

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

November 2009

Volume VIII, Issue 11

Religious Freedom — Diverse Perspectives



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From Your Intern Minister . . .

Back in September, I gave a sermon called “Forgiving and Getting,” related to the annual Jewish observance of Yom Kippur. Many of you approached me afterward with your own stories and thoughts about forgiveness, which moved me very much. We generally agreed that forgiveness is easier said than done, and that more study and reflection than could be had in morning worship would be useful. To that end, I’ll be facilitating a 4-session class beginning later this month called, “Four Conversations About Forgiveness.” You can find details about the class on page 2, and I hope you will join me.



So much going on in the next few weeks-- what a vibrant community this is! When I stopped by the church during this writing, the Galax Gathering brigade was in full swing-- working hard to transform the sanctuary into a delightful place to socialize and have fun raising extra dollars for UUCSV.

About the time you get this there will be Boo at the UU, our annual RE Halloween Party, and then we are on to November. Your “**UUCSV All Girl Staff**” has signed up to be at the **Coming of Age Talent Show**, have you? You have 2 weeks to polish up your act! There is a Worship Workshop in 2 sessions (Nov 8 and 14) which is open to anyone in our congregation but is particularly geared for those who would like to serve in our new Worship Associates program. There are many other events this month you may want to be a part of, so please check out the calendar so you don’t miss out.

Looking ahead to December, I’m starting to plan for this year’s Christmas Eve service. To my knowledge, this is UUCSV’s second year of having such a service; if this is something you would like to help plan, please let me know.

As I write, I’m coming off several days of a nasty bug, but I am relieved to be on the mend. Thanks to all of you who expressed concerns for my health and sent your get-well wishes—your support means a lot to me!

Gratefully yours,

—Sally Beth

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(Office Hours: TWT 3-6)

Board Meeting: Tuesday 17 November, 6 p.m.

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

Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 24 November,
10 a.m., covering December 09

Board Notes . . .

Dear Members and Friends of UUCSV,

Last summer I was blessed to be sent to the UU Leadership School. One of the things we heard several times is to tell our story to the congregation. Most churches, congregations and fellowships have difficulty communicating. In fact this is the topic of one agenda item for our November board meeting! So, in hopes to get started to communicate our story Ursula Goebels-Ellis and I will share a bit of it here.

Since its inception UUCSV has quickly grown from a Family Size Congregation (0 - 50 members) to a Pastoral Size Congregation (50 to 150 members). Initially, Exercising Direct Democracy, worship and governance were in the hands of a small group of founding members and early joiners. As the congregation grew, it naturally transitioned to a Representative Democracy, a Pastoral Model, where a quarter time minister provided sermons regularly and an elected board and committees became more and more involved in governance.

This is where we are now. In the year 2000 we began. Since then, we have grown to between 89-101 members. We have sent a group of young people to Boston for the UU Pilgrimage, had a mortgage burning, and made sincere commitments to being a Welcoming Congregation (LGBT) and a Green Sanctuary. Not to mention we have a part-time minister (whose internship sadly ends in December 2010) and a part-time Office manager plus a Religious Education Director!

So, we have come a long way, and we have a much to do to continue being a louder liberal religious voice in the Swannanoa Valley. Here is a last bit of interesting information that I appreciated learning. Our founders carefully chose the word Congregation instead of church or synagogue or mosque. Congregation is inclusive and welcomes all who identify with Unitarian Universalism. We are a congregation of people who have formed a family like-community based on the principles of Unitarian Universalism. I welcome oldcomers and newcomers alike to be part of this vital congregation.

Most humbly and sincerely,

—Heidi Blozan

Note: To learn more about our history there is a timeline on our website.

TED Talks

TED talks are continuing every Sun. evening at 7:00 pm at UUCSV. TED stands for a lot more than its initials: Technology, Entertainment, Design. We have enjoyed talks about the end of smallpox, shamans in Peru, searching for extraterrestrial life in the universe, having spiritual experiences, and the brain. Coming up will be Goodall, Bono, Swartz (on Loss of Wisdom) and many more! The discussion is the best part of all, so come join us.



Exciting TED Films Sunday Nights: This photo may be blurry, but there was nothing blurry about the creativity Joyce Parsons and Mary Soynova brought to the Sunday service October 4th! They and Sally Beth and others showed us how stimulating the TED films have been -- and the Congregation was convinced! These wonderful films on various topics continue every Sunday night at 7 PM. Come join us for fun and mind-blowing stimulation! See more about TED: Ideas worth spreading at <http://www.ted.com/pages/view/id/5>.



Adult Enrichment: “Four Conversations on Forgiveness”

Wednesday Evenings, 7:00- 9:00 pm

November 18, (no class on Nov. 25) December 2, 9, and 16

Join others in your community for a 4-week exploration of forgiveness, we will delve deeply into what it takes to forgive and how we might cultivate this practice in our lives.

“For some of us, forgiveness isn’t something we think much about. For others, it is a central life practice. For many, it is misunderstood. When you think of forgiveness, what is the first thing that arises? A thought? A feeling? A memory? What does forgiveness mean to you? That is where we will begin.”—*Four Conversations on Forgiveness* handbook.

Participants will be asked to contribute \$5 to cover the cost of the small handbook for the class, which will be open to the public—so bring a friend! To register, please contact Sally Beth at minister@uusv.org.

Sunday Programming

Sunday, 1 November 2009, 11 a.m.

The Greatest Love

Sally Beth Shore

Having an ego and truly loving oneself are not one and the same thing. For some of us, seeing ourselves as lovable and worthy can be a real challenge. To say that religious doctrines focusing on fear, original sin, and guilt, aren't helpful is a vast understatement. What would be possible if a religion offered or even demanded a practice of self-love? Could this be a practice of living our first principal?

Youth in grades K-7 will begin the service in the Sanctuary before going to their classes.

Sunday, 8 November 2009, 11 a.m.

Forever Wild

Walkin' Jim Stoltz

Legendary UU conservationist Walkin' Jim Stoltz will share stories of his unparalleled travels around the globe with us on this Nature worshipping, tree-hugging Sunday morning.

Walkin' Jim has toured extensively throughout the U.S. for the past 23 years. In 2006 he organized a 45 state outreach tour with other musicians and authors, and worked with hundreds of community organizations to gain support for clean water, roadless lands, and wildlife. Jim has been presented with the Environmental Protection Agency's, Outstanding Achievement Award for his sharing of nature and wilderness across America. Stoltz will have copies of his recent book "Walking With the Wild Wind" to sign. His songs from 9 different CDs get regular airplay on National Public Radio and will also be available. Visit his website at www.walkinjim.com.

Sunday, 15 November 2009, 11 a.m.

Out in the Streets

Rev. Heather Dillashaw Spencer

What does it mean to be in community with all people, to truly be inclusive? At the very least, it means an acknowledgment that life can often be messy and hard. It also means discovering hope in unexpected places, and realizing that we are all connected, one to the other—whether we live underneath a bridge or drive one of the cars that crosses above. No one becomes homeless by themselves, nor moves out of being homeless without support.

Rev. Heather Dillashaw Spencer is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. She's served churches in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and Santa Cruz, California. Upon moving to Asheville, becoming a parent, and finding herself jobless, she discovered Homeward Bound of Asheville, and moved her ministry into the streets. She currently works for Homeward Bound as the Director of the A HOPE Day Center for homeless men and women in downtown Asheville.



Sunday, 22 November 2009, 11 a.m.

Oh We Give Thanks

Sally Beth Shore

Our annual service in honor of Thanksgiving will focus on the diversity of ways we express gratitude. One way will be the joining in the celebration of communion with local bread and wine.

Today is Membership Sunday, and we will welcome in new members to our congregation.

Sunday, 29 November 2009, 11 a.m.

In Pursuit of Peace

Ymani Simmons

We enjoy identifying ourselves as peaceful advocates of change, but numerous opportunities are presented daily for actually setting this example. How do we maintain balance and focus as we strive to promote peace in our world? A civilian diplomat to Iran, a 'street marcher' for peace and committed activist for human rights and social justice, Ymani Simmons shares her method of nurturing nonviolence as a spirituality, a way of life, not just a temporary tactic.

Ymani Simmons resides near Asheville, North Carolina. She follows the teachings and traditions of her Native American and Celtic ancestors by walking a spiritual path of respect and honor for all living beings and as a full participant in the circle and cycles of life. Her involvement in the peace movement led her to the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the oldest multi-faith peace organization in the country, and in March of 2007 she participated as a civilian diplomat with FOR's third delegation to the Islamic Republic of Iran. She now travels throughout the US sharing her experience of the people, the rich culture, history, religion and diverse countryside of the ancient land of Persia and also as a trained facilitator for "Creating A Culture of Peace," an international training program for personal and social change, whose innovative design provides a holistic and practical foundation in active nonviolence. Ymani has just published her first book: "Are You Listening - ancient wisdom for the spiritual quest."

Sunday, 6 December 2009, 11 a.m.

It's About Time

Sally Beth Shore

In our culture, December can be a harried time, so let's think about our relationship with time. Isn't it about time we gave it more thought? If our perceptions of time control us, perhaps they can be changed, or at least examined, in the hope of experiencing less stress.

Youth in grades K-7 will begin the service in the Sanctuary before going to their classes.

Religious Education Corner

Religious Education Classes

We are in full swing for our fall classes. Attendance has been low on some Sundays, but we've also had several new visiting families. We hope attendance will continue to pick up over the coming weeks and into the spring. The preschool has continued learning about famous UUs and some of the things they stood for, including Dorothea Dix and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Next up are stories about Daniel Chester French, Dana Greeley, Oliver Wendall Holmes Sr., and a morning focused on Everyone Is Special. The K-3 class will continue learning about the seven UU principles through stories and activities, including *Psalm 23*, *This is the Stable*, *The Keeping Quilt*, and *St. Valentine*, all focused on the second principle of "Be kind in all you do". The grades 4 - 7 class learned about the parts of the church space, made clay chalices, and will learn about the idea of heresy, led by Jeff Hutchins, at their next meeting. Additional upcoming classes include learning about the church's role in death and memorial services, led by Sally Beth, and a focus on music. The Coming of Age class has continued to explore their value systems, including thinking about their own ten commandments. The group attended an evening retreat at Judy Curtis' house for pizza and ice cream, with time to reflect more upon their ideas. We've had perfect attendance by this group, despite the early meeting time!

Religious Education Social Action

Every Sunday, at our gathering time, we share joys and sorrows just like the adults in the main sanctuary. We also take time to donate to an offertory, with the children voting each year where they would like to give their money. This fall, the group decided to donate what they collected last year and through the summer (\$45.00 total) to Animal Compassion Network, a no-kill shelter that works hard to place homeless pets or those who had to be given up for some reason. The money will be

used to help buy food and other supplies for these lucky dogs and cats.

Coming of Age

We have raised a total of \$2153.00 towards our Boston trip next June, and have about \$2200.00 left to go. Thanks to everyone for your continued support. And now, we really need a FULL HOUSE on Saturday, November 14, 2009 from 7 - 9 p.m. for our Boston Tea Party and Talent Show. There's a full-page flyer in this newsletter telling you more about it. If you are able to donate some of your most special desserts for this occasion, please let me know as soon as possible. And, if you have not been contacted and have a talent you would like to share, please let Aaron or Sam know. This promises to be a fun evening for all.

Important Dates to Remember

November 1: Sandwiches/desserts after church (Coming of Age fundraiser)

RE Committee Meeting 9:30 a.m.

All children and youth are in the first part of the service as we pay special tribute to our preschoolers!

Teacher Check-in 12:30 p.m.

November 14: Boston Tea Party and Talent Show 7 - 9 p.m. (Coming of Age Fundraiser)

November 22: Intergenerational Thanksgiving Service

December 6: sandwiches/dessert after church (Coming of Age Fundraiser)

Sybil Argintar, RE Coordinator
merlasybpenny@yahoo.com

230-3773



Preschool Teacher Needed

There's a job opening at the UUCA for a preschool teacher on Sunday mornings from 8:30 - 1 p.m. Pay is \$10/hour. Someone may know of a young person or teacher who might need these extra hours right now. Contact person is Jasmine Kimmel, early childhood coordinator for the church (jasminekimmel@yahoo.com).



COA Youth Introduced to Congregation: Our church's Coming of Age young people were introduced to the Congregation during the October 4th service. They will examine their values and beliefs during this year and travel to the UUA headquarters for a week in June 2010. Don't miss their Boston Tea Party Talent Show on November 14! Pictured l to r: Sam Scott, Laine Everly, Sarah Gilmour, Emily Eliot-Gaines, Aaron Eliot-Gaines. With thanks to the teachers for this program, Sabrina Mills, David Brown, and Judy Curtis.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY



Hear ye! Hear ye! Join us for a fun-filled evening

at the

Coming of Age Boston Tea Party and Talent Show

Saturday, November 14, 2009

UUCSV

7 – 9 p.m.

Suggested donation \$5 /person at the door; doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Bring A Friend!!

Extremely talented members and friends of our congregation will present their known and sometimes unknown talents for your enjoyment.

Some of the star line-up so far includes:

Sam Scott, banjo

Emily Eliot-Gaines, violin

Aaron Eliot-Gaines and his band Solstice

Bill Altork, songs and poetry

Scott Conklin "A True Coming of Age Story"

Jim Carillon, songs

Mary Soyenova, comedy

Dawn Wilson, spoonerisms

Sybil and the All-Girl Staff Revue, a skit or some poetry, or some comedy....

Sally Beth Shore, drumming circle

Emcee: David Brown

In addition to this fabulous line-up of performers, yummy desserts, coffee, TEA (of course), and other non-alcoholic beverages will be available for sale at intermission.

We look forward to seeing EVERYONE there.

Planned and sponsored by your Coming of Age class:

Laine Everly

Sarah Gilmour

Sam Scott

Emily Eliot-Gaines

Aaron Eliot-Gaines

Here we come, Boston!! June 11-16, 2010!!

Green Sanctuary



Now that UUCSV has received its accreditation as a Green Sanctuary, the Green Sanctuary committee has achieved its major goal. As a wrap-up, we distributed an environmental survey to UUCSV members/friends.

Respondents were asked to rank seven environmental concerns in order of importance. The results were then compared with those of the 2007 survey.

In the recent survey, Seeking Justice on Earth shot up from #7 to #1. Energy Use at Home fell from #1 to #5. Conserving Fresh Water experienced a similar decline—from #2 to #6. Some of the changes in rankings were relatively minor. Energy Spent for Transportation and Fuel moved down one. Toxic Substances in Home and Garden moved up one, while Solid Waste at Home moved up two positions. Food Choices remained number #3.

The Green Sanctuary committee will keep these results in mind when planning future projects and programs. The committee no longer holds regular meetings. Instead, we meet only on an as-needed basis to plan special projects, events, and programs. We will plan a celebration in 2010 once our Green Sanctuary certificate is framed and ready for hanging. What was formerly the Green Sanctuary bulletin board is now being used for other purposes.

Hospitality News: The Gift of a Meal Shared Together

As our Autumn Potluck Luncheon, which followed the service on Oct. 18th, was winding down, I heard someone say, "People are hanging around, seems no one wants to go home!" That's why Milt and I, along with members of the Hospitality Committee, continue to provide you with a food ministry. I wished I'd brought a camera! The colors of the food were spectacular, especially David Brown's roasted autumn vegetables. Did you see how his purple potatoes, bright orange sweet potatoes and carrots, contrasted with the white onions? Our tables of food reflected the beauty of the autumn harvest and the food display foreshadowed the deep colors and contrasts of an upcoming winter. Eye candy aside, most importantly, the time for fellowship was treasured by many of us! Thank you to everyone who contributed home cooked locally grown food, lingered around for some fine conversation, and pitched in to help clean up.

Remember, our finger food potluck following the service will be discontinued during the winter months, beginning in November. We will resume setting up the finger food snack table in the portico in April. Please support the purchase of snacks and sandwiches to be sold after the Sunday Service by the RE families throughout the winter months.

—Carolyn Shorkey

Room in the Inn

All of us here at UUCSV may already be looking forward to a promising New Year, which is less than two months away. For people who are homeless, things aren't so rosy. However, the Room in the Inn program does everything it can for homeless women in our community.

You can help these folks by signing up to help on Friday, January 15. If you like to cook or bake, here's your chance to help those who are less fortunate. The women will need bag lunches, breakfast food, and all food/drinks for the evening meal.

The women will be staying at the Black Mountain Presby. Church annex. UUCSV is responsible for providing all of the volunteers and food for the day. We need morning and evening church van drivers who can bring the women to/from Asheville. We also need two overnight volunteers as well as backups.

To encourage people to sign up in advance of the busy holiday season, I will provide people who want to sign up with a free 2010 calendar so they can keep track of their appointments. A sign-up sheet is available in the foyer. For more info or to sign up contact me at 686-3112, flora258@isp.com

Connie Krochmal, Social Action, Room in the Inn Coordinator

Choir News

The UUCSV choir welcomes anyone interested in singing! In November we will rehearse on the 8th after the service at 12:20, then again on Thursday evening the 12th at 7 PM. We will rehearse once more at 10 AM on Sunday the 15th, and perform that day during the service. For more info, contact Linda Metzner at annelinde@hotmail.com.

—Annelinde Metzner

Congregational Care

The Congregational Care Committee is ready to assist our congregation in time of need by providing transportation and meals for those who are facing difficult circumstances. The Co-Monthly Coordinators for September-December will be Kay-Sea Conklin (686-7502, cell: 230-2227, kayseaconklin@charter.net) and David Reid (cell: 713-1607; daviddbreid@charter.net). If needs extend beyond those mentioned, please discuss them with the Co-Monthly Coordinators to see if we might have the resources to help.

Grounds

As I write this during the second week of October, the leaves are already falling. So Grounds is organizing a leaf clean-up work party on Saturday, Nov. 7 from 9 am until noon or so. Bob Box will be bringing his truck with the vacuum hose. The leaves need to be raked in piles alongside the paved areas so Bob can vacuum them up for recycling. We can really use your help. Please bring your rake as there aren't enough in the shed to go around. If you can't attend on November 7, please feel free to rake on other days and times at your own convenience.

—Connie Krochmal

Birthdays in November

November 3rd Sam Scott

November 7th Aaron Eliot-Gaines

November 28th Aaron Gilmour

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

October's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on 20 November 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 "As Good As It Gets" (1997, Jack Nicholson) will be shown. For further information, call Norm Kowal (669-4668).





UUCSV at "BluRP" Gay Pride Event: Emory and Angie Underwood and Daniel Morrison, pictured here, were among nine UUCSV volunteers staffing our booth at the Blue Ridge Pride (BluRP) festival at Dr. MLK Park in Asheville on October 11. We were a sponsor, too, with a \$150 contribution and listed as such in the day's program. Thanks to Susan Culler for organizing and David Reid for loan of the canopy. It was a fun day!

New Member: William Altork

William Altork was born in 1947. He continually strives to see more of God in all people and all things. He believes that God is everywhere, including inside of us; in our spiritual DNA.

William is a carpenter and woodworker, and is pretty good at fixing things. He also writes poetry, short stories and essays. He has written a few books; all with a personal/spiritual/philosophical slant.

William believes that the peace in this world comes from the collective awareness and efforts of every human soul who continually strives for greater loving kindness. As he goes through each day, he often reminds himself that morality is what you do when no one is watching.



An Intergenerational Moment!
Tre Brown shares his smile and a lovely flower with Esther Miller and Jim Clayton after the Sunday service this autumn.

From the Editor—The Last Word

Two suggestions on the preparation of written material on the computer, including items submitted to newsletters: (1) When you come to the end of a line, do not press "enter" or "carriage return," thereby inserting a "hard right" format code into your text. Allow your word processor to wrap around the text to the next line, thereby inserting a "soft right" format code into the text. This saves editors a lot of reformatting headaches. (2) Use only one space between sentences. The use of two spaces disappeared along with typewriters. [If you are interested, take a look at *The PC Is Not a Typewriter* by Robin Williams (1992).]

