

TEXT FOR NEWSLETTER—January 2014

From the Minister

Greetings and Happy New Year to All,

I hope you are as excited as I am about beginning the New Year, 2014 as I am. Last year was a rough one for me on many levels, as well as being a year of much personal growth (at least from my perspective) and change. In many ways what was a constant for me during those challenging times was this congregation. When things really seemed overwhelming to me, I counted on getting up in the morning, something that is never really a guarantee, and coming here to serve. What a blessing you have been to me!

We have much to do this year both professionally and personally. This is the time to make those goals and plans a reality. In our congregational life, we have adult RE to continue planning and carrying out, not to mention that we really need volunteers for our new rental committee. We need volunteers for everything to be honest! Patricia Fahey is our new Interim DRE, and she will need your support as well. We are preparing for our canvass this year, and I know it will be a successful canvass at that. We will need your time and treasure again this year. We must continue to invest in ourselves, each other, and this church community, always bearing in mind what is good for this church and not just what is good for us as individuals. We are here to grow this congregation and to grow our souls as well. I know we can do it and I am excited about the possibilities. I hope you are too! And so the journey goes....

We begin anew. We can, if we so choose, to wipe the slate clean and experience a rebirth. To begin again; no longer slaves to our past, the bitter nor the sweet. Life is alive and so are we. It will take courage to travel from the land of indecision, but once we do, nothing will stop us. Goethe reminds us that nothing is as powerful as an idea whose time has come. This is one of the great “truths” of our existence. Put another way, nothing is as powerful as a made up mind! Have you made up your mind about what you will do with your wild and precious life?

I am wishing each and everyone of you Peace and Richest Blessings for the coming year....

Michael

The words of Dr. Howard Washington Thurman:

Life Is Alive

“There is something which seems utterly final about the end of a year. It means that we are one year older; this is a fact definite and inexorable. We are twelve months closer to the end of our physical time span---one year closer to death. It means that in some ways we are taken farther from or brought closer to the goal of our living, whatever that goal may be. It means that some crucial questions which were unanswered twelve months ago have been finally and decidedly answered, and whatever doubts there may have been are completely removed; now we know. During the passing of twelve months, experiences have come about into our lives which revealed certain things about ourselves we had not suspected.....all of these meanings and many more counsel us that life is dynamic and we are deeply alive....We turn our faces toward the year being born with a riding hope that will carry us into the days ahead with courage and confidence. The old year dies; the new year is being born---Long live Life!

Star

If in the light of things you fade real,
yet wanly withdraw to our determined and appropriate distance,
like the moon left on all night among the leaves, may you invisibly light this house; Oh Star, doubly compassionate who came too soon for twilight,
too late for dawn, may your pale flame direct the worst in us through chaos, with the passion of plain day.

Derek Walcott

Covenant Preface

As Dr. King so eloquently reminded us, we as human beings ought not to simply make peace our goal; he noted that peace is the tool we use to achieve our goals. The Board of UUCSV has crafted a covenant that states we not only have goals to achieve, we will behave in a manor of right relationship as a tool to achieve those goals. In this spirit our Board Covenant was born.

—Michael

Sunday Programming

Sunday, 5 January 2014, 11 a.m.

What the Bleep Are We?

Tim Perry

We meet at 11:00 AM on Sunday morning for a service, during which we sing hymns and often hear a sermon. Our building has what some would call a steeple. We toss around words like "minister," "spiritual," and "congregation," and once in a while someone even slips and says the "G" word, and yet it's obvious to anyone who sticks around for ten minutes that we're not a traditional "church," by any means. So what are we? A social club? A political organization? A business? An entertainment venue? A fraternal organization? Or is there perhaps another model that we might aspire to embrace for our community? And might it possibly even come from (Gasp!) our CHRISTIAN ROOTS? (Imagine those words in a font that looks like gnarled tree branches or dripping blood!) And if so, can such a model still have any relevance for us? Well, let's see . . .

Sunday, 12 January 2014, 11 a.m.

Don't Begrudge Me!

Rev. Michael Carter

I am not one to make resolutions for the New Year. They usually do not last anyway. Yet I want to talk about the grudges we carry with us every day and suggest that in order for us to grow and to become the human beings we say we want to be, we need to let go of the past and move on. As Unitarian Universalist, we cannot even begin to live our principles until we forgive our grudges, as we forgive those who have grudges against us. There will also be a memorial segment to the service to remember those members who have died in 2012.

Sunday, 19 January 2014, 11 a.m.

Martin and Malcolm

Rev. Michael Carter

Often thought of as adversaries, we will explore the similarities between these two African American leaders who chose different paths to achieve the same goal--Human rights for African Americans and liberation for the European American and all peoples of color in these United States. One had a dream, the other saw a nightmare; but is that really all they saw?

Sunday, 26 January 2014, 11 a.m.

Tomorrow's God Today

Rev. Michael Carter

As we enter the 14th year of the 21st century, is our culture really ready to expand not only the language, but the idea of the word God? I suggest that not only are we ready to, but we need to for the very survival of the species. Is there another word or concept that we can all agree on and remain in dialogue with each other as we attempt to describe our experience of the mysterium tremendum (the term coined by Rudolph Otto--The mystery that repels; the holy; the numinous)? It's worth a shot!

Religious Education Corner

From Your Adult Religious Education Committee

What a great way to spend some cold winter evenings.....Reverend Michael Carter and Alton Hancock will co-facilitate a class on American Transcendentalism. Class will take place at church on February 4, 11, 18, and 25, from 6:15 to 8 p.m. Michael and Alton have asked that if you are interested, to please buy and read the book for the class ahead of time. The book, available from Amazon for \$13.00 or as a Kindle e-book for \$8, is entitled: "American Transcendentalism" by Philip F. Gura (New York, Hill and Wang, 2007).

Chalice Lighter Grant Application Approved

The Southeast District Chalice Lighter Grant Committee approved our application for a grant to help us fund the increase of our minister's work hours. The Chalice Lighter Grant Committee will put out a call this winter for UU donors from our district to contribute to our grant. The purpose of the Chalice Lighter's Grant Program is to promote the growth of UU. We appreciate the many UU's in our district who believe that congregations need seed money to help fund the growth process. This grant is one of the vital elements of our UUCSV 5-year growth plan. Please be watching for additional growth plan initiatives such as building modifications and membership retention/recruitment actions.

I am grateful to the following church members who assisted me with the preparation of the grant: Scott Conklin, Ray Culotta, Jill Tagudin, Chuck Shimer, Sybil Argintar, Tim Perry, Rev. Carter, Diane Hutchins, Linda Metzner, Sharon Schuster, Scott Shaw, Milt Warden and Marsha Ott.

—Carolyn Shorkey, UUCSV Grant Manager

Choir News

The choir enjoyed offering a music-filled Sunday for December 22, with two new soloists, Janine and Eileen. In January, we will meet to rehearse on the 19th at 12:15 after the service, then on Thursday the 23rd at 6:30, and then again on the day of performance, Sunday the 26th at 10 AM. Come sing with us!

—Linda Metzner, Choir Director

Room in the Inn Dates for 2014

Room in the Inn will take place twice in Black Mountain during 2014. UUCSV will be responsible for providing food and volunteers for Friday, March 28 at the Black Mountain Methodist Church and for Friday, September 26 at the Black Mountain Presbyterian Church. Social Action will begin sign up for the March date around February 1. Thanks to all our volunteers who have helped with this program over the years.

—Connie Krochmal, Social Action Room in the Inn coordinator

Social Action Committee: Unitarian Universalists to lead the way on Restoring Democracy!

3,000+ UUs at the Louisville General Assembly, on June 23 took a huge step forward in approving an "Action of Immediate Witness" (AIW) titled: "Amend the Constitution – Corporations are not Persons and Money is not Speech"! AIWs are actions that can be proposed, discussed, debated and voted on during the GA that have urgency and the opportunity for generating real change.

Following up on the fact that the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), UU Service Committee (UUSC), and UUs for a Just Economic Community (UUJEC), as well as 20+ UU Congregations and committees around the country have

endorsed www.movetoamend.org (MTA), the AIW does the following: instructs the UUA to make their endorsement formal and public; encourages congregations and social justice committees to pass resolutions of support and to endorse an amendment to accomplish these objectives; asks State Legislative Ministries and other UU groups to join this important cause; and encourages us to work with other faith communities to accelerate the progress towards an amendment! Move to Amend is a national coalition to amend the constitution to restore democracy.

This major commitment, if we can get together behind it, has the possibility of accelerating the process from a slow walk to a sprint!

Here are UUCSV Black Mountain we have approval to form a subcommittee of our Social Action Committee to attract and focus the energy of our church community on this people's movement. The intent is to collaborate with other UU groups, the national Move To Amend group, and the local MOVE TO AMEND OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY (MABCO) group, to educate and gain support (get petition signatures) for a constitutional amendment. Several of our members (Jane, Bette, Sue, Geoff, Barb, Roberta, Helen) have attended the "A Call to Action against Corporate Rule" barnstorming event by David Cobb. We plan showing a recording of that event at our church in the near future...stay tuned.

—Geoffrey Stone – Subcommittee Chair

Rev. Carter Is Keynote Speaker for Milk Breakfast on Feb. 1

Our minister, the Rev. Michael J S Carter, will be keynote speaker for the 24th annual Swannanoa Valley Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. prayer breakfast on Saturday, February 1 from 9 to 11 a.m. at Camp Dorothy Walls in Black Mountain. His speech is entitled "Dreamer." Everyone is cordially invited to attend this special celebration.

Tickets to the breakfast are available for \$12. Patron tickets are \$35, with \$23 of that amount going to the scholarship fund. Also, local businesses, churches, and organizations are encouraged to purchase advertising in the event program. For tickets or more information, contact Roberta Madden or Diane Hutchins. Helen Bell will also have tickets to sell after the Sunday service.

Birthdays

January 4th Aven Blozan
January 5th Sophia Scott
January 7th Robert Tynes
January 9th Teresa Ballinger
January 10th Chuck Cogdill
January 15th Robin Tynes
January 17th Mary Soyenova
January 20th Ann Sillman
January 31st Jim Carillon

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

January's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on 17 January 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 "Slaughterhouse-Five" (2004; based on the novel by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.) will be shown. For further information, call Norm Kowal (458-4537).

New Member Bios

Kathleen Cantwell

Black Mountain could be said to be an antidote to the big cities in which Kathleen Cantwell spent most of her life. Raised in Chicago, Kathleen moved to New York City to pursue her career as a writer. Copywriting, advertising, newspaper, magazine and video writing—she did them all before family concerns brought her back to the Windy City. Trusting the universe when looking for her next home, Kathleen googled “Places in the US Where People are Happy.” Up popped Asheville. In August, she came down to survey the area and the artist in her liked the depth and breadth of our creative community. She listed her house in Chicago for sale, confident that it would be months before it sold. Twelve days later, the house was under contract. A chance meeting at the Folk Art Center sent Kathleen to Black Mountain, where she found the perfect house. Her two cats, Cleo and Woodsy, round out her household. Kathleen’s first exposure to UU was at the Unitarian Church of Clarendon Hills in IL, where she served on the Board and on various committees. She has agreed to work on UUCSV’s PR Committee. Welcome to your new home, Kathleen.

Kathy Phillips

Coming to us from the Charlotte area, Kathy is a landlady, a manager, wife, a mom and a grandma. Sounds very busy and it is. Maintaining the rental houses that she owns in the Charlotte area keeps Kathy on the road. However, having spent 25 years managing medical practices, she has the organizational skills necessary to juggle her many “jobs.” Kathy and her husband Ken own Dynatech Services, a company that does vibration analysis in large industrial plants. Ken is also an avid musician. Kathy and Ken visited friends in our area 10 years ago and always thought they would retire here. But recently they decided not to wait until retirement. They moved here and they love it! Having raised a daughter, a niece and a nephew, Kathy served as a guardian ad litem in Mecklenberg County. She came to UU thanks to a friend who introduced her to the Charlotte church. We are happy to have such a dynamo in our congregation. Welcome Kathy.

From the Editor—The Last Word