

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

December 2014

500 Montreat Rd.

Black Mountain, NC 28711 (828) 669-8050, [www.uusv.org](http://www.uusv.org)

Religious Freedom—Diverse Perspectives

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**Board Meeting: Monday, 15 Dec., 6 p.m.**

**Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 30 Dec., 10 a.m., covering January 2015. Until further notice send submissions to Connie Krochmal ([flora258@isp.com](mailto:flora258@isp.com))**

## **From the Minister**

At times the seasons and the years seem to blend in my mind. Perhaps that is part of the aging process. Elections, ISIS, Ukraine, wars, rumors of wars, Ebola, Ferguson, the list goes on and on. We are a planet and a species in need of healing, and yet this time of year always brings joy and a smile to my face. Yes, for many this is a time of confusion, sadness, hopelessness and depression,

and there for the grace of God go I.

I am so aware of the brokenness of the world this time of year, and yet I count my blessings and am eternally grateful. Grateful for family, friends, lessons learned, even the uncomfortable ones. You see I am learning to at least remind myself to attempt what is doable in my life, to give up a bit more my need to control what is uncontrollable and to leave the rest, for I am not here to change the world. I am here to change myself, which paradoxically enough, does in fact change the world-- just a wee bit. Acceptance is key. At least it has been for me in my quest for personal growth and transformation.

So as we draw ever closer to the end of this year and the beginning of a new one, whatever this season means to you, I wish you a most joyous time with friends and family. And I wish to remind you that despite all of it's seemingly sham and drudgery, it's still a wonderful world. Appreciate the eloquence of silence. Strive to be at peace with yourself and others, at as much as is humanly possible. Remember to at least try to teach only love, for in reality, that is what you are. That is what we all are. Peace to you and your house this season!

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to All!

Michael

### **Between Two Seasons, a Holiday. By Max Coots**

...If we had sense of seasons we'd make a holiday for solitude, As our fathers made on of harvest fruits. Between seasons is a good time to listen to one's own thoughts and make peace with one's environment, a good time to put aside too many things, a time to solve old puzzles we had no time to solve in summer months. Now late autumn or early winter, or whatever its name may be is at time to see farther than we could when leaves cut off the view.

Now the world reveals itself in more dimensions, and neither things nor people, nor issues can hide in the leafless woods. We may say it all looks stark and bare, and I suppose it does, but it also looks clean and clear, for those who dare to look without the screen of leaves and grass that covered so much before the frost came on. A clear view is one thing this time of year allows...

### **Frost Biting Suffering--Anonymous**

Humans conceal suffering  
Just like snow  
Blankets pavements  
In December.  
Be sure to

Lace your snow boots  
With empathy  
And tread very  
Carefully.

I learned at a very  
Young age,  
Not to be deceived  
By the top layer;  
Rock bottom  
Is closer  
Than you think

"In the depths of winter I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer."  
- Albert Camus

**Reading # 615 in our Hymnal, *Singing The Living Tradition***

**The Work Of Christmas by Dr. Howard Thurman**

When the song of the angels is stilled, When the star in the sky is gone, When the kings princes,  
and princesses are home, When the shepherds are back with their flock, the work of Christmas  
begins: To find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild  
the nations, to bring peace among brothers and sisters, to make music in the heart.

**Light the Festive Candles**

BY [AILEEN LUCIA FISHER](#)

**(FOR HANUKKAH)**

Light the first of eight tonight—  
the farthest candle to the right.

Light the first and second, too,  
when tomorrow's day is through.

Then light three, and then light four—

every dusk one candle more

Till all eight burn bright and high,

honoring a day gone by

When the Temple was restored,

rescued from the Syrian lord,

And an eight-day feast proclaimed—

The Festival of Lights—well named

To celebrate the joyous day

when we regained the right to pray

to our one God in our own way.

### **Ramadan! by Noor Syed**

In the name of Allah, the most Merciful, the most Kind

A blessed month is casting its shadow upon us

A night of this month is better than a thousand months

Bear with patience for the sake of Ar-Rahman

It's a continuous training to strengthen our Imaan.

Glory be to Allah who sent Ramadan as a mercy to mankind

Its a purification of our soul, our heart, and our mind

With the most sincere devotion and love we fast

To be cleansed and free from sins of the past

Glorified is He, who chose this holy month,  
To test our sabr ( restraining the self from agitation) and fill our hearts with warmth  
Of his Divine Light, His blessings shall glow,  
The Seer of the unseen, all He does know

Allah! For thee, let my breath be more pleasant than musk  
Allah! For thee, let me be thankful when day turns to dusk  
My thoughts and heart are purified, my eyes truly see'  
This blessed month, the month of spiritual rhapsody!

### **A Kwanzaa Poem**

**by Kemet Mawakana**

It's about love

It's about life

It's about our culture

Our family our community

Our genius our birthright

It's about love

It's about life

It's about our culture

Our family our community

Our genius our birthright

We remember our glory our stories

Yesterdays yesterday

Those that came before me

Today's today

Rebuilding our way

Tomorrows tomorrow

Sunshine good times

And learning from our sorrows

It's about love

It's about life

It's about our culture

Our family our community

Our genius our birthright

Umoja – Unity

Kujichagulia – Self-determination

Ujima – Collective work/collective responsibility

Ujamma – Cooperative Economics

Nia – Purpose

Kuumba – Creativity

Imani –Faith

It's about love

It's about life

It's about our culture

Our family our community

Our genius our birthright

Umoja Kujichagulia Ujima

Ujamma Nia Kuumba Imani

## Sunday Programming

Sunday, December 7 2014 11 a.m.

“Jeff Hutchins Must Die”

Jeff Hutchins

This service, led by our own Jeff Hutchins, takes a look at issues of death and dying as they are ritualized in America. The Small Ensemble Singers will perform.

Sunday, December 14 2014 11 a.m.

“Has Anyone Seen Mary?”

Rev. Michael Carter

This Holiday and Christmas, season our Sunday sermon will focus on the mother of Jesus, or as some have called her, “The Feminine Face of God.” Much is not really known about this young Jewish maiden, but her influence on Christianity, especially among Catholics, cannot be denied. Yet there are many non-Christians who revere her as well. Mary is mentioned 34 times in the Koran! What is the attraction? How has her symbolism both hurt and advanced the role of woman in Christianity and Catholicism in particular? What can she mean for Unitarian Universalism? See you on Sunday!

Sunday, December 21, 2014 11 a.m.

## Musical Holiday Service

Rev. Michael Carter

Come join us as we celebrate the Holiday and Christmas Season with our musical holiday service. The choir will be performing as well as the Small Ensemble. And let's not forget the youth. They'll have a part to play this Sunday for sure! We always have a good time during this service as we kick off this season of joy, peace, goodwill, and holiday cheer! See you at church!

Sunday, December 28, 2014 11 a.m.

## **THE LAST BIZARRE TALE Reading**

**David Madden**

**David Madden will give a dramatic reading of part of the title story of his new book THE LAST BIZARRE TALE. Horrified by a life of listening to bizarre tales, a young man leaves Bristol, Virginia seeking a more normal life. In a small town called South Mountain, a gravedigger tells him the most bizarre tale of all about a young carnival worker who was murdered and whose unclaimed body hung for 70 years in the mortuary garage, exposed to ridicule. Depressed, the young man flees the town, but on the road he experiences a redeeming, uniquely compassionate insight.**

A native of Knoxville, David Madden is a fiction writer, a poet, a playwright, and a Civil War historian. Since moving to Black Mountain, he has published five books, including two novels ABDUCTED BY CIRCUMSTANCE and LONDON BRIDGE IN PLAGUE AND FIRE. His latest book is THE LAST BIZARRE TALE, his 4<sup>th</sup> book of stories. MY INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN THE ARMY is a memoir in progress.

Sunday, January 4, 2015 11 a.m.

"Judgment Day"



Dr. Brad Rachman

UUCSV launches 2015 with guest speaker Dr. Brad Rachman, a naturopathic physician and yoga therapist based in Black Mountain. The service is provocatively entitled “Judgment Day,” but don’t worry—it’s not about the eschatology of the Abrahamic religions! Rather, he will explore how the daily tendency of the mind to name and judge often clouds our experience of the world, causing us to see things as we are..not as they truly are.

Dr. Rachman is well-known locally as the co-founder of the Black Mountain Yoga Center and medical director of the Rachman Clinic. His extensive, multi-disciplinary training and expertise includes biomedical engineering, chiropractic, functional medicine, yoga and meditation. He resides in Black Mountain with his wife and professional partner Martia, and two daughters.

#### **Religious Education – December 2014**

Religious Education Programs are available each Sunday for youth from Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Adult Education is provided through events and programs during the year.

#### Adult Education:

The Luunch Buunch meets the first Tuesday of each month from 12-1:00 pm. Rev. Carter facilitates a range of topic up for discussion.

Also on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30, Rev. Carter’s hosts a UU History class. This will continue in December.

#### **K-12 Curriculum**

##### **Preschool – Infant — Pre K:**

**Chalice Children** was written by Kate Tweedie Covey because preschool teachers wanted more connection to our faith when teaching UU church school to preschoolers. The curriculum features over 35 lessons, simple UU rhymes, mini plays and introductions to the sharing circle.

##### **Early Elementary – Grades K—2:**

**Denton the Dragon** was written by close UU friends Jeff Hutchins and illustrated by Jerry Pope. Enjoy these Bubbleland books, pictures, songs, videos, and activities designed to teach universal values to young children, ages 4 to 8. Religious/spiritual education is woven into amusing character-driven stories and activities. We’ve enjoyed getting to know Denton, Rachel and the other characters in Bubbleland.

An alternative curriculum we may use is **Picture Book UU**: This curriculum is fun, friendly and concise with teachable moments that introduce our faith to young children. It uses simple picture books as the focus of each lesson, take home sheets for parents, a defined belief, principle and source for each session, flexible options for advanced activities.

### **Upper Elementary – Grades 3 - 5:**

**Spirit of Adventure:** This curriculum has been the highlight of the fall. It includes information about real Unitarian Universalist, children across the ages from preschoolers, to the K-2 group and even older children have enjoyed learning about Fannie Farmer, Superman - Christopher Reeve and others. During September, October and November this group has studied: Sports, Medicine and Food and enjoyed having guests in all three areas. Thank you Mary Soyenova, Dr. Jay Ellis and Jim Carillon for your contributions.

**December's Curriculum focuses** on the Winter Holidays and famous Unitarian Charles Dickens and James Pierpont who wrote Jingle Bells. Like November's Intergenerational Service, we will host full IG service where youth stay and participate in the service. The IG Service takes place on the third Sunday of each month: December 21<sup>st</sup> and the theme is related to lighting candles.

### **Coming of Age (COA)**

The Coming of Age Program officially started on Sunday November 2<sup>nd</sup> with 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders. As such the group is divided into two as follows:

Middle School Grades 6-8 includes Facilitators Heidi Blozan and Linda Tatsapaugh.

High School - Grades 9-12 includes Facilitators: Scott Conklin and Courtney Smith.

### **Curriculum**

The curriculum for both groups is very similar yet meets the needs of learners at each level. The Middle School curriculum has been modified with more hands on activities, journaling, etc. and this group will not be working on a formal credo to present to the congregation at the graduation ceremony. They will have an alternative activity. The high school group will be working on the Credo statements and presenting them to the Congregation in May. Both groups will participate in the Heritage Trip to Boston where they will learn about UU history and stay in the city for five days. At the end of November the middle school group participated in an overnight retreat and both groups can expect similar events throughout the program.

### **Financial Update**

We are looking for COA sponsors – individuals who are willing to contribute financially to the program so that the approximate \$12,500 that needs to be raised through baked sales, movie night, dinners, and community events will be possible. It's a lot of money to raise in a short amount of time. If anyone in the Congregation is willing to sponsor this group as a overt or anonymous donation, please contact: [redirector@uusv.org](mailto:redirector@uusv.org)

Stay tuned on Sunday and throughout coming months for baked sales, Soup and Movie Nights, Fun and Games nights, a special health event and more from our Coming of Age youth.

Wishing youth and their families everywhere fun and comfort this holiday season.

Patricia Fahey  
Director of Lifetime Religious Education

## **Birthdays**

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

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

December 6 Annie Hall

December 17 Gene Chilton

December 21 Jane Carroll

## **Caring Committee**

We are fortunate in our small church to have so many loving and caring people. Our caring committee is being used well and we always have someone willing to help when asked. Thank you.

Ann, your caring committee coordinator

## **Choir News**

The UUCSV Choir will be busy this December. We will be singing carols around Black Mountain with our director, Linda, on the evening of the 13<sup>th</sup>, and then again with Ginny on the 19<sup>th</sup>. We will be singing two anthems for the Holiday service on December 21<sup>st</sup>, with the Small Ensemble Singers also offering a song or

two. Our choir rehearsals will be on Sunday the 14<sup>th</sup> at 12:15, then on Wednesday, the 17<sup>th</sup> p.m., and finally on the 21<sup>st</sup> at 10 a.m.

Come and sing with us! Linda Metzner, Choir director

### **Friday Fling**

**December's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups, will be on the third Friday, December 19th. Red and white refreshments will be provided; please bring a potluck dish to share. The movie "Mandela: a long walk to freedom" will be shown. Potluck begins at 6:30. We are keeping our fearless leader Norm in our thoughts and hope that he will be back for this movie.**

### **Sunday Coffee Hour**

Please join me to extend a thank you to outgoing coffee hour hosts: Willow Allen, Carol and James Sheeler and Linda Blasky. When you see them, thank them for having provided us with beverage and snack service on Sundays.

Also, a great way to thank our continuing volunteers (Jean and Allan Brown, Cilla Becker, Mark and Angie Manuel, and Milt Warden) is for you to offer to become a Sunday Coffee Hour host. Many hands make light work! FMI about becoming a Sunday Coffee Hour Host contact Carolyn Shorkey by phone at 299-9456 or email [c14shorkey@gmail.com](mailto:c14shorkey@gmail.com)

### **Holiday Food Collection**

On Sunday, Nov. 23, 2014 we will begin our food drive to benefit the Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry food pantry. The drive will end on Dec. 21. The Religious Education youth class will be decorating a grocery cart to kick off the event. Please bring nonperishable items such as canned tuna, meats, vegetables, toilet paper, etc. You may also purchase gift cards from the supermarket as well.

### **Guest at your Table**

It is time for our congregation family to collect coins for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's Guest at Your Table project. This year, we are encouraged to

use recycled boxes for our home collection. Please bring your donation to UUCSV by Sunday, January 25, 2014.

Both projects are sponsored by the Social Action Committee with assistance from the Religious Education youth and staff. Contact Diane Hutchins if you have questions at 669-3823 or dmh1211@aol.com.

### **Room in the Inn Black Mountain Dates for 2015**

Our first Room in the Inn for 2015 will be at the Black Mountain Methodist Church on April 5, Good Friday. We will be providing all meals for the day as well as morning and evening drivers and overnight volunteers. Sign-up for volunteers will begin about the latter part of February. There will also be a Room in the Inn at the Black Mountain Presbyterian Church in 2015 as well, but we don't have the specific date yet. They expect it to be in August.

Connie Krochmal, Social Action Room in the Inn coordinator

### **Comment Now on FDA's New Food Safety Rules**

Public Comments are due on December 15, 2014

#### **FSMA Background**

**In September 2014, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released several repropoed sections of food safety regulations originally proposed in January 2013:**

- Standards for produce production (Produce Rule), and
- Food safety measures for facilities that process food for human consumption (Preventive Controls Rule)

**These rules are part of FDA's implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), which was signed into law in 2011.**

**Last year, tens of thousands of farmers, eaters, and experts weighed in with comments to the FDA to let them know that the originally proposed rules would unfairly burden family farmers, target sustainable and organic**

**farming, and reduce the availability of fresh, local food in our communities.**

**In late 2013, the FDA announced they would repropose parts of the Produce and Preventive Controls rules; these reproposed sections are FDA's 'second draft' for public review; the rules are not yet final. Our shared efforts made an impact last year – and we have a second opportunity to shape the rules before they become law this fall!**

### **Current Situation**

#### **FDA Needs to Hear from You!**

**Before FDA can finalize the proposed rules, the agency needs to seek input from the public. Comments from consumers, farmers, on-farm processors and food businesses will directly shape the final rules and are critical to ensuring that the final rules work for small and mid-sized farmers, sustainable and organic growers, value-added businesses and conservation systems.**

**The following link gives detailed instructions on how to comment.**

**<http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/fda-publishes-new-food-safety-rules/#more-17432>**

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