

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

April 2010

Volume IX, Issue 4

Religious Freedom — Diverse Perspectives



500 Montreat Rd
Black Mountain, NC 28711
(828) 669-8050, www.uusv.org

From Your Intern Minister . . .

That 1st annual (yes, I suspect it will be annual) Pie party this past Sunday was something—I'm still full! What fun, what talent, and what a fantastic service. Thanks to all of you who made it all happen: speakers, musicians, Party planners, judges and set-up and clean up crew, and of course all who brought and ate pie! I way underestimated the time and needed to drastically cut the sermon I'd prepared, but here's some of what I wanted to say to you about giving your slice of the pie this year:



It can be easy to forget, tucked away as we are in these ancient mountains, that we are the local flagbearers of a great and radical faith; a faith that is so desperately needed in our world, where division seems to reign on every corner, human enmity and violence so glorified that it seems our culture would make pain a sport. Your annual pledge is not merely about the operation of this church for each of our sakes. When you make your contribution to this church you are making a statement that your faith lies elsewhere, in the hope of human development and world community. You are saying that the values of our faith—peace, compassion, justice, interdependence, individual worth and dignity, community, religious truth, rationality—will endure, that the light from our chalice lamp will spread, and you are holding the flame so others may yet be lit.

In 1863 the Universalists made history by ordaining Olympia Brown as the first woman minister of any Christian denomination. She said:

Stand by this faith. Work for it and sacrifice for it. There is nothing in all the world so important as to be loyal to this faith which has placed before us the loftiest ideals, which has comforted us in sorrow, strengthened us for noble duty and made the world beautiful. Do not demand immediate results but rejoice that we are worthy to be entrusted with this great message. That you are strong enough to work for a great true principle without counting the cost. Go on finding ever new applications of these truths and new enjoyments in their contemplation, always trusting in the one God which ever lives and loves.

May it be so—

—In faith,

—Sally Beth

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(Office Hours: TT 10-2)

Board Meeting: Monday 19 April, 6 p.m.

Send Newsletter Information to
Norm Kowal, *Editor*
normankowal@bellsouth.net

Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 20 April, 10 a.m., covering May 2010

Board Notes . . .

Dear Friends and Family,

I loved our March 21 Service and the stewardship kick-off Pie Party. We had an energetic music-filled service and lots of delicious pie too! Those people who had to miss it were missed and missed some fun.

The results of the recent survey are in and the board is still digesting them. Besides the fact that we are a diverse group of people (which is demonstrated in the survey) we are united by the fact that 94% of the people that filled out the survey desire a ½ time to ¾ time minister. This has been a current running among us for some time. Now is the time to start taking action steps on this widely felt desire.

Please consider this when privately contemplating your pledge for the 2010-2011 budget. In addition, to considering gently stretching your pledge amount, please consider nominating someone (including you) for the committee that will help us fulfill the desire to have another minister. Contact me if you have any questions on how to make a nomination to this committee.

At our last board meeting we had a special guest, Annette Marquis, the executive for the Thomas Jefferson District of the Unitarian Universalist Association. She affirmed for the board that the search for a minister is not only the desire of the congregation but also helps us to be a beacon of hope for people who have not yet found us. Our congregation deserves a minister that will nurture us in the Principles of Unitarian Universalism and help us to further shine our light out into our community.

I feel happy, excited and hopeful for UUCSV. I also hope this message finds you with serenity in your heart even if things are a little messy around you. This is what I am learning is what life is about: serene filled messes. Speaking of messes, those pie plates were messy when we were done. But the pies were oh so good.

Sincerely Yours,

—Heidi Blozan



Thomas Jefferson District of the UUA: It's Annual Meeting / Family Retreat Time Again

A wonderfully inspiring and energizing weekend has been planned for you, your spouse or partner, and your youths and children for the weekend of April 30 - May 2 at Penn Center on St. Helena Island, near Beaufort, SC. See: <http://www.tjdistrict.org/newsevents/tjd2010annualmeeting.html> for details.

—Geoffrey Stone, *Denominational Affairs*

NEWS OF OUR PEOPLE: Thank You to Barb Rogers

Barbara Rogers has informed the board and Sally Beth that April 16th will be her last day serving as Church Administrator. When you see her, please take a moment to thank her for the service she has given UUCSV during the past year and a half while she has held this post. During her time as a staff member she has made a number of improvements in the functioning of the office, to name a few: the organization of our files, initiating and managing an upgrade of the church's accounting and membership software, and most recently, managing the switch to new telephones. Barb plans to remain active as a UUCSV member, so don't say good-bye!

Sunday Programming

Sunday, 4 April 2010, 11 a.m.

Easter

Intergenerational Service

Easter's themes are suffering, atonement, redemption, and to go along with the spring season---rebirth. What's it all about? Humans have been grappling with these themes as long as we've had a sense of morality. The Christian story provides one framework for dealing with them, and other faith traditions offer other paths. What's yours? This Intergenerational Holiday service will be rich in story and song (and just maybe....something oval and colored), making it both fun and thought provoking for our entire community. We welcome Alison Tynes as our guest soloist.

Sunday, 11 April 2010, 11 a.m.

Letting Go of Anger

Rev. Dick Weston-Jones

Beginning with a "love letter" written by a character in May Sarton's novel titled simply *Anger*, Rev. Dick Weston-Jones will discuss the ways we develop and nurture anger in ourselves, how we can use it constructively, and how we can get rid of it. He'll tell how a number of psychotherapists he interviewed for the sermon say they get rid of their own anger. Who is it that gets hurt the most by the anger you hold within yourself against others? Who does it belong to?

Rev. Weston-Jones is Minister Emeritus of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Ventura, California, and has served in UU ministry for 46 years, following his father Robert T. Weston, who was a UU minister for 48 years. He lives in Chapel Hill and preaches frequently all over the US.

Sunday, 18 April 2010, 11 a.m.

The Peace of Wild Things

Sally Beth Shore and Others

Taking its name from a poem by Wendell Berry, we celebrate Earth Day (April 22) with this beautiful, visual, service about finding peace and meaning in wilderness. Contemplation of Nature has been a part of Unitarian Universalism since the mid 1800s, introduced in the writings of the Transcendentalists, but before that it was anathema. Now most Unitarian Universalists strongly revere nature... how can we continue to turn that professed love into positive action for the Earth?

(Milt Warden won the "Custom Sermon" at last fall's silent auction, and this is his chosen topic. Not content to be a mere consumer, Milt will assist with the service.)



Sunday, 25 April 2010, 11 a.m.

Imagination and Compassion

David Madden

From the perspective of a novelist who feels that the creation of a novel is an act of compassion, David Madden will address the following questions: What is the nature of compassion? How does it differ from sympathy or empathy? What is imagination? How does failure to imagine affect failure to feel and act upon compassion? How may imagination, actively engaged in the process of compassion, enhance the power and duration of the feeling of compassion and guide a person in compassionate action?

David Madden and his wife Robbie (a member of this church) moved to Black Mountain four months ago. David is the author of almost 50 books, 10 of which are novels; two were nominated for the Pulitzer Prize, and one was made into a movie; published this month is *ABDUCTED BY CIRCUMSTANCE*, which is being adapted into a movie. After 43 years at LSU, he is Robert Penn Warren Professor of Creative Writing Emeritus. David is a native of Knoxville, once taught at Boone, and was writer in residence at Chapel Hill. He claims to be a mountain writer, not a Southern writer. An agnostic for 50 years, now a Christian for 14, he often writes on religious subjects.

Sunday, 2 May 2010, 11 a.m.

Stress and Distress—Is There a Way Out?

Sally Beth Shore

Our national conversation about stress really got going in the 1980s, and since then, research has ever more honed in on answers to questions such as, "Why are some people stressed and others not?" , "Does stress really cause health problems and which ones?" and, most importantly, "What is the antidote for stress?" The answers, according to scientists, are not all intuitive. Invest some time thinking about how you can both use and dissipate stress in your life with this funny and interactive service, and be a better person for it.

Religious Education Corner



The arrival of spring (I know, it's not quite warm enough yet to believe it, but it will be soon!) is both wondrous and bittersweet. I celebrate new beginnings as I begin to notice everything budding out, greening up, and see my neighbors out and about after a long, cold winter. It also signifies to me the ending of another school year and yet another chance to relish in all we have accomplished together this year as I've watched our children and youth grow and explore. Most of our preschool group will be "graduating" to the big kids class next year, some of our K-3 class will move up to begin exploring more detailed questions about their beliefs and the world around them as they begin their later elementary school years. Our grades 4-7 class will begin to delve more into the spiritual world around them and how they are beginning to fit into things. Last, but certainly not least, I have watched our Coming of Age youth learn about and discuss the bigger questions of life that we ALL continue to explore. This group has come together as a unit, working hard to help with fundraisers, meeting *early* on a Sunday morning (when they could be sleeping late) to gather in community to learn and grow together. I am so proud of what all of our children and youth have offered to us all this year. Their views of the world will never cease to amaze me.

Religious Education Classes

Attendance in our preschool group is usually only two or three children. Since two of these children are really ready for the "big kid" class, we often have them join the older kids who are exploring their UU principles. Mavis Jordan-Blackley, our youngest in the preschool set, brings her smiling face to our preschool room several Sundays each month. The K-3 class in the past month, with five or six in attendance most Sundays, has explored the principles of "each person has a say" and "working for a peaceful world" (our adult principles 5 and 6). As they wrap up the school year this month and next they will explore our seventh principle of "the web of life's the way". Our Traditions With a Week class, comprised of three energetic boys, have explored in an abstract sculpture their UU principles, crafted UU Rosaries, and will also explore the seventh principle over the next few weeks. The Coming of Age class, comprised of five dedicated youth who hardly ever miss a Sunday, has spent most of their time in recent weeks outlining and writing their faith statements. We will begin more detailed planning of the May 16 service over the next few weeks and the group will spend a day-long retreat with their teachers and mentors, hopefully in an outdoor setting.

Coming of Age Trip to Boston

We were all holding our breath, but alas, the Buncombe County school board made the decision, despite the North Carolina calendar laws, to extend the school year to June 14. So, we made the decision to change our COA trip dates to June 18 to 23. We will unfortunately miss Gay Pride Week and likely will not be able to reschedule our program at UUSC, except on an informal basis, since most staff will be gone the week of June 21 to General Assembly. We were able to reschedule our visit to the UUA and youth ministries on Friday June 18, however. All other program activities will proceed as planned, so we are on our way!

Coming of Age Fundraisers

We are getting closer and closer to our budget goals for Boston. Due to some additional airfare charges from the date change, we have about \$500 additional we need to raise. But we are all confident we'll make it. This congregation's generosity has been outstanding, so hang in there a while longer. By the time this newsletter comes out, we will have held our pancake breakfast, but remember that after the Intergenerational service on Sunday April 4th we will be selling yummy desserts for your take-home pleasure! Then an exciting concert is scheduled on Friday April 23rd featuring our own Laura Blackley (mom of Mavis) and George Scott (dad of Sam), along with additional local musicians Jim Arrendell on drums and Steve Cohen on bass. A portion of the press release is noted below. Please see the poster of this wonderful community event elsewhere in this newsletter. **Thank you, thank you, thank you to Laura, George, Jim and Steve. All of these talented musicians are donating their time to our Coming of Age program. Your above-and-beyond-generosity is greatly appreciated!!** This concert will be open to the community at large so be sure to get your tickets in advance. This will be our last big fundraiser of the year. Anything we bring in above our budget needs will go into a fund for the next Coming of Age class.

Important Dates to Remember

- April 4 Intergenerational Easter service
COA BIG dessert sale after services
- April 17 Trillium!
- April 23 Laura Blackley and A Band of Friends community concert. 7 - 9 p.m. COA fundraiser

Laura Blackley will take the stage on Friday, April 23, 2010 at 7:00pm-9:00pm at the Unitar-

ian-Universalist Congregation of the Swannanoa Valley in Black Mountain for a fund-raiser to support the Coming of Age Youth Group in their efforts to raise funding for their end-of-year trip to Boston in June. Blackley will be backed by a band of notable area musicians, including Jim Arrendell (drums), and Steve Cohen (bass), and George Scott (keyboards). Material will include Blackley's original work as well as other material. Admission: Adults - \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door, Under 18 - \$5 in advance, \$7 at the door. Complimentary coffee and other beverages as well as delicious home-made desserts will be available during the intermission. Advance tickets may be purchased in person at the UU Congregation at 500 Montreat Road, 10:00am - 2:00pm Tuesday and Thursday, or Sunday 10:30-1:00.

Laura Blackley is a singer-songwriter, raconteur, music writer, and all around Renaissance woman living in the hills west of Asheville, NC. A quote from her MySpace (www.myspace.com/laurablackley) page gives the listener a hint of what to expect: "...You can't get nothing out of your art if it don't sting you a little bit in the process. That's my philosophy on writing songs. I've been writing songs and stories since I was 5 years old. I've been doing it as a job for the past 15 years. I specialize in love and murder ballads, ghost stories, and done-somebody-wrong songs. I love the blues, rock and roll, and country music, and you can tell it when you listen to my records..." Blackley's discography includes: "Intentions of Mine," 6-song EP, © 2000, "When A Woman...", © 2002, and "Liquid Courage," © 2004 "Love & Monsters," © 2007

May 16 Coming of Age Sunday—youth plan the service and present their faith statements

May 23 RE Sunday and end of class year—overview of the year; volunteer appreciation

May 30 Summer programs begin

—Sybil Argintar, RE Coordinator

(merlasybpenny@yahoo.com, 230-3773)

SOLS News

SOLS wants your rummage and white elephants. They are things you no longer want or use, but are things we can sell at UUCSV's annual rummage sale, a part of "Trillium: A Festival of Follies and Flings" coming in April. Date for donations to be delivered to the church forthcoming. If you will need help with delivery, contact Jane Carroll at 828-664-1695. Just about anything is accepted except junk. We don't sell junk. It is not junk if:

1. The motor is working.
2. The batteries will charge.
3. All parts are present.
4. It is clean.
5. It is mildew-free.
6. The owner's manual (if you have it) is included.
7. DVD cases contain the DVDs.
8. It is free of pet hair and smell.
9. It is unbroken.
10. It is in working order.
11. It is non-toxic.

Congregational Care

Congregational Care, now under the Membership Committee umbrella, is ready to assist our congregation in time of need by providing transportation and meals for those who are facing difficult circumstances. The Monthly Coordinator for April and May will be Marjorie Starrs (664-9320). If needs extend beyond those mentioned, please discuss them with the Monthly Coordinator to see if we might have the resources to help.

Room in the Inn

Thanks to all of our volunteers who have signed up to help with the next Room in the Inn. This will be on Friday, April 23 at the Black Mountain Methodist Church annex. This program provides food and shelter to homeless women in our community.

There is still a need for volunteers who can serve as backup drivers for morning and evening and as backups for overnight volunteers. For those who like to cook, we could also use bag lunches and breakfast foods as well as all foods/drinks for the evening meal (bread, salads, veggies or side dishes, entrees, and desserts). A sign up sheet is available in the foyer, or contact me at 686 3112, flora258@isp.com.

—Connie Krochmal, Social Action, Room in the Inn Coordinator

Hospitality News: Snack Service Resumes April 11th

During the fair weather months of April through October, we will continue our practice of having snacks out on the "carport" after Sunday services. Also, instead of calling our social hour, Finger Food Potluck, we have changed the name to Beverages and Snacks. We continue to urge you to bring food to share which does not require the use of an eating utensil, so we are not using and discarding so many plastic utensils. We will continue to host a few full service Covered Dish Potlucks throughout the year.

Support our youth by purchasing sandwiches and desserts on April 4th, after the Sunday Service. On April 11th please resume bringing a healthy snack to share with others during our Sunday social hour.

UU 101 Classes

We will be holding our UU 101 classes on Monday April 19th and Monday April 25th at 7 pm at the church.

These classes are for new UUs, new members, and people who want to know more about our faith, our roots, and our philosophy.

Child care will be provided, but please call the church to let us know if you'll be needing this.

—Mary Soyenova, Membership Chair



Friday Fling

April's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on 16 April 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 "Casablanca" (1943, Ingrid Bergman, Humphrey Bogart—love in a time of war) will be shown. For further information call Norm Kowal (333-4925). And don't forget the drum circle at 5:30.

Choir News

Hope you all enjoyed our songs about Pie for the March service. For April, we will rehearse on the 11th at 12:20 after the service, then on Thursday the 15th at 7 PM, and then on Sunday the 18th at 10:15 AM, the day we will perform. Please come sing and have some fun with the choir!

Green Sanctuary

“The Old Man and the Tree”

Bill Altork

A narrow winding path meandered down the hill.
Out my window stood a tree, tall and alone from the others.
Almost daily a pale old man arrived and paused there...
hands together, paying homage.
Stepping closer, compelled to love reaching with one hand gently touching, then the other.
Words were offered in a space of sanctity, as if it were his beloved old wife he embraced,
Warm cheek and skin of wood.
He never knew I watched with humble envy,
the power of pure and simple devotion, allowing me greater compassion through an age-old longing which dwells in us all.
For a moment or eternity he held on, giving and receiving symmetry in silent motion.
Personal vows exchanged, backing away and turning, he walked on.
On quiet afternoons I would glance and wonder,
then find myself believing the tree knew and loved him;
patiently awaiting the sound of light feet, the touch of warm hands, and soft heart.



Post Pie Party Prescription

We celebrated spring’s arrival and kicked off our pledge drive for next year on March 21st. Over forty pies were entered in the Pie Party. Ursula Goebels-Ellis shared her fabulous German -style tart; winning Most Creative, Best Fruit Pie and Best of Show categories. Superb event production was provided by Milt Warden and Carolyn Shorkey. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the party so much fun!

Board Chair Heidi Blozan reviewed the results of our recent on-line congregational survey. A clear voice has been expressed – we want to have a half-time minister serving our congregation. Heidi has asked each member and friend of UUCSV to consider making a stretch financial commitment for next year in order to realize this dream. The draft operating budget of \$79,000 can be met if we all contribute our slice of the collective pie. We are asking everyone to bring their signed pledge card to church on April 4th and place it in the pie plate. If you have not received a pledge card yet please give me a call at 664-0082.

—Lee Reading, Pledge Drive Coordinator

Partner Church in Romania

After a lull of several months, we are now receiving news of the status of the ministerial situation at our Partner Church in Medeser, Romania. The former minister, Imre Balint, has left the congregation with his family, and is now serving elsewhere. Last October, the Rev. Rozali Vida was appointed Interim Minister, and travels from nearby Kadacs (where she has a permanent position) to serve Medeser. She is able to correspond in English, so establishing a relationship with the congregation may be fairly uncomplicated.

UUCSV has been sponsoring the congregation in Medeser, Romania for several years. Our women's group, Sisters of Lucy Stone, has raised funds with the Trillium Festival, sent support for the upkeep of the historic church, and gifts at Christmas. (For the complete story of UU Partner Churches and our specific history, check our website, www.uusv.org and look under Partner Church heading.)

Another source of information on our partner congregation is the bulletin board on the back wall of the Sanctuary. Several pictures and a map help to visualize the location, building, and people in Romania. For news from Rev. Vida, as we receive it, contact Evelyn Carter, gardenerrev@charter.net or 251-1416. She is currently in the role of corresponding secretary for SOLS.

If you would like to know more about our choice of name for our group, check out the book in our library "Lucy Stone, Pioneer of Women's Rights", written by her daughter, Alice Blackwell.

Birthdays in April

April 7 th	Fern Martin
April 10 th	Pat Middleton
April 13 th	Angie Manuel
April 16 th	Bobby Decker
April 17 th	Jim Clayton
April 18 th	Monroe Gilmour
April 28 th	George Leroy

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



Proud “Best Of Show” winner Ursula Goebels-Ellis with event co-organizer Milt Warden.

Great UUCSV Adult Education Opportunity—April 2-4

Author, playwright, and natural healer Meta Commerse, who you may have met on Christmas Eve when she volunteered impromptu in our “Baker’s Dozen” readers theater, is offering a Story Medicine Community Workshop at UUCSV on Easter weekend. “Story Medicine” is an ancient indigenous healing modality that predates the written word. The sessions will total 15 hours of dialogue, writing and reading that will have you create your own oral history, fostering a greater sense of self-awareness and power for social change. Registration for the Workshop is just \$25 and some scholarships will be available. To register, please contact Meta Commerse at 505-4298.



The Noise Continues

Yes, there is still a UUCSV Drum Circle, and it meets on the third Friday of the Month from 5:30-6:40, just before Friday Fling. Now that the weather is nice, we can sit outside and enjoy our rhythm in the breeze. Bring a drum if you have one, but there are a few extra instruments. (Sally Beth normally participates in the circle, but on April 16th she will be playing drums for the Learning Community School’s production of *The Sound of Music* directed by UUCSV friend Tom Tracy and Jim Carillon’s wife, Aline!)

Summer Camp at the UUCSV?!

How about a week of summer day camp at the UUCSV for K-6th graders? Sally Beth would like to talk with anyone else who is excited by this idea. Please check in with her ASAP (minister@uusv.org).

Membership Meeting Change

Membership meeting is Sunday, April 11 at 10 a.m., NOT 12:30, as is on the webpage.

Telephones Upgraded!

UUCSV has recently upgraded our telephones (thanks, Emory)—now Sally Beth has her own voicemail box—if you need to reach her for a non-emergency, instead of using her personal cell number please call the church and press 2 to get to her mailbox—messages will be checked regularly. This also means that Sally Beth has a telephone at her desk and should be able to pick up during office hours.

From the Editor—The Last Word

I am currently reading a book that has opened my eyes on why American society has become so polarized in political, social, and religious views, particularly exemplified by what has been going on since Obama was elected as our president. The authors trace it to a clash of personality differences in *worldviews*—“By worldview, we mean a set of connected beliefs animated by some fundamental, underlying value orientation that is itself connected to a visceral sense of right and wrong. Politics cleaved by a worldview has the potential for fiery disagreements because considerations about the correct way to lead a good life lie in the balance. Specifically, we demonstrate that American public opinion is increasingly divided along a cleavage that things like parenting styles and “manliness” map onto. We call that cleavage authoritarianism.” Those who have a strong authoritarian belief system tend to view the world in more concrete, black-and-white terms, having a greater than average need for order. Those who are more nonauthoritarian have more comfort with more ambiguous shades of gray, which allow for more nuanced judgements. This affects distinctions between in-groups and out-groups; views of existing social norms, immigration, and terrorism; attitudes toward minority groups (Jews, African-Americans, gays, Arabs); favoring military action vs. diplomacy; and many other differences. [“Authoritarianism & Polarization in American Politics,” M.J. Hetherington and J.D. Weiler, 2009, Cambridge University Press.]



LAURA BLACKLEY and a Band of Friends

Friday April 23, 2010

7:00-9:00pm

Unitarian Universalist
Congregation
of the Swannanoa Valley

500 Montreat Road
Black Mountain, NC

Adults: \$8 advance/\$10 at door
Children 12&under: \$5 advance
\$7 at door



This concert is a fund-raising event for the Unitarian
Universalist Congregation of the Swannanoa Valley's
"Coming of Age" youth trip to Boston

For more info or to purchase tickets:
info@uucsv.org -- (828) 669-8050