

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

June 2012

Volume XI, Issue 6

Religious Freedom — Diverse Perspectives



## From the Board

Ah-h-h, June. That wonderful month that heralds the beginning of summer, much the same way the birds herald the break of day. If you have your bedroom window open at 5 am, when the first light comes, there will be one bird who chirps, then another and another until there is a symphony of bird calls going on, each with its own voice. Then they're gone, off on their day. Our congregation is so much like that. After the winter quiet, there is such a flurry of activity going on, people coming and going, new programs on the horizon as well as the breathless anticipation of our new minister, Michael. By now, we've all probably heard about the start-up of our small ministry Covenant Groups. We've had these in the past and they were so successful and beloved that we're really excited to begin again. The basic idea of the Covenant Groups is that people get a chance to talk about their beliefs, to engage in conversation with people they might not have spoken with before and look at new ideas. Sure, we love to stand around after church and chat with our friends over coffee, but this is different. It gives us a chance, in quiet and intimate surroundings, to engage in meaningful dialogue with others. Haven't we all taken some idea away from the Sunday service and chewed on it during the week? Now we'll have the opportunity to share our thoughts. Oh, how Unitarian!

At this point, there are quite a few changes going on. We have new Board members, and there are many opportunities for those in the congregation to step into new roles. We need a Membership Committee chair, as Angie is stepping down after keeping us well on our toes over the winter. Thank you, Angie! And even though she's a hard act to follow, we'd love to have a volunteer for this position. Membership is a very important part of our congregation. If you want to be more involved in our church, now is a good time to come aboard.

Our day camp is filling up with children eager to have a week-long experience in RE. Got grandchildren visiting in July? Now is a good time to sign them up for a week of adventure. Ask Sybil for applications, and if you enjoy the company of the little ones, come join in! And if this isn't enough, we'll be having our yearly retreat to The Mountain. This will be our annual Board retreat and all are welcome. Michael and his family will be there and it will be an excellent time to get to know them better. The Mountain is in the Highlands, secluded in the woods with wonderful accommodations, a kitchen that serves up really wonderful food, views that go on and on, and stars that look as if they're at your fingertips. We're really looking forward to this time together.

Welcome summer! What a wonderful time.

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

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

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**Board Meeting: Monday 18 June, 6 p.m.**

Send Newsletter Information to  
Norm Kowal, *Editor*  
[normankowal@bellsouth.net](mailto:normankowal@bellsouth.net)

Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 19 June, 10  
a.m., covering July 2012

## Sunday Programming

**Sunday, 3 June 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **Birthing a New Self**

**Rev. DiAnna Ritola**

In times of transition the pain of being surrounded by uncertainty can feel nearly overwhelming. Yet just because one chapter of life has ended or shifted does not mean that there is nothing but a void. It is within this sacred space that we are called to birth our new self and become more of who we really are as Divine Human Beings.



Rev. DiAnna Ritola is an Interfaith Minister, ordained by The New Seminary for Interfaith Studies in New York. She also has a practice called Authentic Integration: Spiritual Sex and Intimacy Coaching as well as being a professional speaker on the integration of spirituality and sexuality. She has lived in cities large and small, explored her inner Earth Mother in rural Vermont where her two children were born, and moved to Asheville in 2001. She has been a member of the UU Congregation of Asheville for 11 years and is now enjoying the joyfully busy teen years with her daughters. She recently took up running, and will have completed both a ½ Marathon and a full Marathon by the time she gets to UUCSV.



**Sunday, 10 June 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **Hereafter or Herenow?**

**Rev. Dr. Marc Mullinax**

Many faith-professions come with a well-developed sense of an Afterlife.

"Heaven" is a carrot

for inducing good behavior or faith In this life, and "Hell" is that stick to motivate us against bad behavior. But remove these faith-motivations, and what is left? Without hope of heaven, or threat of hell, how might our choices for worthwhile alter? We will focus upon the question of why have or practice faith in the first place. Drop the idea of the hereafter/afterlife; will the journey be worse ... or better?



We will welcome new members of UUCSV in a ceremony today.

The Rev. Dr. Marc Mullinax is a Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Mars Hill College. He is our enthusiastic monthly pulpit supply minister from January through July 2012.

## Sunday Programming

**Sunday, 17 June 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **Hand – in – Hand with Transylvania**

The service on Sunday, June 17, 2012 will honor the friendship and collaborative relationship that has evolved over the past decade between UUCSV and its partner Unitarian church in Medeser, Romania. The two congregations derive from a common history starting in the 16th century in Transylvania. It was there at that time that Francis David and the young King John Sigismund joined to form what we know as the Unitarian way of thinking.

Our partner church is located in Transylvania. This area has a long and tangled history of being shunted between Hungary and Romania and being governed by various bodies including different monarchies, the communists, and among the most recent, the repressive dictator Ceausescu.

Worried about the welfare of the Unitarians in Romania, the Unitarians in the US founded the partner church movement in the late 1980s. Close friendships with the Unitarians in Romania were formed. It is UUCSV's important and growing friendship with Medeser Unitarians that the SOLS (Sisters of Lucy Stone) have worked rigorously to establish and which we honor on this Sunday.

**Sunday, 24 June 2012, 11 a.m.**

**“Be joyful, though you have considered all the facts.” ~Wendell Berry.**

### **Laura Collins**

The vote on Amendment One is only one recent example of the way the facts around us might lead to despair. How do we maintain our sense of humor in the midst of situations that are anything but funny? How do we stay the course, when we're tempted to go jump off a cliff? How do we keep the fire in our belly when we've just been doused with cold water? Join Laura Collins as she reflects on



awakened activism or staying involved while staying happy. Laura will draw on some of her favorite writer/activists including Wendell Berry, Dorothee Sölle, Barbara Kingsolver, and Bill McKibben, as well as on her studies in contemplative spirituality and positive psychology.

Laura lives in West Asheville with her teenaged son where she freelances as a writer, editor, and retreat leader. She works part-time at Mission Hospital providing support to families in trauma. In previous lives she has been a Presbyterian minister, a climate change activist, a provider of hospitality to ex-offenders and women in prostitution, and a drama coach for inner-city children.

**Sunday, 1 July 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **To Do One Thing Well**

#### **Rev. Robin Tanner**

Religious traditions the whole world over ask adherents often to do one thing well. For some, it's the Golden Rule. For others, it is keeping kosher. Some traditions ask for a single confession of faith, a belief to be stated. What is it that Unitarian Universalism asks us to do well? What is your one thing you will do well in this life?

Originally from upstate New York, Rev. Robin Tanner now serves as the minister of the Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church in Charlotte. Prior to moving to Charlotte, she lived in Albuquerque, New Mexico where she completed a year-long chaplain residency at Presbyterian Hospital. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Religious Studies from the University of Rochester, and earned her Master of Divinity from Harvard Divinity School, where she was awarded the Williams Fellowship. She was ordained as a Minister in December 2009 and was called to serve at the Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church in 2010.

## Religious Education Corner



Sunday May 20 marked our annual RE Celebration Sunday, with the theme of "Open Hearts and Minds". Our youngest presented, in the form of a handmade quilt, their representation of what peace means to them. Our teens presented the challenges they have faced in the world, trying to live up to the idea of keeping an open mind and heart. All parents should be so proud of how their sons and daughters are viewing the world. As we bridge our senior youth into the larger congregation, as we did with Sam Scott last Sunday, you can be assured that you are giving greatness to the world. I am so proud and you should be too.

Sunday May 27 begins our Summer Sundays programs. I'll be contacting folks over the coming weeks to help out with a special program or talent you would like to share. We prefer, during the summer, to extend our village of volunteers beyond our regular classroom teachers so that they can have a time to participate in services. So, all you adults out there, we need you! Please sign up as soon as possible to help in the preschool or in the K-5 class-

room. If everyone can contribute their time one Sunday during the summer, we'll have plenty of volunteers!

### Summer Sundays K-5 Classroom

May 27 Earth Stewardship and the Interdependent Web

Evelyn Carter

June 3 Field trip to Brother Wolf Animal Rescue 9 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Sybil, parents

June 10 Open (Fill this space!!)

June 17 Father's Day  
Sybil Argintar

June 24 Open (Fill this space!!)

### Summer Sundays Preschool Room

We need two adults or one teen and one adult, every week, all summer long. See me to sign up!!

### Journey for the Earth: Daily Travel Adventures

We are still taking registrations for summer camp, but we are filling up fast! We have seven children registered to date, but can take a few more. Beata Ball and Aaron Eliot-Gaines will be work-

ing with me as counselors for the week. We have some great days planned—please keep passing the word! Cost for church members/friends is \$140 for a full day, full week of camp! Non-church member fee is \$150. Some scholarship funds are available. Camp runs the week of July 16 - 20. See me if you need more information.

### Important Dates to Remember

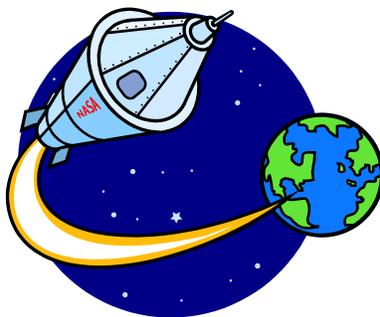
May 27 Summer Sundays begin

June 3 Summer Sunday program: Field trip to Brother Wolf Animal Rescue

June 9 RE Committee Retreat 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., home of Susan and Scott Shaw

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](http://www.uusv.org)**

**For more info: Sybil Argintar, Director of Religious Education**

**(828) 230-3773 [sybil.argintar@yahoo.com](mailto: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 June**

- June 19<sup>th</sup> Don Pfister
- June 24<sup>th</sup> David Reid
- June 25<sup>th</sup> Jane Carroll
- June 26<sup>th</sup> Heidi Blozan
- June 29<sup>th</sup> George Scott



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

**Choir News for June**

Thank you to all the singers and to the RE children who did beautiful hand signs for "Spirit of Life" in May! In June we will perform on the 24th. We will rehearse on Sunday the 17th at 12:15 after the service, then on Wednesday evening the 20th at 6:30 PM, and again on the day of performance, the 24th at 10 AM. Come sing with us—we have a lot of fun!



—Linda Metzner, Choir Director



May 20, 2012, "Spirit of Life" with the children signing.

**Friday Fling**

June's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on 15 June 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 "Cold Comfort Farm" (1995; typically British; "She discovered a new branch of the family tree . . . The one with all the nuts.") will be shown. For further information call Norm Kowal (458-4537).



**Social Action Committee**

The Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry and the Prison Ministry Project will take place June 11th through June 16th. Women from the prison and other volunteers will be working on fixing up houses in the community.

Our congregation will be in charge of providing a luncheon for the workers and their sponsors on Friday, June 15th. The lunch will take place at noon at Lake Tomahawk. The Social Action Committee looks forward to being a part of this important community-sponsored, interfaith event and needs your help in making the luncheon a success. We will be feeding up to fifty people so need volunteers to contribute sandwiches or desserts and possibly paper goods/other supplies. If you can be a part of this project, call/email Emory Under-



**Room in the Inn Update**

Thanks to everyone who has signed up to help out with Room in the inn on Friday, July 20th. The women will be staying at the Black Mountain Methodist Church annex. UUCSV is responsible for providing all the meals and volunteers for the day. At this point we still need another overnight volunteer as well as overnight backups and backup van drivers. A sign-up sheet is available in the foyer or contact me at flora258@isp.com or 686-3112.



—Connie Krochmal, Social Action Room in the Inn Coordinator

## The Mountain Retreat

Save the Date: On the weekend of August 17-19 three UU congregations from WNC are invited to join forces and have a joint congregational retreat at The Mountain, the UU Camp and Retreat Center located near Highlands, about 2 hours from Black Mountain. Members of the Swannanoa Valley congregation will collaborate with the fellowships of Hendersonville and Brevard to plan a fun and relaxing weekend. Ministers from all three congregations will be attending and participating. Six healthy and delicious meals are included, starting with Friday's dinner and ending with lunch on Sunday after the worship service.

The Mountain is located on top of Little Scaly Mountain at an elevation of 4,200', so if you want to beat the heat of the dog days of August, put this on your calendar. Our host will be Lee Reading, Interim Director. There will be opportunities to hike, swim, nap, stretch, play, make new friends, and enjoy a concert by Lee Knight, a great musician, folklorist and storyteller.

Go to [www.mountaincenters.org](http://www.mountaincenters.org) to learn more about the Mountain and to use the on-line registration system. We hope you will join us!

## Get Ready, Get Set, GROW!!!

Soon you will have the opportunity to join a Covenant Group. Never heard of one? Covenant Groups are small groups of congregants who commit to studying a topic of mutual interest over a group-determined period of time. In the process, participants often form unexpected and enduring relationships.

Those who participated when our congregation last ran Covenant Groups will attest to the power of these groups. Those new to the concept have a treat in store.

Your first step is to pick up and read an information packet at church if you haven't already.

Next, on June 3, 10, and 17 surveys will be distributed after Sunday services. Be sure to fill out and return your survey. Once the Implementation Team has collected all the surveys, groups will be established.

## Sally Beth Shore

Candidate for UU Ministry, Sally Beth Shore is proud to announce that she was awarded her Master of Divinity degree from Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago on Sunday, May 20. Sally Beth hopes to be admitted into preliminary fellowship with the UUA in September. Sally Beth did her ministerial internship with us from June 2009 through December 2010. Congratulations, Sally Beth!



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

We now have louvered awnings on the windows on the south side of the building. Kim Taylor and Susan Culler volunteered to make, paint, and install them. That room should be protected from the sun to a greater degree than it has been. Many thanks to Kim and Susan.

—Jane Carroll, Chair



## Membership Committee

More Good News from Membership!!



We are delighted to welcome three brand-new members to our congregation!! They are James and Carol Sheeler and Ray Culotta. Jill Tagudin, Ray's wife, is already a member.

With all these new additions, your Membership Committee is looking forward to a New Member Recognition Ceremony during our June 10th Sunday Service. Please plan to attend and welcome James, Carol, and Ray as well as others who have joined in recent months!!

—*Angie Underwood, Chair, Membership Committee*

## Women's Spirituality Group



The Women's Spirituality Group will meet Wed. June 6 at 6:30 pm.

This month we will explore and share some of our favorite rituals. If you are able, please make copies of the steps to your ritual to share with the others. Do you have a way that a group begins or ends that you are drawn to? Is there a particular ritual that helps you when you are feeling a bit blue? How do you follow rituals for celebration? Bring music to share if it's part of a ritual. We will also be planning a "special" gathering for July, but not on Independence Day, so we will meet on another date in July. As always, this group is open to all women.

—*Barbara Rogers*

## From the Editor—The Last Word



Imagine yourself dead. What picture comes to mind? In reality, you can no more envision what it is like to be dead than you can visualize yourself before you were born. Death is cognitively nonexistent, and yet we know that it is real because every one of the 100 billion people who lived before us is gone. We see death all around us, and yet it involves the end of consciousness, and we cannot consciously simulate what it is like to not be conscious.

The attempt to resolve the paradox has led to four immortality narratives:

Staying alive—the dream of living forever,

Resurrection—the belief that we can physically rise again,

Soul—the dream of surviving as some kind of spiritual entity,

Legacy—more indirect ways of extending ourselves into the future, such as glory, reputation, historical impact, or children.

Given the improbability of the first three immortality narratives, making a difference in the world in the form of a legacy that changes lives for the better is the highest we can climb up Mount Immortality, but on a clear day you can see forever.

(Adapted from Michael Shermer in *Scientific American* of April 2012.)