

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

April 2012

Volume XI, Issue 4

Religious Freedom — Diverse Perspectives



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

From the Board

The Happy Dance!

The Ministerial Search Committee requested a meeting with the Board of Trustees. We reluctantly agreed to yet another meeting, and when we met, we were given the wonderful news about Rev. Carter. We all did a Happy Dance. We are so delighted with the choice of the Ministerial Search Committee. We all know Michael Carter, and welcome him with open arms, open hearts, and being Unitarian Universalists, with open minds. We look forward to August, when Michael will be in our pulpit.

We also want to give our heartfelt thanks to the Ministerial Search Committee. What an outstanding job they did for our congregation! Their dedication was phenomenal. Their cooperation was truly, and I don't use word lightly, awesome. Thank you, MSC!!

The next big Event coming up is the Trillium Sale!! Saturday, April 28 is the Big Day. It's an excellent opportunity to clear out the garage, the attic, or any place that things accumulate. The guidelines for donations are in the Current and this is one yard sale that the people of Black Mountain really look forward to. So bring on the goodies, folks!

Well, it looks as if winter really is over, for what it was worth, and spring is upon us. This is one of the most beautiful times of the year...things that looked grey and dead all winter are coming back to life. It's always a miracle of rebirth. We're ready to get out the garden tools and go play in the dirt, and plant the flowers and vegetables that will bring us joy and sustenance all summer long.

Happy Spring!

—Mary Soyenova, *Vice President, Board of Trustees*

UUCSV Board of Trustees

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Sybil Argintar, *Director of Religious Education* 230-3773
Linda Metzner, *Choir Director*
Tricia West, *Office Staff*
(Office Hours: W 12-5,
Th 9:30-3:30)

Board Meeting: Monday 16 April, 6 p.m.

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

Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 24 April, 10 a.m., covering May 2012



Ministerial Status

The Ministerial Search Committee has recommended that the Board hire Rev. Michael J. S. Carter as our "Half Time Consulting Minister". The Board unanimously approved this recommendation and Rev. Carter has accepted the position. Board members Jennifer Billstrom Caldwell and Lynn Failing are working with Michael on the contract which is expected to be complete and executed in a week or so. The contract period is expected to start in August.

—Geoffrey Stone, UUCSV Board President

Sunday Programming

Sunday, 1 April 2012, 11 a.m.

Sacred Humor

Rev. Dick Weston-Jones

Harvard psychologist Gregg Jacobs says the maturity of a religious people can be seen in whether or not they can laugh at their own religion. Our speaker, the Rev. Dick Weston-Jones, says he hopes a lot of mature UU's show up this Sunday because every time he talks about sacred humor he seems to get in trouble. "Come and laugh," he says. "Please." Dick, Minister Emeritus of the Ventura, CA UU church, is currently in Ecuador where he is helping other UU's from Chapel Hill's Community Church, UU with the development of a medical clinic in a rural village. He's about to start a UUA-wide search for doctors and nurses who could help with short-term staffing as the clinic gets started next year.



step of the way. He has been a minister of one kind or another for most of his adult life, and is still known to a select few as "Father Tim." But of course, life has a way of changing both our minds and our plans. Today he considers himself a liberal, "a Hopeful Agnostic," and a proud member of UUCSV.

Sunday, 15 April 2012, 11 a.m.

Holy Discontent

Rev. Dr. Marc Mullinax

There are two ways to think about one's own faith or spirituality as one lives it out in the world. One way is more popular: You see the world as a chaotic place, and you seek to bring order, the order offered by your spirituality, upon this world that is indeed in need of that order. The other way is for those who see the world as a basically ordered place, where things hum along, and they seek to impose a spirituality of chaos upon all this sanctified, ordered, but unjust ... mess. To both spiritualities there is a critical word: "NO!" A meditation on the word "NO!" will occupy us today.



Sunday, 8 April 2012, 11 a.m. Easter Sunday

A Return to Life

Tim Perry

Though different segments of Christendom may calculate the day differently in their liturgical calendars, call it by different names, celebrate it in different ways, and argue endlessly about the details of the story behind it, all agree that what they remember on this day is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, a return to "life" of one who had been "dead," (whether physical, spiritual, or metaphorical) and therefore a message of great hope for all the world. Join with me as we attempt to embrace that hope (while retaining the right to question the details, in true UU form) by pondering the idea of Resurrection and it's implications for our personal and corporate lives.

Tim Perry began preaching in Fundamentalist churches when he was too young to drive. He passed through several denominations on his journey from Free Will Baptist to Roman Catholic, but remained devoutly conservative every

Sunday Programming

Sunday, 22 April 2012, 11 a.m.

Stand Against Racism Service

Robbie Madden

A Social Action Committee service with Robbie Madden and friends, in follow-up to Stand Against Racism. Our "own" Michael Carter will be speaking! More details to follow.



Sangha and volunteers her time teaching mindfulness at the local jail. She is also involved in Non-Violent (Compassionate) Communication, Interplay, and the Center for End-of Life Transitions which assists families with home funerals and after-death care, the perfect continuation of her previous career as a Hospice Social Worker. Lastly, Anna's passion is various forms of dance.

Sunday, 29 April 2012, 11 a.m.

A Moment of Mindfulness

Anna Matheson

Thich Nhat Hanh is a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, teacher, prolific author, poet and peace activist who has written more than 100 books on the practice of the mindfulness of each moment as a way to alleviate suffering and bring about peace.

He writes: "Our true home is the present moment. To live in the present is a miracle. The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green Earth in the present moment, to appreciate the peace and beauty that are available now.

"Life is both dreadful and wonderful. To practice meditation is to be in touch with both aspects. We do not have to be solemn in order to meditate. To meditate well, we have to smile a lot."

Anna will be guiding us in meditation focused on the practice of mindfulness as a way to touch the peace that is always present in this moment. We will sing practice songs together, learn about Engaged Buddhism, the concept of interbeing, and gratefully celebrate our time together.

Anna Matheson, MSW, grew-up Catholic, but has been practicing Buddhist meditation for 20 years. She has trained extensively with Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, and was ordained by him into the Order of Interbeing in 2007. Anna is the co-founder of the Mountain Mindfulness

Sunday, 6 May 2012, 11 a.m.

The Bonfires of Liberty: Practicing the First Amendment's Vision of Religious Freedom

Byron Ballard

How do we open the gate of tolerance and then move from that space to true freedom? Fresh from her work on diversity in the Buncombe county schools, Byron Ballard invites us to engage true diversity and the freedom that brings. Linking this work with the old Irish season of Beltane with its bonfires and Maypoles, Ballard suggests that Thomas Morton and his pioneering 17th century colony at Merrymount had the right idea.

In addition to being a Wiccan priestess and clergy at Mother Grove Goddess Temple, H. Byron Ballard is a writer, organic gardener, and rootwoman. Her writings have appeared in local and national print and electronic media. Byron lives on an urban farmstead in Asheville's historic West End with her husband Joe and two cats. She blogs for the Asheville Citizen-Times as "the Village Witch."

Religious Education Corner



Spring is here. Spring is a time of renewal, remembrance, and, for our children and youth in the religious education program, a time of service and social justice. Our youngest UUs voted last Sunday to work with Brother Wolf Animal Rescue as our service project. Watch for more information about a bake sale (to add to the money we've collected in our offertory at circle time all year). We're hoping to go to the animal shelter on Sunday April 22 to work with the animals and help out in any way they need us. The middle and high school youth have helped to make meals for Room in the Inn, and will be working with the Rathbun Center, making meals there. On March 24, two of our youth will be heading to D.C. to attend the Reason Rally. Then, on April 29, our youth will join with others from Owen High School and other area churches in the valley for Youth STARS (Youth Stand Together Against Racism Sunday). This is part of the YWCA's annual Stand Against Racism program, but this year the Swannanoa Valley is focusing its efforts on youth. The afternoon will include two shared meals, a viewing of the movie "I Am", and facilitated small group dialog, based upon the format used in Building Bridges. The goal is for the afternoon to serve as a starting point for youth to begin talking about race and racism. We hope there will be many more follow-up programs.

Curriculum offerings for the coming month:

Over the past month we have had many visitors on Sunday mornings. We hope to keep these new families engaged in the congregation through the summer by offering several social activities (see

below for more info), in hopes they will continue to be with us in the fall. Following are classes scheduled for the next month.

Infant/preschool Class: *We Are Many, We Are One*; free play, stories, and songs

Presently this class is focused primarily on cooperative play time.

Grades K-5 Class: *In Our Hands: A Peace and Social Justice Program*

March 25 Local Unitarian Universalist Conflict Resolvers

April 1 Non-teaching Sunday—spring break (holiday program)

April 8 Non-teaching Sunday—spring break (supervised program available)

April 15 Earth Interdependence

April 22 Service project

April 29 Earth Stewardship

Grades 8-12 Class: *A Chorus of Faiths*

April 15 Planning for Youth STARS and May 20 service

April 29 Youth STARS

Summer Socials

Our soup and movie night on March 17th was such a grand success, that we're planning some additional activities over the summer which will be open to everyone in the congregation. We'll have another movie night (this time as a cook-out), and we're planning to go to at least one Tourist baseball game. More details will be available soon!

Journey for the Earth: *Daily Travel Adventures*

Aaron Eliot-Gaines and I attended the Camp Expo event on Saturday March

10th, held at the Sherrill Center at UNCA. This was an extremely well-attended event, which gave families a chance to see what summer offerings are available. We gave out over 50 brochures about our camp, and had one family sign up there. Interest has been expressed by other families, and we may have some of our own families attending again as well. Business sponsors for the camp so far are Dawn Wilson Realty and Town Hardware. We'll be partnering with Dynamite Roasters (to learn about fair trade coffee production) and FLS Energy (to learn about solar energy at their solar farm). Sound interesting? Separately in this newsletter is a flyer about the camp, so all you grandparents out there, sign up soon, as we can only take twelve campers!

Important Dates to Remember

March 24 Youth head to D.C. for the Reason Rally

April 15 Bake sale after services to benefit Brother Wolf Animal Rescue

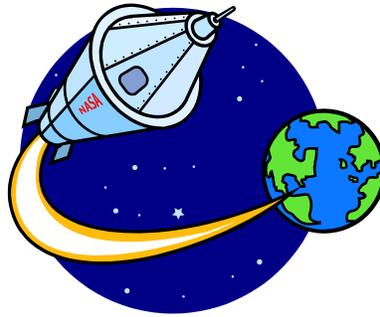
April 22 K-5 children's service project at Brother Wolf Animal Rescue Shelter

April 29 Youth STARS

May 6 RE Committee Meeting 12:30 p.m.

As always, feel free to call me if you have an idea to share or have any concerns.

— Sybil Argintar, Director of Religious Education (sybil.argintar@yahoo.com, 230-3773)



Join us for a week filled with hands-on activities, adventures, and learning!

Build a Recycled Creature!! Take Home Your Own Special Garden!!

Space is limited to twelve campers, register early!

Who: Rising first through fourth grades

What: Full-day camp focusing on caring for our environment

Each day will carry a different theme:

Recycling

Sustainable Gardening

Water

Energy Conservation

Animal World

When: July 16 – 20, 2012 9 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. M through F

Where: Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Swannanoa Valley

500 Montreat Road

Black Mountain, North Carolina 28711 www.uusv.org

For more info: Sybil Argintar, Director of Religious Education

(828) 230-3773 sybil.argintar@yahoo.com

Cost: \$150 per child, general public; discount for second child same family

\$140 per child for church members and friends

Limited scholarship funds are available—just let us know if you need assistance



Birthdays in April

April 7 th	Fern Martin
April 10 th	Pat Middleton
April 13 th	Angie Manuel
April 15 th	Noah Box
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.

Membership Committee

We look forward to welcoming Tina Rosato, a member of our committee, back from Florida!!

We are so pleased to have Meg Bruch as our newest member!! She will be a Greeter soon; so be sure to say Hello to her.

Your Membership Committee will be presenting another UU Orientation (with lunch!) on the first Sunday in May, the 6th, after the service. Our condensed version was so well received earlier this year that we want to do it again!! Lunch was a big draw, too. Potential and new members are invited to this Orientation.

—Angie Underwood, Chair, Membership Committee

Choir News for March

In April, the choir will meet on Sunday the 15th at 12:15 to rehearse. Then we will once more change our midweek rehearsal to Thursday at 7 PM. We will then rehearse on the 22nd at 10 AM, the day we perform. The subject of this service is "Standing on the Side of Love," the UU theme.

We are also looking forward to the dedication of our beautiful new piano on April 14th, 7 PM.

—Linda Metzner, Choir Director



Piano Dedication—Saturday, April 14, 2012—7 p.m., at UUCSV

A musical extravaganza is being planned to appropriately dedicate our wonderful new piano. We have lined up several pianists from the congregation to show off their skills (and the features of the piano, of course), and are still looking for more volunteers.



Please contact Linda Metzner (669-2293) or Sue Stone (669-0619) to sign up. And come one, come all, to this beautiful event!

Friday Fling

April's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on 20 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 "Around the Bend" (2004; Christopher Walken; a four-generation reunion and road-trip) will be shown. For further information call Norm Kowal (458-4537).



Bake Sale at Trillium Festival

Last year you were most generous in bringing baked goods for sale at our Trillium Festival. This brought a wonderful response from visitors to Trillium and we were sold out. Thank you every one. Now it is time again to show your magic with baking. Please plan to help out and bring baked goods. Cakes, cookies, breads, both yeast and gluten free, please mark it carefully. I can already smell all those delicious cupcakes, small cakes, big cakes for use at the cake walks we conduct during the morning, cookies of all kinds, YUM!!! And do not forget the home baked breads.

We plan to have this bake sale as much on the green side as possible, so if you can, use paper to cover your baked goods, but in such a way that we and the buyer can see what is for sale, if that is possible.

Please bring the baked goods in the day before the sale, The church will have a place to leave baked goods on Friday April 27 and latest to bring in baked goods will be on day of sale, We set up on April 28 at 6:30 AM and will need the goods by that time. So we can price them.

Happy baking every one.

—Your volunteers at the bake table.



"Hugo" was enjoyed by all ages!

A bountiful meal was served between movies.

B/A/G (Building, Aesthetics, Grounds) Committee

Action Beginning on RE and Building, Aesthetics, and Grounds Committee's (B/A/G) FY 2012-2013 Collaborative Project:

On Sunday, March 18, 2012 the newly formed UUCSV Memorial Garden Sub-Committee composed of RE Committee and B/A/G Committee members met with the B/A/G Committee to report on the sub-committee's progress toward planning and building a memorial garden on the grounds of UUCSV's building. UUCSV member and professional architect Scott Conklin is donating his time, knowledge, and skills by helping us design a garden of which we can be proud.

Sub-Committee members Sybil Argintar, Jeannie Shimer, and Angie Underwood recently visited memorial gardens in Asheville, Montreat, and Black Mountain. These women were able to offer Scott suggestions based on what they saw. At this time, we have Scott's preliminary drawings. It is proposed that the garden be in the area bordered on its north side by the existing large green shrubbery now in place and viewed from the large RE room windows on the east and by the chain link fence running along the east border of our property and seen from the east window of the minister's office. The exact location and dimensions of the garden are undecided pending Scott's and Emory Underwood's conference with Progress Energy regarding how we can work in this area where two power poles and a transformer are located. As we move forward, we will keep the Board and the congregation apprised of our plans.

—Jane Carroll, Chair

A Letter from Our Partner Church in Medeser

The words below are taken from the most recent email sent to The Sisters of Lucy Stone (SOLS) by Monika, the part time minister of our partner church in Medeser, Romania. We are partners through a link with the UUA. We thought you might like to read this letter from our friends in Romania whom UUCSV supports through proceeds from Trillium, our annual spring festival. We will have pictures Monika sent from Romania available soon to show you. Monika and her husband Lazlo speak Hungarian as their native language, but Lazlo also speaks and writes some English quite well, as you will see:

Dear members of SOLS, and all our brothers and sisters in Swannanoa Valley UU Congregation,

I am addressing this e-mail to all of you; because I want more people hear my words of thanks.

But firstly let me thank for you, Jane this e-mail. We are glad that you are informing us. It is a so good feeling that you all are thinking of us! We are also thinking of you a lot, and pray for you. Dear Evelyn, we were worried about you. Thank's God you are feeling better now.

Hope you all are fine, and everything is going well in your church.

You will have interesting programs on the next months, and it is so admirable how active you are! We are wishing you endurance and good organization! [they have access to our website via internet-J].

Let me write you a little bit about us. Here was and still is really big winter, with much snow. This winter was so long, and problematic. Caused a lot of difficulty, not only in transport. A lot of fruit trees, and barns broken under the weight of the snow. We hope it will end soon, and the spring will arrive.

We are working a lot. I love very much to work in Medeser, but as you know, we do not live there. I traveled a lot on this winter, and unfortunately I had car accident. Thanks God it was not so serious. I am fine. But after I do not drive. Until the spring arrives my husband will drive, because we have terrible road conditions. We realized that we must to change our car to a 4X4 for the next winter.

But the situation is not so dramatic. And we have really good news for you! Last week we finished the work on the parish house in Medeser. At the end of February started the renovation, and now we have two renovated (renewed) room. Now it is so nice, warm and homely. Plasterboard walls, new floor, curtains, chandeliers, fireplace. We are very pleased for the renovation, because all community events taking place here. The people here are very grateful to you! You must to know: the half of your last year support we used for this renovation! (The other half last year was invested to the bell ringing system) [the old system needed repair and to be mechanized- J]

On 8 of March we had the inauguration ceremony. At the same time we celebrated the women, because 8 of March we are calling "Women's Day." The women's from my husband congregation (from Firtosvaralja) visited us and we celebrated together. For this occasion we prepared corn on the cob, several kinds of cakes, coffee and tea. It was so fine!

So, lately we progressed a lot with your help. Thanks again very much for the support for you all! We were thinking about, how we can reciprocate your kindness??? We only our prayers, and our hospitality can offer. Do you heard about the event, what will be on autumn, 2012, here in Romania? (!!! More information down, or: WWW.ICU UW.COM) It will be so fine, if some of you will be able to come to this event or to Medeser! We are inviting you now!

If you have any questions related this, please contact me!

Now we are preparing to the "Prayer's week", which will be next week.

Best wishes and blessings.

Congregational Care News

We are happy to report that, for the most part all the UUCSV members and friends are holding up quite well. In our continued efforts to be “proactive “ about Congregational Care, we offer these thoughts: Taking care of yourself is one of the most important (and sacred) things we can do in this life. We have Very Important Work to do in our short time on this planet, and we cannot accomplish that work if we are weary, hungry, lonely, or angry. We need to get our bellies full of nourishing food, which, fortunately, is available in abundance in our little valley. Make your grocery list and get yourself to the market on a regular basis so you can fuel your Very Important work. Sleep when you are weary, sleep for the dreams and the replenishments that only sleep can bring. Bring people into your life, go to scheduled events at your congregation, in your town, invite folks to your home. Be surrounded by the wonderful mammals that inhabit our town. And anger – what about that? Do you hang onto anger long after the irritant is gone? Find ways to “let it go”. It’s just not worth it, considering the physiological problems associated with long term anger. And, what is the Very Important Work? It is love, it is taking care of each other. There is nothing else as important. Really.

For Congregational Care needs call Dawn Wilson (828) 713-5590 email Care@uusv.org

From the Editor—The Last Word

From a recent review of the latest book by Elaine Pagels, the historian of religion who wrote the 1979 book, “The Gnostic Gospels” (named one of the best 100 English-language nonfiction books of the 20th century by the Modern Library): ‘ . . . 2003 is also the year Pagels scored her first New York Times best seller, “Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas.” Her next book, a study of Judas written with the Harvard professor Karen King, also landed here, in 2007, and now Pagels is back. Her latest effort, “Revelations: Visions, Prophecy, and Politics in the Book of Revelation,” enters the hardcover nonfiction list at No. 10. Reviewing the book in The New Yorker this month, Adam Gopnik highlighted Pagels’s argument that Revelation is “essentially an anti-Christian polemic . . . written by an expatriate follower of Jesus [John of Patmos] who wanted the movement to remain within an entirely Jewish context, as opposed to the ‘Christianity’ just then being invented.” Gopnik continued: “The scarlet whores and mad beasts in Revelation are the Gentile followers of Paul — and so, in a neat irony, the spiritual ancestors of today’s Protestant evangelicals.”’



Women's Spirituality Group

The Women's Spirituality Group will meet April 4, at 6:30 pm to remember some Earth Based Spirituality traditions which have been carried forward to use in more modern traditions. Our focus on the rites of Spring will let each of us have colorful hand-decorated eggs, blown out so they will last, (cook with those scrambled eggs that you blow into a cup after you pricked a hole in each end of your eggs and blew really hard...don't plan to bring the insides to our meeting). Bring a couple of hollow eggs to try different decorations, acrylics, wax (crayon), glue, sparkles, paper, inks. We'll make little stands for the eggs to sit upon as great decorations or gifts. Bring your decorative goodies too. We will also talk about why Easter has carried forward the use of eggs and bunnies.

—Barbara Rogers

Room in the Inn

Social Action sends a special thanks to everyone who assisted with Room in the Inn on March 23rd. We couldn't do this without your help. The women always look forward to their week in Black Mountain and you've helped make this possible.

Our next event will be in July at the Black Mountain Methodist church. There'll be a notice in the May newsletter with more details.

—Connie Krochmal, Social Action Room in the Inn Coordinator