

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

October 2012

Volume XI, Issue 10

Religious Freedom — Diverse Perspectives



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## From the Minister

The season of Fall is fast approaching. As I look back over the highways, byways, and rhythms of my 55 summers of life I find that I have always loved this time of year. Of course living in these mountains makes the Fall for me even more glorious but even while residing in New York City, with the only real green space to speak of being Central Park, I still delighted in the season.

There are of course other reasons for my appreciation of Summer moving on. I have suffered from hay fever most of my life and usually when the weather gets cooler (despite the climate change) the allergies begin to alleviate a bit bringing me much comfort which usually continues into the Spring. Yet another more significant reason for my love affair with Fall, speaking again regarding the rhythms of my life is that I have always remembered Fall being a time for me to reap what I have sown.

It appears the significant transitions in my life usually happen in the Fall whether it be travel, employment, or any other new adventure. The immediate transition that comes to mind is my beginning my ministry new here at UUCSV. Whatever the season of Fall means to you, it may help to bear this in mind:

*If there is any sense to seasons it is this:*

*That time is timeless and time is Life.*

*Not Spring nor Summer, not even Fall is gone.*

*Each will be what it becomes as Winter will be Spring. The Seasons play their walk-on parts, and we can hardly hear the lines, much less know all the plot, except the final line----"Life Abides."*

---Rev. Michael Carter

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

Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 23 Oct, 10 a.m., covering November 2012

## Sunday Programming



**Sunday, 7 October 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **A Sabbath Wholly Kept**

**Rev. DiAnna Ritola**

How do we unplug from the demands of daily life and reconnect to that which we deem most sacred? Is there a magic formula for finding ways in which to slow down and breathe into the space of wholeness? Indeed there is—well, sort of. Many faith traditions have spiritual practices that allow us to find our centers, and the tradition of Sabbath is a good place to start.

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 enjoys yoga, running, singing, acting, and reading for fun and profit.

**Sunday, 14 October 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **The Pebble In My Shoe**

**Rev. Michael Carter**

There is a wonderful line from *The Godfather III* that I absolutely love. Al Pacino plays the part of Michael Corleone, who has been the head of the Corleone Crime Family in New York for quite some time. He is trying to go legit and no matter what he does he cannot get away from a life of crime. In one scene Pacino's character Michael says, "Every time I try to get out they keep pulling me back in."

This is how I have felt for some time about Christianity and the teachings of Jesus. Those teachings have been "the pebble in my shoe." I invite you to explore what it can mean to be a Unitarian Universalist Christian and a follower of the teachings of Jesus.

## Sunday Programming

**Sunday, 21 October 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **Campaign for Southern Equality**

**Rev. Jasmine Beach-Ferrara**

Working for LGBT rights in the South means being an underdog: political defeats outnumber victories and it's common to hear people from other regions suggest that the solution to this problem is for LGBT Southerners to simply move north or west. Yet, I find that being an underdog is actually a liberating experience that enables creativity and nimbleness. As a result, in my work with the Campaign for Southern Equality, I feel extraordinary hope about what is possible in the years to come as we work for full federal equality from the South. In my sermon, I'll explore what it means to be an underdog, drawing on theology as a way to better understand and embrace this position. I'll situate these reflections in the current landscape of LGBT rights in NC and across the South.

Raised in North Carolina, Jasmine Beach-Ferrara is a minister in the United Church of Christ and the Executive Director of the Campaign for Southern Equality, a LGBT-rights organization based in Asheville. She also writes fiction and her first collection of short stories is forthcoming in 2013. Jasmine and her wife, Meghann, live in Asheville with their hound dog, Otis. Jasmine loves Tarheel basketball, NFL football, politics, reading and candy.



**Sunday, 28 October 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **The Spirituality and Faith of the Atheist**

**Rev. Michael Carter**

Really? Can the self proclaimed UU atheist (or any atheist) really be called a person of faith or even, "spiritual." Come and find out. See you there!

**Sunday, 4 November 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **Seriously, Let's Change the World**

**Tim Perry**

Being a lifelong victim of a condition I call "Puzzle-brain" I can't seem to look at anything without wondering if it can be fixed or improved. Needless to say, the often irrational, self-destructive behavior of humankind has provided endless fodder for my thoughts over the years. I've spent more time than I care to remember thinking things like, "What the h\_ll is wrong with people?" and, "Will we ever change?" Well, after 47 odd years, I think I might possibly have an answer (Yes, I'm actually arrogant enough to think that) and I'd love to run it by you and see what you think.

Tim is a former Christian and Priest, a recovering Fundamentalist who was preaching before he could drive, and currently considers himself a "Hopeful Agnostic." He is also very proud to call UUCSV his spiritual home.

## Religious Education Corner



The air is starting to feel “crispy” and cool. In RE, this is our time to settle in to our classes and be together in community. Children, youth, and young adults in the religious education program are a community within our larger community. As we begin our connection with our new minister, expect to see more of our younger UUs participating in services, service work, committees, and many other ways within our intergenerational diversity. This is so important, not only to empower our young people, but to grow our congregation. Ask our children what they are learning about the importance of rainforests and why we must save them. Talk to an older youth or college student about their views of the world. I guarantee you will be inspired.

### **Classroom Attendance**

We started our first full Sunday of classes on September 16 with fourteen children, youth, and young adults in attendance! This included two littlest ones in the preschool, five in the elementary classroom, and seven in the senior high/young adult covenant group! I encourage everyone to keep up attendance. Religious education is not only about what you learn, but is a way to connect with old and new friends.

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

*Preschool—Our Natural World*

Cooperative play and nature stories

*Grades K-6—Celebrating Rainforests*

October 7 Life in the Rainforests—Plants (continued)

October 14 Rainforests—How Can We Help? (Part 1)

October 21 Rainforests—How Can We Help? (Part 2)

October 28 Life in the Rainforests—Animals (Part 1)

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

October 7 Being Together, Part 2

October 14 Seasons

### **Annual Halloween Party!!**

We're a little early this year, due to some scheduling conflicts of members of the RE Committee, but our annual Halloween Party FOR ALL AGES will take place Friday October 19, 2012 from 6 - 9 p.m. The committee for planning this event includes Beata Ball, Susan and Scott Shaw, Heidi Blozan, Lori Daniel, Amy McGillicuddy, and Amy Williams. We always welcome new ideas for big and little kids, so contact any of these folks as soon as possible! If you can't be on the planning committee, but would still like to help, we always need folks to help decorate, set up, clean up, and help with activities for all ages. Come in costume and have fun!!

## Religious Education Corner

### Important Dates to Remember

October 6 RE Committee Retreat 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Home of Susan and Scott Shaw.

October 19 Halloween Party!! 6 - 9 p.m. at church



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](mailto:sybil.argintar@yahoo.com), 230-3773)



### **Minister's Startup Workshop**

On Saturday, October 20th beginning at 9:30 am we will have our Minister's Start Up Workshop. All board members, church committee leaders, our ministerial search committee, and our Ministerial Support Team are expected to attend. The workshop usually last anywhere from 3-5 hours. Denise Rimes, who is our district representative will be facilitating. As some of you may or may not know, Annette Marquis has moved on to other duties within the denomination.

Secondly, We will be having our annual board retreat after the workshop. Those church leaders who do not serve on the board will be dismissed and all board members will remain. As you can see it will be an exciting, and a busy day. I look forward to seeing you there!

—*Rev Michael J Carter*

### **Building, Aesthetics, and Grounds Committee**

The architectural design of the Memorial Garden is probably complete. Thanks to Scott Conklin for donating his expertise. Thanks too to Sybil Argintar for helping with the interior design of the structure. Several people are working to maintain our UUCSV surroundings. Thanks go to the individuals who agreed to mow the lawn. It can be a thankless job. A major development can be seen in all the gardens that surround the building. Ray Culotta and Jill Tagedin installed a hose irrigation system! The BAG committee members adopted the various gardens to maintain, and the irrigation system is much appreciated. Finally, we will hire a man with machinery to handle the huge job of raking and removing the leaves next fall. Let's hope we will not have problems with ice this coming winter.

—*Jane Carroll, Chair* [UUCSV's own BAG lady?—Ed.]

### **Care Committee**

My first full week as your minister had proven quite pleasant. Folks have dropped by to visit and to chat, a wonderful lunch for Tricia, Ann Sillman, and me was prepared by Carolyn Shorkey on my first day here from potluck leftovers—Delicious! There is still much to learn and to do but I am beginning to get to know our community a bit better and to get a "lay of the land" so to speak.

Having said that, I want us to think about how we will continue to contribute to our Congregation. We have busy lives for sure but if you can find some time to give to some committee work, we could sure use the help.

Our "Care Committee" is in need of people who would be interested in reaching out to old and new members, to check on them and to see what their needs may be. This is a ministry in and of itself so we need people who are willing to be leaders and to give of their time. A visit if possible, a kind word, a phone call, a smile, these may be just what someone needs to press on. Jim Carillon is now the new co-ordinator of our Care Committee. He is the new contact person for our outreach to those who are,"sick and shut in" in our congregation.

I hope you can join us!

Thank you,

—*Michael, Rev Michael J Carter*



**Membership Committee**



Friends, our membership in the Unitarian Universalist Church here in Black Mountain is growing. I am so glad, for the more members we have, up to a point, the more our church can offer. Membership in this church is a great way to get to know your church friends, especially if you also join in one of the many groups or committees which help run our church. There is a place for everyone and I am so excited about our newest effort to share and be welcoming, our chalice circles, where we get to know each other on a very deep and helpful and loving level. If all circles are full when you join the church as a member or even as a friend, there will be more, as the church gets this new effort going strong.

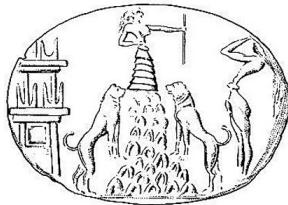
Membership gives more than it takes. Even as you give of your self in the running of this church and give financially to keep the doors open and the bills paid, your participation in the Sunday Services leave you spiritually and emotionally fulfilled and your church gives you a place to get active in social action.

Join us.

—Ann Sillman, Member chair

**Women's Spirituality Group**

Women's Spirituality Group will meet Wed. Oct. 24, 6:30 pm. This group explores different topics related to the divine feminine, and all women are welcome. For information contact Teresa Ballinger at 828-275-8453.



**Choir News**

In October the UUCSV Choir will meet on Sunday the 21st at 12:15 after the service. Then, as a change in schedule, we will meet on Thursday evening the 25th at 6:30 PM. Then we will meet at 10 AM on the 28th, the day of our performance. Linda will be offering a special "Music Theory Brushup" on Thursday evening at 6 PM for those who would like some clarity on what's happening on the musical staff! This will be based on your own questions and needs about notes, rhythms, keys etc.

Come sing with us!

—Linda Metzner, Choir Director



**Friday Fling**

October's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on 19 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 "Hugo" (2011; a magical world of spectacular adventure, directed by Martin Scorsese) will be shown. For further information call Norm Kowal (458-4537).



## Birthdays

October 1 <sup>st</sup>	Marilyn Wells
October 11 <sup>th</sup>	Geoff Stone
October 12 <sup>th</sup>	Dawn Wilson
October 15 <sup>th</sup>	Diane Graham



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

## FALL at THE MOUNTAIN!

The Mountain invites all in the Unitarian Universalist family to come up for wonderful fall days in October and November! The Calendar tab at [www.mountaincenters.org](http://www.mountaincenters.org) leads to a cornucopia of opportunities for nourishing body and spirit!

SUUFU – the Southern Unitarian Universalist Fall Institute at The Mountain – will happen October 1-5 and offers four glorious but affordable days of fall color, great views, fine food and company, and programming to stretch the imagination and feed the soul! Registration and details are at [www.suufi.org](http://www.suufi.org).

Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit will happen October 10-14th and celebrate the 25th Anniversary of this event at The Mountain! More info and registration are online at [www.uuwomenspirit.org](http://www.uuwomenspirit.org).

November will bring an Intermediate CON (Ages 12-14) the first weekend, the annual gathering of southeastern UU ministers (SEUUMA) during the week of November 12-15, and a Thanksgiving gathering and feast the 21-25th! Details and online registration for all are at [www.mountaincenters.org](http://www.mountaincenters.org) under the Calendar tab.

The Mountain, a treasured place for Unitarian Universalists, always welcomes you!

## From Michael

The mystic is one who draws attention to the unity and sacredness of what is, while a prophet is one who speaks out when that unity is disrupted. Like yin and yang, they are two aspects of one whole—the inner and the outer, the stillness and the action, the silence and the song.

Can you see how these times are calling us to be both? Mystics are needed to share the many ways of being in relationship with the Great Mystery.

They are the ones whose first language is unity.

Prophets are needed to speak out when that unity is compromised or undermined by outside forces. It was a luxury of former times to choose one or the other. The requirement of this time is to practice both: to steep ourselves in the wisdom of deep stillness and the knowing of Perfect Oneness, then to go out and stand firm against the forces that divide us.

—Jan Phillips, “No Ordinary Time”

## From the Editor—The Last Word

In a section of his book, *The Magic of Reality: How We Know What's Really True* (2011), called “Pollyanna and Paranoia”, Richard Dawkins writes: “So, we have seen that bad things, like good things, don’t happen any more often than they ought to by chance. The universe has no mind, no feelings and no personality, so it doesn’t do things in order to either hurt or please you. Bad things happen because *things* happen. Whether they are bad or good from our point of view doesn’t influence how likely it is that they will happen. Some people find it hard to accept this. They’d prefer to think that sinners get their comeuppance, that virtue is rewarded. Unfortunately the universe doesn’t care what people prefer.”

