

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

May 2013

Volume XII, Issue 5

Religious Freedom — Diverse Perspectives

## From the Minister

From my new apartment in South Asheville I can hear the birds singing when I wake up in the morning, which is usually between 4 and 5 am. A single bird tweets for about 30 minutes or so and then another joins in for a duet. It reminds me in many ways of the adhan, or the Muslim call to prayer. It really drives home the point that I have another day of life on planet earth and that this day, for me at least, deserves my thanksgiving and praise. There were some days I could feel a bit of August in the April breezes. A promise of things to come. I do so hope you too have a ritual or a deep appreciation of the natural world and the gifts it brings us each and every day.

I am getting used to my new digs and am spending some time with myself, getting to know myself a bit better now that I don't have as many imposed (and self imposed) distractions. An unwanted "gift" in my second half of life, I will make the best of this new found solitude and see just what it brings. It will not be easy, nor should it be, but it appears that it is certainly necessary. Perhaps it really is true that love heals the wounds it makes...

Our congregational meeting on Sunday, April 14th, was a spirited one. Especially when the topic of the possibility of two services came up. Again, this was just a discussion on the possibility of this happening in the future, not immediately. We had a good turnout and I am certain the conversation will continue. Our attendance continues to grow and for this we are eternally grateful. Our UU message of religious freedom, interdependence, and love of our neighbor and the earth seems to resonate with many. This is good. Let us all keep up the good work. Now that our canvass drive is over I want to thank each and everyone of you who give of your time and financial gifts to keep us afloat. You are the reason we are here! I also wanted to remind you that on Tuesday, May 14th, we will be hosting our Community Ministerial Alliance Lunch. Clergy from our community will meet and break bread together here at UUCSV at 11:30 am. Hopefully, we can keep a dialogue going with our neighbor churches in the area and partner with them in assisting with challenges in our community and outlying areas.

On another note, our hearts go out to the city of Boston after the terrorist attack on April 15th, 2013. This event, along with the saber rattling from the leadership in North Korea, not to forget countless other trials and tribulations that we experience collectively and individually, can cause us to forget that with all of the stress and strife, wars and rumors of wars, this is still a wonderful world. This beautiful blue orb is all we have and she takes care of us even when we cannot take care of ourselves. In the words of the Desiderata, "go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons...with all of its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy!"

Michael



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**Board Meeting: Monday 20 May, 6 p.m.**

Send Newsletter Information to  
Norm Kowal, *Editor*  
[normankowal@bellsouth.net](mailto:normankowal@bellsouth.net)  
Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 21 May, 10  
a.m., covering June 2013

“ Our difficult and very urgent task is to accept the truth that nature is not primarily a property to be possessed but a gift to be received with admiration and with gratitude. Only when we make a deep bow to the rivers, oceans, hills, and mountains that offer us a home, only then can they become transparent enough and reveal to us their meaning. A friend once gave me a beautiful photograph of a water lily.

I asked him how he had been able to take such a splendid picture. With a smile he said, “Well, I had to be very patient and very attentive. It was only after a few hours of compliments that the lily was willing to let me take her picture.”

—Henri J.M. Nouwen

“It is a glorious destiny to be a member of the human race, though it is a race dedicated to many absurdities and one which makes many terrible mistakes; yet....now I realize what we all are. And only if everybody could realize this! But it cannot be explained. There is no way of telling people they are all walking around shining like the sun.”

—Thomas Merton

## Sunday Programming

**Sunday, 5 May 2013, 11 a.m.**

### **Nonviolence and Middle East Conflict**

**Tony Bing**

For anyone looking at the conflict in the Middle East over the past forty-five years it should be clear that violence, whether in the interest of self-defense or aggression, has only produced more violence. Superior force has sometimes brought periods of calm but it has never achieved reconciliation between two sides in a conflict. Today's talk will explore the possibility of using nonviolence, both as a strategy and as a principle, to solve conflict. The talk will concentrate on concrete examples of when nonviolence has been embraced and will discuss the role of nonviolence in the possible transformation of the world, replacing the myth of redemptive violence with an ethic of love.

Anthony Bing is Professor of English and Chair of Peace and Global Studies Emeritus from Earlham College. He retired after thirty one years at Earlham in 2001. While at Earlham he also served as the national Executive Director of the Peace Studies Association, 1994-2001. Educated at Haverford College, Oxford University and the University of Michigan, Bing was a teacher of Shakespeare, Modern French Novel, Old and Middle English and Literature of the Middle East. In the Peace Studies field, he offered courses in the theory and practice of nonviolence, introduction to peace study, war and literature, and the contemporary conflict in the Middle East.

He spent a good portion of his career developing programs in international education, especially in the Middle East, where he taught at the American University of Beirut (1967-69) was chairman of the Great Lakes Colleges Association's Middle East Advisory Committee (1970-76), and in 1982 began the Great Lakes Jerusalem Program, a semester of study of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, study that involved living with Israeli and Palestinian families and having courses taught by Israeli and Palestinian professors. Based on that model, Bing set up a Northern Ireland Pro-



gram in 1991, also with a peace focus, that studied the origins and development of the catholic/protestant conflict in Northern Ireland. For his work in Northern Ireland, he was given an award by the British government in 1993. In 1992 he was selected by the Peace Studies Association as its Peace Educator of the year.

Bing has written widely on the conflict between Palestine and Israel, most notably a book about Joseph Abileah, Israel's first conscientious objector. He also coauthored a 2004 work, *When the Rain Returns*, a study of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

He has served on the Board of the American Friends Service Committee, has clerked its National Peace Education Committee and its Middle East Peacebuilding Program Advisory Committee. Currently he is on the AFSC's Nobel Peace Prize Committee. In May of 2007, he co-led an AFSC delegation to Israel/Palestine that commemorated the 40th anniversary of Israel's occupation of Palestine. It was his 30th visit to that troubled land. In retirement he has been clerk of the Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting and has offered courses at Warren Wilson and at McCall College for Seniors in Montreat.

**Sunday, 12 May 2013, 11 a.m.**

### **Mother's Day**

**Rev. Michael Carter**

Words usually get in the way for Mother's Day in my humble opinion. For some our mother's have been abusive, emotionally absent, and downright cruel. For others, mom has been the wind beneath our wings. And yet, what can be said that has not already been said? But words are all we have as we wrestle with what Mother's Day means to each of us, individually and collectively; not to mention our Mother Planet that sustains us through it all. See you at church!!! Child Care is provided.

## Sunday Programming

**Sunday, 19 May 2013, 11 a.m.**

### **Heart of the Earth: Celebrating Rainforests**

**Sybil Argintar**

Join us for our annual RE Sunday service as we explore the many ways we are connected, not only to the earth and the great web of life, but to each other in so many important ways. This morning will also honor high school senior Stephen Ball as we bridge him from the RE community into the larger congregation. Choir sings today, accompanied by the children for part of the morning, and we will have for your enjoyment some special rainforest snacks after the service.



**Sunday, 2 June 2013, 11 a.m.**

### **Charles Dickens Reincarnated**

**Diane Graham**

How would Charles Dickens react to our world? What were his prophetic concerns?

Diane's many years of teaching British Literature in high school and college, and Diane & Richard's travels to England with the Dickens Fellowship led to her desire to share her interest in this most singular individual with UUCSV.

**Sunday, 26 May 2013, 11 a.m.**

### **Memorial Day Weekend**

**Rev. Michael Carter**

Today I would like to begin something that I hope will be well received and perhaps presented again every so often. Our Memorial Day weekend sermon will be a biographical one as we remember the life and legacy of Dr. Howard Washington Thurman. Mentor to Dr. King, as well as co-pastoring (with Dr. Alfred Frisk) the first interracial church in America in 1944. Dr. Thurman was a mystic, theologian, minister, author of 21 books, as well as being a pioneer in bringing non-violent resistance to these shores from India and Mahatma Gandhi. Join us as we memorialize his life and work!



Child Care is provided!!!

Michael

## Religious Education Corner



### Reflections

We are winding up yet another school year, and each one seems to fly by faster than the one before. The religious education program at UUCSV has really grown this year, with a typical Sunday, when all classes are in session, often including 15 to 20 children and youth. That is exciting to see, and I love watching visitors quickly become part of the group. Please join us for our end of the year service, "Heart of the Earth: Celebrating Rainforests". A more detailed description can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, but this service will focus upon our many connections, to each other and to the earth. Many surprises await you that morning, and we promise you will go away feeling inspired by all of our children and youth!



## Religious Education Corner

### **Classes for the Coming Month**

#### *Preschool—Our Natural World*

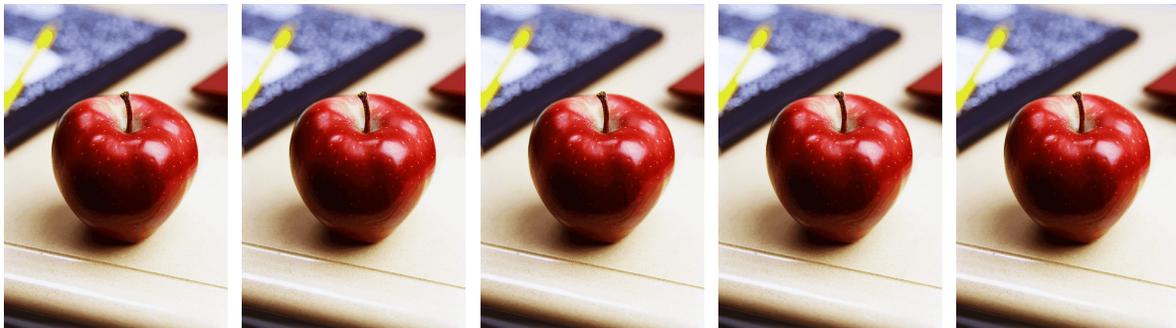
Cooperative play and nature stories

#### *Grades K-6—Celebrating Rainforests*

This group will spend the next few weeks completing all of our scenery and props for the May 19 service, *Heart of the Earth: Celebrating Rainforests*. Mark your calendars for what promises to be an amazing service.

#### *Grades 8-12/young adult—Sharing the Journey: Small Group Ministry with Youth*

This group has made some selections of their own topics for the remainder of the year. Most of the time will focus upon some brief encounters with world religions.



### **Teacher Recruitment Happening Now**

If you haven't considered teaching in a RE classroom before, think about what that might mean to you. Teaching can be not only a great way to volunteer your time, but can be a time for spiritual growth and learning for you as well. Our teachers who have been doing this for a while often learn many things along the way about our principles and UU values. The Religious Education committee has voted to focus upon a theme of *World Religions* for next year, and these curriculums will give you a chance to learn about faith traditions of others. Full training is provided for teachers and support is given throughout the school year. If you're interested, please contact Sybil as soon as possible!

## Religious Education Corner



### **Save the Rainforests: Fundraisers!! One more big one during Trillium!!**

To date, from our bake sales, we have raised just over \$320 towards our goal of \$500 so we can adopt 10 acres of rainforest land in Costa Rica. Our big blowout bake sale and lemonade stand will take place during Trillium on Saturday May 4<sup>th</sup>. We welcome all donated baked goods, pre-packaged and labeled, and are also looking for a few more parents and children to help out that day with selling refreshing lemonade and tickets to the other children's activities. Proceeds from the children's area and bake sale will all go towards the rainforest service project. Please contact Sybil as soon as possible so we can get you scheduled!



### **Adult Religious Education Program Underway!**

A group of interested adults met with Sybil recently to begin brainstorming some ideas for a more comprehensive religious education program, known in UU jargon as "Lifespan Religious Education". To start simply, we have asked Reverend Michael Carter to conduct a "LUUNCH BUUNCH" on Tuesdays, beginning in May. More detailed information will be forthcoming. Watch also for a survey to gauge your interest in other programs. That should be coming soon.

## Religious Education Corner



### **Journey for the Earth Summer Camps—Registration Now Open!!**

Registration is now open for our summer camp program, with an environmental theme. **REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS JUNE FIRST!!** See the flyer for this program elsewhere in this newsletter. A \$25 non-refundable deposit will hold your space. Even if your children can't attend, please let others know. We have a generous scholarship fund and will be able to assist several campers. Cost is \$150/week for members and friends of UUCSV, \$160 for the general public.



### **Important Dates to Remember**

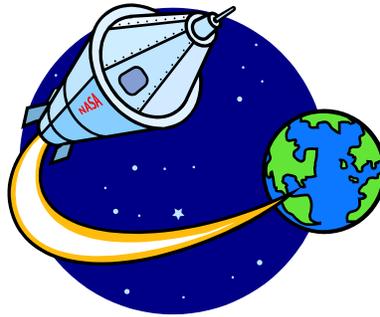
- May 4                      Trillium and Rainforest Fundraiser! 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- May 19                    Heart of the Earth: Celebrating Rainforests  
Annual RE Sunday Service and Volunteer Appreciation Day!

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

—Sybil Argintar, Director of Religious Education

sybil.argintar@yahoo.com, 230-3773

## Religious Education Corner



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

**Space is limited, register early!**

**Who: Rising first through fourth grades or fifth through seventh grades**

**What: Full-day, week-long camp focusing on caring for our environment**

Each day will carry a different theme. Field trips throughout the week.

Recycling

Energy Conservation

Water

Sustainable Agriculture/Gardening

Animal World

**When: June 10 – 14, 2013 9 – 4:00 p.m. M through F (Grades 1 – 4)**

**June 24 – 28, 2013 9 – 4:00 p.m. M through F (Grades 5 – 7)**

**Before and after care available at small additional cost**

**Where: Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Swannanoa Valley**

**500 Montreat Road**

**Black Mountain, North Carolina 28711**

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

## Religious Education Corner

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

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

**Cost: \$160 per child, general public; \$150 per second child same family or  
for church members and friends. Scholarships available. Let us know if  
you need assistance.**

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### Membership Committee Reminder & News

A quick reminder to recent visitors: if you expressed an interest in joining the church on your white "info" card, you still need to sign our membership book to become an official member. You can do this any Sunday after the service. Simply look for Jill Tagudin (Membership Chair) and Rev. Michael Carter; we'll have the membership book ready for you. On Sunday June 9th, we will be having a "New Member Recognition Ceremony" during the Service to celebrate all our new members. Welcome everyone!



### Choir News

In April, a few of us enjoyed a trip to the UU Southeast District Choral Festival in Chapel Hill, where we sang four beautiful and challenging songs with 80 other singers at two Sunday services, as well as attending workshops and meeting other singing enthusiasts from the UU. A beautiful trip!

In May, we will be singing with the RE for their May 19th service celebrating the rain forests. We will rehearse on May 12th at 12:15, then on TUESDAY the 14th at 6:30 PM, and then on Sunday the 19th at 10 AM. This will be a fun service, sharing music with the children. Please join us!

—Linda Metzner, Choir Director

### Birthdays

May 11 <sup>th</sup>	Angie Underwood
May 11 <sup>th</sup>	Cecilia Shaw
May 11 <sup>th</sup>	Richard Graham
May 12 <sup>th</sup>	Charlie Chilton
May 14 <sup>th</sup>	Kim Taylor
May 14 <sup>th</sup>	Tom Motzko
May 15 <sup>th</sup>	Jill Tagudin
May 15 <sup>th</sup>	Kay-Sea Conklin
May 15 <sup>th</sup>	Peter Boggs
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Harry Hamil
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Sue Stone
May 24 <sup>th</sup>	Jeffrey Carillon
May 24 <sup>th</sup>	Trish Byers
May 25 <sup>th</sup>	Emory Underwood
May 26 <sup>th</sup>	Jay Ellis
May 27 <sup>th</sup>	Sue Everly



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

### Friday Fling

May's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on 17 May 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 "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel" (2012; Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, and some guys) will be shown. For further information call Norm Kowal (669-4668).



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

**Social Action Thank You**

As our fiscal year 2012 - 2013 comes to a close, we of the Social Action Committee would like to thank the congregation for entrusting us with a \$2900 budget. We thought you would like to see a summary of the donations we have made on your behalf. Our intention is to contribute mainly to smaller organizations who really could use our assistance. As you can see, our focus is local, regional, national and international. We plan to highlight these organizations on a quarterly basis over the coming year.

With gratitude,

*—Helen Bell, Monroe Gilmour, Diane Hutchins, Connie Krochmal, Roberta Madden and Emory Underwood*

Aug. 2012	Our Voice Rape Crisis	\$100.00
Aug. 2012	UU Service Committee	\$200.00
Aug. 2012	People of Faith Against the Death Penalty	\$100.00
Aug. 2012	Hand in Hand	\$100.00
Spt. 2012	People of Faith Against the Death Penalty	\$50.00
Spt. 2012	Life Without Film Family Aid	\$213.01
Dec. 2012	Swannanoa Women's Correctional Holiday Meal	\$122.76
Dec. 2012	Habitat for Humanity	\$600.00
Dec. 2012	Blue Ridge Pride Registration 2012	\$120.00
Dec. 2012	Blue Ridge Pride Materials	\$56.00
Dec. 2012	Swannanoa Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Corp.	\$65.00
Feb. 2013	Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance	\$100.00
Feb. 2013	Campaign for Southern Equality	\$100.00
Feb. 2013	Planned Parenthood	\$100.00
Feb. 2013	Building Bridges	\$100.00
Apr. 2013	Homeward Bound	\$200.00
Apr. 2013	Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry	\$200.00
Apr. 2013	Ministry of Hope Africa	\$100.00
Apr. 2013	Western North Carolina Citizens Ending Institutional Bigotry	\$100.00
Apr. 2013	Blue Ridge Pride Early Registration 2013	\$120.00
Total		\$2,846.77

## Long Range Planning Committee Updates

Earlier this year, the Board of Trustees created a Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) comprised of the following members: Scott Conklin (chair), Jeff Hutchins, Chuck Shimer, Kim Taylor, Ray Culotta & Jill Tagudin. The task of the LRPC is to:

- 1) Assess current aspects of the church (staff, membership, programs, building, etc.).
- 2) Anticipate future potential growth-related issues.
- 3) Develop a realistic plan of action to meet the needs and goals of the congregation.

"A goal without a plan is just a wish." –Antoine de Saint-Exupery

In February, the LRPC congregational survey revealed that our membership expressed a near unanimous desire for a ¾-to-fulltime minister. To meet this goal we will need to grow in our finances, programs and Sunday service attendance. The LRPC is researching and planning several different options to accommodate that growth. In order to financially support a fulltime minister and other corresponding staff increases (RE, admin, etc.), our membership would have to grow to ~130 members (at the current "average pledge"). Our existing sanctuary can only accommodate a maximum of about 100, so we would need to do one of three things:

- 1) Enlarge the existing sanctuary and RE space;
- 2) Build a new, larger sanctuary at our current location (and re-purpose the current space for RE, etc.) or acquire a larger building elsewhere.
- 3) Hold 2 Sunday services in the existing sanctuary and make a small addition to the RE space.

On April 14th the LRPC held a "Town Hall Meeting" to address the pros and cons of the least costly "2-Service-Sunday" option. An example of another UU Church's logistics and transition to 2-Service-Sundays was presented, and then the meeting was opened for discussion. The following points were noted:

Pros:

- 1) Would require a smaller capital campaign to expand only the RE space, and leave the Sanctuary as is.
- 2) Would make a good transition during a construction phase if we were to build a new sanctuary in the future.
- 3) Would create a larger pool of volunteers from which to draw for RE (volunteers wouldn't have to choose between teaching in RE or attending the service – with two services they could choose to do both.)
- 4) Might help with our limited parking space

Cons:

- 1) Could potentially split the congregation (would require extra effort to create social opportunities for the entire congregation to gather as one group).
- 2) A disparity in attendance could cause a "loss of energy" at lesser attended service.
- 3) Payments to guest speakers would have to be adjusted for both services.
- 4) More time demands on some volunteers.

Towards the end of the meeting, the importance of RE was mentioned and this critical conversation will be continued at a later "Town Hall Meeting", along with other issues on growth. Although current membership (~80) doesn't cause sanctuary overcrowding, our numbers have been increasing and it's the LRPC's responsibility to have a contingency plan in place should we eventually outgrow the present building.

The LRPC thanks everyone who attended the meeting and shared their views. Your input is welcome as we work to plan our future together and achieve the congregation's expressed goals. In the meantime, if you have additional questions or comments, please contact any of the LRPC members listed above.

## Trillium

Dear friends, Trillium has come and gone, I sure hope you all contributed mightily and as I was at the bake table the whole day, I hope you all feel good about your "Many" contributions to the bake sale. Today as I write this, it is April 17 and I have not had a single call to let me know that you are bringing something for the bake table. I can only hope that you will. Or we will all be disappointed.

—Ann



## Habitat for Humanity Wall Raising Ceremony

There will be a Habitat for Humanity Wall Raising Ceremony for Stephanie Arrington's home on May 29<sup>th</sup> at 4:30. Stephanie is the daughter of Theresa Ballinger. The home is being built in Swannanoa, and everyone is welcome to come to the ceremony. Please call Theresa (275-8453) for directions. Stay tuned for volunteering opportunities.

## From the Editor—The Last Word

This month the editor might be jumping into a controversy by suggesting a sensible chronological sequence of overlapping steps to handle the future development of UUCSV:

1. Since there appears to be a consensus that RE may be the major attraction for new members, plan the enlargement of the RE space, and start construction. (And, of course, publicize this cool move.)
2. Optimize the sanctuary seating arrangement, and plan the future enlargement of the existing sanctuary.
3. If there is a need, because of increased attendance, develop a plan for two services, and carry it out on a temporary basis. (My personal feeling is that two services, on a permanent basis, would be a social disaster for our congregation.)
4. Start construction of the enlarged sanctuary.
5. Go back to single service as soon as practical.

So, sue me! But please don't fire me. And don't give up our wonderful location—you will never find a site as good as the one we have.