "No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks." We believe that. Today, we offer recognition to the many volunteers who make this community thrive-- you! It takes a village to nurture each of us, and today we directly acknowledge the gifts of time and compassion and commitment that we give and receive.

Sunday, March 1, 2009 11 a.m.
Annual Canvass Kickoff Sunday

Sally Beth Shore

Yes, it's that wild, crazy time of year again! How will you support and nourish this church in the coming year? What will be possible for this community thanks to our collective financial commitment? We'll take this Sunday to acknowledge what you have created and wonder about new dreams that can be realized in this community for liberal religion in the Swannanoa Valley.



Changing Office Hours

Our UUCSV office hours are changing starting Feb. 1. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 3:00-6:00 pm. Perhaps this will help more of us to be able to drop by and visit.

Nurturing our Evolution, Securing our Future

Annual Budget Campaign for giving year:

July 2009-June 2010

Campaign dates: March 1-20, 2009

Optimistic, hopeful, audacious? Yes we are! The time has come again for us to plan our annual pledges of financial support for our church. This year's Campaign goal is \$78,000. Combined with anticipated income from other contributions, we will be able to fund a budget of \$83,000 that will allow us to expand our programs, extend staff hours, and hire a permanent half-time minister.

Starting March 1st, a visiting steward will call you to meet with them to make a pledge. These visits are the heart of our congregational well-being. They give us a chance to get to know each other better and to talk about our financial commitments to the congregation. Please make every effort to meet with your steward and take advantage of this opportunity to talk, and to make a powerful financial commitment.

Continuing our financial support at the levels we have been giving will assure that the congregation we cherish will be there for us now and in the future. Your pledge will be a commitment of appreciation for what we have, and of hope for what we know we want to be.

Yours in a giving, hopeful congregation,

↪ Karen McClelland, Budget Campaign Chair

Congregational Care Committee

The Congregational Care Committee is ready to assist our congregation in time of need by providing transportation and meals for those who are facing difficult circumstances. If needs extend beyond those mentioned, please discuss them with the Monthly Coordinator to see if we might have the resources to help.

Our committee is once again updating our list of volunteers. Are you willing to occasionally provide a casserole of simple meal, and/or transportation for members and friends in times of need? If you can help during 2009, please call Kay-Sea Conklin at 686-7502 or email to kayseaconklin@charter.net. We would like to hear from new, as well as continuing volunteers!

Volunteers will be contacted by the committee's Monthly Coordinator if/when the need arises.

Search Committee

We've begun the search for your new minister!

The UUCSV Search Committee – selected in November by the congregation to begin a new search for a half-time minister – held its first and second meeting, December 14, 2008 and January 18, 2009, respectively.

The first meeting was a formative one for members Jane Carroll, Susan Culler, Walter Hoffman, George LeRoy and Pat Middleton. The group elected Susan as chair, while discussing other organizational details. George assumed responsibility for revising the comprehensive informational packet, which is sent to interested candidates.

During the second meeting the five-member committee began – in earnest – discussing the tasks ahead. The group elected Jane as secretary, and Susan reported on her informative and helpful meeting with Evelyn Carter, chair of the former search committee.

The committee also concluded that more information from the congregation is needed before it begins the actual work of advertising for and presenting to you the right person for the job. While information is available from the prior search committee's research, this committee believes that since 2006 the congregational makeup and economic circumstances have changed significantly to warrant another study of the congregation's needs. Thus, your committee advised the Board of Trustees on January 20 that a thorough assessment of the congregation's current needs should be completed soon.

A needs assessment of this nature may consist of any or all of the following: written survey, focus groups, or congregational meetings. It will provide far-reaching information about what you really want in a minister, as well as insights into problems and/or resources available. On the other hand, the assessment may lead us to discontinue the search. Whatever the outcome, the committee intends to work with and take advantage of Thomas Jefferson District Office staff during the assessment.

A necessary and required feature of the search committee's work is confidentiality. However, this committee intends to keep you informed about what's happening during this process, within the confines of appropriate discretion, through periodic updates in the newsletter and other suitable media.

Green Sanctuary

Though recent rains have helped, WNC is still experiencing prolonged, devastating drought. We need to conserve water more than ever. Much of the water usage in the average household is for the toilet. Low-flush models use about half as much water. I have them in my home and they work just fine. When shopping for washing machines, choose front loading models. Using one-third less water, they require much less detergent. For showers, install flow-restricting showerheads. These can reduce water usage by one-fourth. It stands to reason that taking shorter showers also helps. If necessary, set a timer in the bathroom to train yourself.

Our daily use of faucets takes about as much water as a daily shower. This is one area where water-saving measures really make a difference. To avoid waste, turn the faucet off while you soap your hands, brush your teeth, or shave. Water can be wasted throughout the day without our realizing it. But there are remedies. Running the water in the shower or sink until it gets hot wastes a lot of water. The solution is to place a pail or container under the faucet to collect the cold water that would normally go down the drain. I use this water to flush my toilet or water plants.

Leaks can lead to major water loss—almost as much as what we use from faucets each day. Leaks can occur both inside and outside the house. If your faucets are dripping, fix them. Toilet tanks can leak without our realizing it. To test, squeeze a couple drops of food coloring into the tank. Check to see if the color bleeds into the water before the next flush.

Water conserving measures can reduce household water use by as much as 35%.

↪ Connie Krochmal



On January 19, about thirty UUCSVers gathered with hundreds of others in Asheville for the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace Walk--made especially poignant this year with the inauguration the next day of the nation's first African American President.

Room in the Inn

Thanks to all of our Room in the Inn volunteers who helped out on Jan. 9th. The weather cooperated as well. There was no snow or ice for which I'm grateful.

The next event will be on Friday, May 29th. We expect to start sign-up in late March or early April. Though we aren't sure yet whether it will be at the Black Mt. Presbyterian or Methodist, we'll know before sign-up begins.

↪ *Connie Krochmal,*
Social Action, Room in the Inn coordinator

Black Mountain's Best Rummage Sale

The Sisters of Lucy Stone (SOLS) need donations for the UUCSV rummage sale to be held at our annual event "Trillium: A Festival of Follies and Flings" on April 18th 8:00 – 3:00. We are particularly interested in outdoor living items. Clothes not so much. Please bring any and all "Good Stuff" to the RE rooms to the left of the church foyer starting the afternoon of Sunday, April 12th until Thursday, April 16th.

"Good Stuff" is:

- Clean
- Mildew and mold-free
- Free of pet hair and smell
- Unbroken
- In working order
- All parts and pieces present
- Antiques in just about any condition
- Non-toxic
- Passes the "It's not junk" test

We will pick up Good Stuff during the week prior to Trillium if need be. Questions? Contact Jane Carroll at 664-1695 or dr_jcarr@msn.com. Proceeds go to our partner church in Romania and for special projects at UUCSV.

Birthdays in February

February 7th Sherrie Traub
 February 7th Sue Miller
 February 15th Phyllis Robertson
 February 17th Sarah Scott
 February 19th Annelies Fryberger
 February 19th Dawn Precour
 February 22nd Jerry Pope
 February 23rd Will Byers
 February 24th Evelyn Carter
 February 24th Jeffrey Reckinger
 February 25th Frohm Lutvack
 February 27th Marjorie Alexander
 February 29th Tom O'Connell



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

Warblers

We are so very pleased that Linda Metzner is already at the helm of our little Warbling ship and what a difference it is making! She's great and we feel super! Thanks so much to SOLS for making this possible at this time. We have a new rehearsal schedule, too. For February, we rehearse around 12:30 following the service on February 8th, at 7 PM on Thursday, February 12th, and at 10:15 on February 15 before the service during which we will sing.

Linda Metzner, our new director, has begun to lead us into even more beautiful warbling!

Friday Fling

February's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on February 20th 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 "Chicago" (2002, Renee Zellweger, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Richard Gere) will be shown. For further information, call Norm Kowal (669-4668).

Religious Education Corner

Coming of Age

I'd like to focus most of this column on the Coming of Age program which our rising eighth through tenth grade students will participate in next school year. This congregation and board of directors is already known for its tremendous support of RE, but this program perhaps more than any others will require that extra push of support from the whole congregational village. The Coming of Age program is the "confirmation" year if you will of the RE curriculum. During this school year the youth will have the chance to explore in-depth their Unitarian Universalist identity. They will each be paired with an adult mentor who will work with them throughout the school year, both in and out of church, working on service projects, exploring together what being a Unitarian Universalist means, sharing a meal together, etc. This is an extremely important aspect of the Coming of Age program, where a lasting friendship is often formed. Youth will participate in wider denominational activities (youth CONs or conferences), and in every aspect of church life including attendance at board and committee meetings. The RE committee is also exploring ways the youth can more fully experience Sunday morning services through more regular attendance. The year culminates in a service in May honoring these youth where they will present their own "credo" or "This I Believe" statements to the congregation (watch out for being blown away—I've experienced this with my own children, and what they put into words will astound you in an amazing way). As a continuation of their study and as a chance to explore further on their own (with chaperones, however), the youth will take a five-day trip to Boston to experience the founding place of both our American and UU history. We'll throw in lots of fun events, too, such as a Red Sox game, whale watching, and journeys to vintage clothing shops. While your emotional and spiritual support through this challenging school year is needed, so is your monetary support. We've already started fund-raising through bread sales, sandwich and dessert sales, and helping with member yard sales. We have a full calendar lined up through the spring, of dinner and movie nights, a booth at the Saturday farmer's market, and raffle of our rain barrel. Watch for these events over the coming months. Economic times are difficult for everyone right now, and by holding many small, low-cost fund-raises, we hope to ease the way for all. Depending on our transportation costs, we will need to raise several thousand dollars from the community over the next year and a half. Youth and their families will be working hard, donating their time to organizing and managing these events. From all of us, thank you, thank you, thank you.

RE Class Activities

The preschool Chalice Children class will continue learning about our church world, including lessons on exploration of our larger world through lessons on the seasons, Valentine's Day, rainbows, and dreams. The



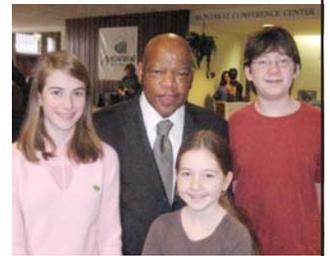
Our Middle/High School RE class continues its study of Neighboring Faiths, here visiting Om Shanti Bhavan in Black Mountain as part of the study of Hinduism. Next up is Baha'i & Quaker.

elementary school Timeless Themes class has just completed their study of Moses, the ten commandments, and the Ark of the Covenant (thank you Indian Jones!), and will continue focusing more on the New Testament in the coming months. The Neighboring Faiths class concluded their study of Hinduism, including a visit to the Hindu temple in Black Mountain. Next will be a study of the Bahai and Quaker faiths, different from many others they have

studied to date. The group will be visiting the Bahai Center in Asheville on January 15th. All elementary children and youth, if they are not on a field trip, will participate in the first part of the service every first Sunday, when Sally Beth is preaching.

John Lewis

Three UUCSV youth, Sarah Gilmour, Sophie Scott, and Sam Scott, had a real thrill when they met Civil Rights Movement giant, Rep. John Lewis D-GA on January 4. He met the community and answered questions during a meeting in Montreat. Thanks to Monroe Gilmour and Fern Martin for taking our youth to this memorable event.



Pictured l to r: Sarah Gilmour, Rep Lewis, Sophie Scott, and Sam Scott

Charlotte Youth CON

We will be sending two of our youth, Aaron Eliot-Gaines and Sam Scott, to the Charlotte Youth CON the weekend of February 6 – 8. They will be joining youth from the Asheville church, and will have the opportunity to meet youth from all over the state. CONS include exploration of social issues, worship time, and just plain fun and socializing with other youth.

An Addition to Our RE Family

We welcome into our RE community the Anderson/Childress family. Their two children, Gabriel, age two, and Sebastian, age 8, are attending classes regularly. Their parents are Holiday Childress and Cori Anderson. Welcome them when you see them!

Important Dates to Remember

- **February 1**—Monthly RE Committee meeting. Anyone is welcome to join us.
- **February 1 and March 8**—Sandwich/dessert Coming of Age fund-raises after church.
- **February 15**—Youth will complete painting of the rain barrel for the church-wide raffle.

In peace,

~ Sybil Argintar, RE Coordinator

Yoga Class

Some of you may know, that after a 10 month/250 hour yoga teacher training program, I am now a certified yoga teacher. For some time, I have hoped to offer a beginning yoga class for UUCSV members and friends, a proposal which was just approved on Tuesday night January 20th by the Board of Trustees.

Given that, I would like to offer either a beginner's class or what is commonly known as a "gentle flow" class, designed to meet the needs of adults in reasonably good health and condition, who have done either little or no yoga in the past, or who have done some yoga but desire a gentle class. The class will be offered in the sanctuary of UUCSV either in the morning or afternoon on Saturday for six weeks, though if a week night is better for the majority of interested folks, I can also accommodate that.

The class will run for an hour and a half per session, and include hatha yoga or asanas as well as introductory yoga philosophy and breath work. We might also do some beginning meditation practice, if there is interest in the latter. The fee for the class is \$10 per session for a total of \$60 per person for the series. I would ask that folks pay for the series in advance, though if that is a hardship for anyone, feel free to talk with me about it as you call to register. Half of the proceeds will be donated by me to UUCSV for the first series. Interested people should be in touch with Deb by phone at 674-4290 or by email at debvingle@yahoo.com. I will be happy to answer any questions or address any special needs during those individual conversations.

If seniors or individuals with particular physical limitations have an interest in participating, but don't feel they can do traditional postures, I would also be interested in offering a chair yoga class as an alternative. My belief is that most people can enjoy the many positive benefits of yoga. Finally, I am also available for individual sessions in people's homes (either mine or yours!) to be discussed individually.

Participants will be expected to provide their own props, which will include a sticky mat, and either two blankets, or a blanket and bolster. I'm excited to share my joy in and love of the practice of yoga, so if you are interested, give me a call. We'll begin as soon as we have a full class, likely in early or mid- February.

Best wishes,

~ Deb Vingle



Monthly Committee Meetings, etc.

(CG = Covenant Group)

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
FIRST	9:45 RE Committee 12:30 Congregational Care Committee 12:00 Program Committee			1:00 Written Word CG		
SECOND	9:30 Adult Forum 10:00 Membership Committee 12:30 Warblers		7:00 Open Topic CG	5:30 Social Action Committee	7:00 Warblers	
THIRD	9:30 Green Sanctuary Committee 10:15 Warblers		6:00 Board of Trustees	1:00 Written Word CG		6:30 Friday Fling
FOURTH	9:30 Adult Forum 12:30 SOLS		7:00 Open Topic CG			

For the dates, times, and locations of specific events during the current month, go to the UUCSV website (www.uucsv.org), and click on the UUCSV Calendar.

Celebration Sunday!

You are invited to join the UUCSV congregation after the service on

Sunday, March 1st

SECOND ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP EVENT

12 noon to 1:30 PM

Join us for a Fantastic Potluck Brunch and Talent Show

*Featuring homemade food, music, songs and frivolity,
presented by some of our own favorite entertainers !!!!*

**We will celebrate fellowship
and kick-off the annual Budget Campaign**

We look forward to celebrating our community with you at the potluck to follow the service on March first. Please bring a nutritious main course, salad or dessert to share among us. Also, when you pack up your food to bring to church, please remember to bring a serving spoon and your place setting (plate, bowl, silverware, cup and cloth napkin). The Hospitality Committee will be providing beverages.

Call for Talent: This Means You!

Please share your love of music, jokes, dance, poetry, drama... performing at anything! by appearing in our annual Fellowship Event Talent Show on Sunday, March 1st. You'll have the opportunity to work with our own George Scott who is coordinating the show. Please contact George by February 22nd at ssgs108@gmail.com, or 686-7221. We want you.



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Congregation of the Swannanoa Valley



Artwork by Evelyn Carter