

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

March 2012

Volume XI, Issue 3

Religious Freedom — Diverse Perspectives

From the Board

Faith is the bird that
feels the light
And sings
when the dawn
is still dark.

—Rabindranath Tagore

"In this season of early spring, midway between winter and summer solstices, sometimes waking in the morning, we can almost feel the first touches of summer coming. Often it is still cold and dark. But something in the air is telling us--- that the days, at least in our Northern Hemisphere, are lengthening. The light will come sooner and last longer."

—Martha Whitmore Hickman

The novelty of the New Year has worn off, many of the resolutions that we so valiantly made have taken a back seat and we are now looking ahead to summer, which will be here all too soon. This midway point seems to be a time for us to take stock of what we mean to accomplish this year---oh, I don't mean the 10 pounds that seem to have made permanent friends with our hips, or the list of projects that seems to grow longer every time we cross one off. I mean, where are we going this year? It's like having a gift---that's why they call it "the present". A little like having money in the bank----we have around 300 days left in this year, so what will we do with them? How will you spend your time?

Many of us have a pretty rigid schedule, but we all have some free time. Free. How we spend it depends on us. Do you have a family and spend time with them? Do you have dear friends who nurture you? Are you enriching your life with community service? Or maybe you're spending more time just being with yourself. It's all in our hands. Some of us have a hard time saying, "No", when asked to do or contribute something. Some of us don't want to venture outside our comfort zone, while some of us keep crashing right through it! Sometimes it feels like we're "frittering away" our time, but we also need to give ourselves permission to fritter away sometimes. Was it Charlie Brown who said, "Wherever you go, there you are."?

Soon, we'll start feeling that peppy spring energy. Time to garden! Time to go out and wash the car! Let's get on with it! Hike, swim, ride a bike. Join a committee (see how I just slipped that in?) Get involved. Whenever you give of your time, money or energy, it comes back, often in surprising ways. We'll be starting our pledge drive for this year very soon, and we'll all be asked to give to support our church. When we think of all that our congregations means to us, it is appropriate to give what we can.

In the meantime, let's enjoy the Sunday talks and the fellowship we share.

Blessings to us all-

—Mary Soyenova, Vice President, Board of Trustees



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

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

Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 20 March, 10
a.m., covering March 2012

Sunday Programming

Sunday, 4 March 2012, 11 a.m.

Annual Budget Drive Kickoff

Jeff Hutchins

We will have our Pledge Drive Kickoff with a churchwide potluck right after the service. The church will provide some food and we ask that you bring a dish to share. Since we are a Green Congregation, we ask that you bring your own plate and silverware.

Our theme is "The Community You Deserve".

Sunday, 11 March 2012, 11 a.m.

The Spirit of Occupy

Carolyn Raleigh and Thembi Blessington

This service will be an exploration of the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism, the "American Dream," and how they relate to the Occupy movement. Through personal stories, Carolyn Raleigh and Thembi Blessington will explain how Occupy can be a forum to express your deepest truths and transform them into action. Perhaps you have a calling to Occupy...

Thembi Blessington graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill, majoring in Anthropology and Religious Studies. He works with people with mental health and substance abuse issues. He has also studied conflict resolution with the Process Work Institute in Portland, OR, and South Africa. During his two years in South Africa, he studied traditional medicine and was initiated as a traditional healer. Thembi is actively involved with the Facilitation and Outreach working groups in Occupy Asheville and is interested in preserving the principles of nonviolence, diversity, fairness, transparency, and consensus as set forth by the Occupy movement.

Carolyn Raleigh was raised by agnostic parents and attended a Unitarian Universalist church growing up. Before stepping off the "conveyor belt" of modern society, she worked as a webmaster and kitchen designer. Today, Caro-



lyn serves as a delegate for the Occupy Asheville General Assembly, helps out at A HOPE day center for the houseless, visits folks in hospice with her therapy dog, philosophizes with friends, family, and strangers, tends a garden, cooks, reads, and just generally shares smiles and love with the world.

A Discussion of Deep Economics: Please join us after the service at 12:30 for a one hour presentation and question and answer session with Mark Blessington, author of the forthcoming book, *Deep Economics*. Using film clips and presentations from his own work Mark will lead a discussion about a "people's history of economics" and how this relates to the principles that underlie the Occupy Movement.

Mark Blessington is the author of the forthcoming book *Deep Economics*. He has an MBA from Northwestern University, was a management consultant to huge corporations like Pfizer, GE and Allstate, and was often quoted in the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*. Mark's current focus is to tell a "people's history of economics" and help us align our loftiest values with our economic decisions.

Sunday Programming

Sunday, 18 March 2012, 11 a.m.

Six Impossible Things Before Breakfast

Rev. Dr. Marc Mullinax

"I can't believe THAT!" said Alice.

"Can't you?" the Queen said. "Try again: draw a long breath, and shut your eyes."

"Alice in Wonderland" gives us a jumping off place for a world that is upside-down and reversed, and thus, worthy of investigation. Between these two poles -- "The Impossible" and "The Really Really Difficult" -- we form our characters and our world. Today we consider how the Examined Life is the one that embraces the Impossible, and takes it seriously!

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 June 2012.



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.

Sunday, 25 March 2012, 11 a.m.

Growing Our Spirit

Rev. Lisa Bovee Kemper

Communities of faith are exactly what we need to sustain us through difficult times, and our shared faith is just the healing balm that our culture is crying out for. Is it possible to be progressively evangelical, and what might that mean for Unitarian Universalists?

Rev. Kemper is the Assistant Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Asheville.

Religious Education Corner



Church services and religious education classes happen on Sunday mornings. But we are so much more than that. The community that supports each other, in good and bad times, is really what we're all about. In that spirit, we hope everyone in the congregation will join together for a fun late winter event on March 17th.

We'll be running a double feature and join together for a potluck soup night. We'll be showing "Hugo" at 4 p.m. for the young ones (and young at heart—this is an Academy Award nominee, by the way), followed by dinner and fellowship, and then The Help after dinner (also a nominee). If you haven't had a chance to see either of these outstanding movies, now is your chance! But mostly we'd just like for you to be there. Bring a friend with you. Show them what we're all about. We might even have something green to drink in honor of St. Patrick's Day!! See you then!

Curriculum offerings for the coming month:

Over the past month we have continued to have several visitors on Sunday mornings, an encouraging sign that some younger families are considering being part of our congregation. 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 and Moral Tales

- March 4 Creative Conflict Resolution, Part 2
- March 11 Cooperation/Plan for Service Project
- March 18 Making Peace and Building Justice
- March 25 Local Unitarian Universalist Conflict Resolvers
- April 1 Non-teaching Sunday—spring break

This class is deciding what they would like to do as a service day, but it's looking like some work with one of the local animal shelters is a good possibility. The work of this class will culminate in the spring in the creation of a peace quilt.

Grades 8-12 Class: A Chorus of Faiths

- March 11 Service Is Our Prayer
- March 18 New Habits of the Heart

This class, as part of its goal of service and working with other faith communities, has decided to help in a variety of ways this spring. Our biggest project will be taking part in the Stand Against Racism event for youth from area schools and churches, set for April 29th. We will also help with Room in the Inn, and possibly with the Rathbun Center,

making meals.. Some of our youth are planning to head to Washington, D.C. on March 24 to take part in an event to help others understand non-traditional faiths such as ours (more on this from Sam Scott in this newsletter). Our children care and are becoming involved in the world!

Summer Camp is a Go—Tell Your Friends!

We are planning our second annual summer camp program, with the same theme of Journey for the Earth: Daily Travel Adventures. Camp dates will be July 16 - 20, for rising first through fourth graders. Cost for the full week will be \$150 for the general public and \$140 for church members/friends or if there is a second child in a family. More information will be available soon!

Important Dates to Remember

- March 17 Soup/chili/movie night. Starts at 4 p.m. with Hugo!!
- March 18 RE Committee meeting for March/April 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)

Save the Date!!!

The Religious Education Committee is inviting you to an afternoon and evening of fun and fellowship!!

Featuring two Academy Award nominated movies!!

Saturday March 17th

4 p.m. Hugo (rated PG)

5:45 p.m. Dinner

Bring your favorite crockpot of soup or chili

We'll provide bread, salad, drinks, and dessert

7 pm. The Help (rated PG-13)

Bring your friends and family!!



Birthdays in March

- March 4th Scott Shaw
- March 10th JoAnn Hansen
- March 10th Howard Hansen
- March 11th Evan Shaw
- March 13th Judy Curtis
- March 14th Ann Lutz
- March 14th Marjorie Starrs
- March 18th Elaine Hamil
- March 18th Linda Metzner
- March 23rd Lee Reading



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're Celebrating. . .

Your Membership Committee is delighted to welcome two new members who recently joined UUCSV!! They are Meg Bruch and Miller Jackson. We hope you'll welcome them, too!!

—Angie Underwood, Chair, Membership Committee

Greeters

- March 4 - Meg Bruch and Angie Underwood
- March 11 - Jane Carroll and David Reid
- March 18 - Susan and Scott Shaw
- March 25 - Helen Bell and Norm Kowal

Your Membership Committee sends special thanks to these Greeter Volunteers. They're the best!!

Choir News for March

The choir is very excited about the money that was raised for a new piano for the sanctuary! Thank you so much to our music-loving congregation. In March, the choir will meet for rehearsal on Sunday the 18th at 12:15, the following Thursday the 22nd at 7 PM, and then on the day of performance, the 25th at 10 AM. Come join us in singing!



New Piano!

On Friday, a brand new Perzina piano was delivered to the church by Keith Freeburg Piano Service of Hendersonville. It's an upright piano, made in Germany, with Austrian spruce interior and Ebony finish. It has a unique floating sound board for a distinct bass sound.

Chuck Shimer located the piano and got a very good deal through his brother Max, an accomplished piano technician. The piano is paid in full! Many thanks to all who donated, especially to the anonymous donor who initiated the pledge drive with a matching fund!



Friday Fling

March's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on 16 March 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 "Mamma Mia" (2008; Meryl Streep, Pierce Brosnan, etc.) will be shown. For further information call Norm Kowal (333-4925).



Congregational Care News

After a couple of trips to the hospital, Evelyn Carter is home and accepting visitors, calls and cards. She can be reached at 251-1416. We are now using a web site to coordinate visits and food. It is much easier than trading dozens of emails! Please go to <http://www.takethemameal.com/>. Just search for Carter and the password is uucsv. You will see she has visits lined up till the 22nd, and more would be welcome after that date. There is a map to her home, notes about her food preferences, and an interactive calendar.

Connie Krochmal is also happy to have a visit now and then. She can be reached at 686-3112.

Marjorie Starrs enjoys calls and cards and visits if you call ahead at 664-9320.

The Elliot Gaines family is doing as well as can be expected after the loss of their daughter Emily in December. They want the church family to know that they really appreciate the warmth and opportunities we gave to Emily for seven wonderful years. She really loved playing for the church and felt very connected to the congregation. During this very sad time we may not see Bert, Eileen and Aaron attending services as often as in the past. It is very difficult for them to confront the vast memories of Emily found at UUCSV and the family hopes we all understand that they appreciate our love and hope to return on a more regular basis in the future.

This month the Care Committee is thinking about our hearts. What is your "heart's desire"? Do you know? If you do, then what small step can you take this week to lead you in the direction of that desire? And if you don't know your heart's desire, and this can be very difficult for some of us, what if you paid special attention this week to the small things that bring you joy? Could they lead you to know more about what you desire? Much love to all from your Care Committee.

The Congregation keeps a list of people willing to offer rides, food or similar types of assistance to our members and friends. Please contact coordinator, Dawn Wilson, at care@uusv.org or 828-713-5590 if you need congregational care assistance or know of someone who does.

Women's Spirituality Group

The Women's Spirituality Group meets on March 7 in the home of Ann Sillman. She will host our viewing of the movie "The Mists of Avalon." Since this is a long movie, we're going to share a pot luck supper in the intermission, and will start our meeting at 6:00 pm. If you haven't been to Ann's home, just contact her at 828-669-0974 for directions.

—Barbara Rogers

Room in the Inn Volunteers Needed

Social Action thanks everyone who has signed up to help with Room in the Inn on Friday, March 23 at the Black Mountain Presbyterian annex. This program provides food, shelter, and transportation for homeless women. We need volunteer van drivers for both the morning and evening shifts. There is also a need for back-up volunteers as well. Please see the sign-up sheet in the foyer or contact me at 686-3112, flora258@isp.com

—Connie Krochmal, Social Action Room in the Inn Coordinator

From the Editor—The Last Word

This edition of the newsletter is coming out a bit late. Sorry about that. Life sometimes interferes with life.

