

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

October 2011

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Religious Freedom — Diverse Perspectives



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## From the Board

Autumn is under way, and the days of summer are about gone for the year. Your new board has been meeting for several months now, and I think we're beginning to get the flow of things. Last week, the board attended a day-long workshop at the Asheville UU church, and we all went to several different seminars conducted to help us become better leaders.

Last week, we had our yearly Board Retreat, to study UU history and become more familiar with our by-laws. The board retreat is one of the rules in the by-laws. Your board is working mightily to become a cohesive and forward-moving group of very dedicated people, and I must report that this group works very well together. We are fortunate. We approach our commitment as a board, with seriousness, dedication and with love, not necessarily in that order!

Realizing that we are acting for our congregation, we have approached our work with clear vision and an obligation to do the very best that we can and be the very best board that we know how to be. Our minutes are always posted so that we have transparent and open communication with the congregation. Should there ever be a question, I hope that anyone would feel free to contact the board. We're here for you.

Very Sincerely,

—*Mary Soyenova, Vice President*

### UUCSV Board of Trustees

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(Office Hours: W 12-5,  
Th 9:30-3:30)

**Board Meeting: Monday 17 Oct, 6 p.m.**

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

Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 18 October,  
10 a.m., covering November 2011

## Sunday Programming

**Sunday, 2 October 2011, 11 a.m.**

### **Made for Joy**

**Marc Mullinax**

On October 2, Marc Mullinax, from the Religion and Philosophy Department at Mars Hill College, will return for his second time at this Unitarian congregation, sharing his joy and passion with us. He will speak of his life-long theme (especially after his bout with cancer five years ago), of Socratic life-examination. That is, "If life is short, and no one gets out of life alive, then the hour is late to start this life-examination process, to make sure we are on track."

In a talk entitled, "Made for Joy," Marc will speak about living joyfully as one lives an examined life. If free will is ours, then to live an examined life is to live the joyous life. It is OK to get wrapped up in rapturous enterprises (from social justice to love relationships). However, it is probably not OK to start - or endure for another day - a life of regrets and resentments. He will argue that is in our cards, our destiny, to live out one's joy.

Marc Mullinax teaches religion and philosophy courses at Mars Hill College. His special joys there include (1) mentoring a small spirituality group of students invested in seeking, spirituality, and their connections with social justice (not unlike a Unitarian congregation), and (2) Teaching courses in Eastern religions and in human nature and behavior. He earned a Ph.D. from Union Seminary in New York City, has taught college since 1993, is an amateur photographer, and one month ago got married here in Black Mountain.



**Sunday, 9 October 2011, 11 a.m.**

**Rev. Michael Carter**

### **The Courage To Feel**

Descartes' proclamation of, I Think Therefore I am, has been the dominant template for what it

really means to be a hu-

man being in Western Civilization being since the time of "The Enlightenment".

Yet, is that all it really is to being human?

Perhaps it is for those who worship at the altar of the intellect. Join us on October 9th as we explore what it really means be

human beings with the courage to feel. See you there!



**Sunday, 16 October 2011, 11 a.m.**

### **A New Way to Serve**

**Rev. Mark Ward, Lead Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Asheville**

What is ministry about? It's a powerful question for this congregation right now in the midst of the search for its next minister. This Sunday, our neighbor from Asheville, Mark Ward, offers thoughts about his own path to ministry after a 25-year career in journalism and what ministry has to offer our congregations.

Mark Ward is a life-long Unitarian Universalist who grew up in New Jersey and entered the ministry after working in newspapers in West Virginia and Wisconsin. He is in his eighth year as minister of the UU Church of Asheville. He is married with three grown daughters and a granddaughter.

## Sunday Programming

Sunday, 23 October 2011, 11 a.m.

WWMD-What Would Muhammad Do?

Rev. Dick Weston-Jones

Lots of people speak for and against him, but most don't understand him. This is an appreciation of the man, one of the most significant religious leaders of our Judeo-Christian-Islamic heritage. Rev. Weston-Jones will also speak about American Muslims, the relationship of their heritage to our own, how difficult their religious task is today and our role as Unitarian Universalists in that.

A UU minister for 48 years, Dick is Minister Emeritus of the UU Church of Ventura, California. He has served UU Churches in Florida, Pennsylvania, Illinois, North Carolina and Virginia. He also founded and directed wUUrld's WhaleCoast Alaska, a wilderness tour program co-sponsored by five UU fellowships in Alaska from 1994 to 2007. He spoke to our congregation on Easter last year. He lives in Chapel Hill, where he operates a Medical Homestay for outpatients at the UNC Medical Center.



Sunday, 6 November 2011, 11 a.m.

United in our Beliefs

Bill Altork

The Sunday Service on 6 November is titled: UNITED IN OUR BELIEFS. Bill Altork will give a revealing and challenging talk. He will describe how our UU diversity of acceptable differences holds a magnetic pull on him. He will also give attention to some of the frustrations that remain unresolved among us, while encouraging us to meet the challenge of either resolving or accepting them.

Also, the beliefs that many of you have so bravely and generously submitted will be shared openly (and anonymously) to us all during the service.

Please plan to attend so you can get a closer look at who we all are.

Sunday, 30 October 2011, 11 a.m.

Celebrating...Death?

Byron Ballard

Indigenous peoples have long had a decidedly personal relationship with family members who have died. Their celebrations include fanciful skeletons, feasting and music. What can we learn from these old traditions and how can we incorporate this light touch into our own mourning practices? Join Byron Ballard and friends for a lively celebration of the Day of the Dead, sugar skulls and all.

## Religious Education Corner

I'm very excited about the doors we will be opening this year for our children and youth. Many of them, through their parents, friends, or own experiences have already begun traveling the road of social justice. We hope, through our social justice curriculums this year, to expand upon that experience as we adopt charitable organizations to work with, learn about prejudice, racism, bullying, fairness, differences, and similarities, create a peace quilt, film a video, and organize an interfaith service event. These are some of the things our children and youth will do this year. If you know of other families who would like to join us, they are always welcome. Spreading the word about these important issues helps others to understand what we as UUs are all about. We can also always use volunteers in RE, so please join us one morning and see firsthand all that we will be learning.

### Summer Sundays!!

A big thank you to everyone who helped make our summer programs so special. Your time is greatly appreciated. Thanks to you we were able to offer morn-

ings of painting, plant pressing, cooking, hiking, tire swing adventures, printmaking, music, clay creatures, and flag making.

### Registration and Classes

We joined the adults for the water communion service last Sunday and then had our own ingathering in the RE classroom. Our first classes will take place on September 18<sup>th</sup>. To date we have two preschoolers registered, five in the K-4 group, four in the 5-8 group, and three in the 9-12 group, for a total of fourteen. Here are our curriculum offerings for the coming month:

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

*Each of Us Is Important and Special*; *Here We Meet Friends*; *Congregations Are Places of Caring*; and *Old and Young Make Good Friends*

### Grades K-4 Class: *In Our Hands and Moral Tales*

*Valuing the Group and the Individual*; *From Being Affirmed to Self-Affirmation*; *Listening, Talking, Sharing*; *What Is Service? What or Who Can We Help?*



### Grades 5-8 Class: *Race to Justice and Beyond Pink and Blue*

*Establishing A Covenant*; *Sharing Our Heritages*; *Unlearning Stereotypes*; *Stories of Prejudice*

### Grades 9-12 Class: *A Chorus of Faiths*

*What Do We Mean by Social Justice*; *Beyond Diversity*

If you haven't already registered your son/daughter, please see me for a registration form.

### Important Dates to Remember

October 1—RE Committee Planning Retreat 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

October 2—IG Beginning

October 28—Boo at the UU Annual Halloween Party—watch for details soon!

November 6—IG Beginning

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

**Membership News**

It is a pleasure to welcome our newest members, LIBBA TRACY of Black Mountain and CILLA BECKER of Asheville.

Cilla Becker, living in the Oakley area of Asheville for ten years, has attended UUCA, where she was a proud member of Interweave. She was at UUCSV a few years back, then came again and joined.

Cilla was born in Omaha, Nebraska, but has lived in San Francisco, serving as a resident manager of an apartment building. Her volunteering included an outpatient AIDS ward, where patients were mainly gay men, "whose courage and humor I have never forgotten". She has been a member of the St. Augustine, FL, UU Fellowship, serving on caring and hospitality committees. "The principles spoke to me and so I stayed". (Watching PBS nature shows in her early years helped shape her respect for the interdependent web.)

Radio has been a real life line for Cilla more recently. She likes "New Dimensions", "Interfaith Voices", "House Party"(blues) and "Jazz and Beyond". Walking, resistance training, and reading are current interests. Her one cat "Oreo" is a stray who came to Cilla's door, stubborn and neglected.

"Thanks to a helpful nudge from one of our own to share this background with you! And for wanting to get to know me through the newsletter as a means to that end!"

Libba Tracy: Her name is Elizabeth, but she goes by Libba and her husband's name is Tom. They have 2 children, Guy, 20 and Savannah, 17 and live on North Fork Road with a horse named Oliver and a dog named Otis.

Libba grew up in Columbia, SC and has also lived in Phoenix, Az. She is a mother, homemaker and artist who enjoys creating beauty with anything to do with paint and is looking to re-create herself since the nest has emptied. Libba volunteers at the Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry with the food bank. She spent summers here in Montreat growing up, for 15 years.

Libba comes to us as a new UU and was drawn to UU by our authenticity of expression.

Welcome, Libba!

**Choir News for October**

In October, the UUCSV Choir will sing on the Fifth Sunday (the 30th) to accompany Byron Ballard on the theme of the Day of the Dead, a celebratory time in Mexico, known as All Souls in the US. We will rehearse on Sunday the 23rd at 9:30 AM (a change because of the LEAF festival) and also on Wednesday the 26th at 6:30, plus on Sunday the 30th at 10 AM. Come sing with us!

—Linda Metzner, Choir Director



**Birthdays in October**

- Oct 1<sup>st</sup> Marilyn Wells
- Oct 11<sup>th</sup> Geoff Stone
- Oct 12<sup>th</sup> Dawn Wilson



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 21 October 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 "Grand Canyon" (1991; "Ruminations on why and how Life is Lousy, especially in L.A., as a handful of disparate lives intersect . . ."—Leonard Maltin's 2011 Movie Guide) will be shown. For further information call Norm Kowal (333-4925).



### **UUCSV Building/Aesthetics Committee, Sept. 19, 2011 Report**

The Building and Aesthetics Committee has made significant progress toward completing the projects they undertook in 2010 and continued into this year. At this time we have:

Carpeted, painted, and furnished the office for the next minister. H/she will find framed Mary Rodman paintings on the walls, comfortable chairs, and a renovated bookcase and file cabinet. We request that no furniture or other articles in this room be removed. The table, lamp, desk, and recliner chair are on loan from UUCSV members.

Completed the carpeting of the RE area by removing the decades-old green shag and replacing it with carpet to match the sanctuary.

Completed the renovation of the former women's restroom. It is ready for members and visitors in wheelchairs. We removed the small toilet and the walls that divided the room into two booths. We installed one more grab bar, a larger and undamaged mirror, handicap-accessible sink, cabinets below the sink, new flooring and trim, a water-efficient toilet, and a new and energy-efficient sink light. We painted the walls and ceiling and stained and hung a new door that will accommodate a wheelchair.

Removed the old front doors and windows in the foyer. They were replaced by new doors and windows that are undamaged, energy-efficient, and more serviceable. They allow more light into the building. We painted the doors and frames of the windows. The old doors were donated to Habitat for Humanity.

Ordered new chairs for the sanctuary to replace the metal chairs now in place. We expect the chairs to be delivered by the manufacturer to the distributor in Conover, NC, during the first two weeks of October. We hope to deliver them to the church soon thereafter.

Our next project is to pressure wash and paint the exterior of the building and the portico floor. We have the equipment and materials necessary. Our next move will be to schedule the work. Mary Soyonova has volunteered to spray paint the walls once the walls have been cleaned. We will count on other volunteers to complete the painting. Anyone interested?

The people who did all the work described above and continue to spend hours making our surroundings safe, comfortable, and respectful of the environment are: Jane J. Carroll, Chair; Bill Altork; Evelyn Carter; Bert Gaines; Les Johnson; Lauris Liljestrand; Pete Ronman; Angie Underwood; Emory Underwood.

—Jane J. Carroll, Chair

### **Ministerial Search Committee**

Your Ministerial Search Committee presently has three candidates under consideration and we are in the process of setting up interviews with them. Also we are receiving inquiries from others. We appreciate the patience and trust of our congregation as we keep moving forward in our task.



### **From the Editor—The Last Word**

From a recent NYTimes article on Richard Dawkins:

Belief in the supernatural strikes him as incurious, which is perhaps the worst insult he can imagine.

“Religion teaches you to be satisfied with nonanswers,” he says. “It’s a sort of crime against childhood.”

And please spare him talk of spiritualism, as if that were the only way to meditate on the wonder of the universe. “If you look up at the Milky Way through the eyes of Carl Sagan, you get a feeling in your chest of something greater than yourself,” he says. “And it is. But it’s not supernatural.”