

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY

July 2012

Volume XI, Issue 7

Religious Freedom — Diverse Perspectives



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## From the Board

"There's nothing so rare as a day in July"

Summer is upon us with all the activity of these early summer days in the mountains. The days are warm and sunny with just enough rain to make our gardens bloom with such lush beauty that we forget the dark, cold, brown days of winter. The nights are cool and those of us without air conditioning are happy and snug.

Church activity is blooming, too, with our summer camp gearing up for an exciting adventure. The Board of Trustees is looking forward to spending time with our new minister, Michael Carter and his family, along with the Hendersonville and Brevard UUs at The Mountain. Everyone is welcome to come to this exciting time and peaceful retreat in Highlands. Please see our website for more information.

Our Sunday sermons have been so uplifting and given us thought for pondering all week long. Would you still strive to be the best person you could be even if there was no reward at the end? Would you be your best just for the joy it brings? Is this a silly question? How fortunate that as UUs we can explore our spirituality and question what is often taken for granted.

Our Covenant groups are forming soon, and if you took a questionnaire home, please remember to bring it back so we can have the best range of thoughts from our congregation. Covenant groups allow us to get closer to one another and to do what UUs like to do best—talk about what we believe.

We're looking forward to the future with such shining hope that it will surely carry us through the year.

Happy summer to you all!

—Mary Soyenova, *Vice President, Board of Trustees*

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**Board Meeting: Monday 16 July, 6 p.m.**

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

Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday 24 July, 10 a.m., covering August 2012

## **Getting to Know Our New Members**

### James and Carol Sheeler

James and Carol Sheeler come to UUCSV after spending their working lives moving throughout much of the United States. Richmond, Baltimore, Clearwater, all these cities have benefitted from having the Sheelers as residents. Since 2002, Asheville has enjoyed that benefit.

Coming from mainstream Protestant backgrounds, the Sheelers sought out the local UU church on the advice of James' father and brother. Their broad-mindedness and understanding of each person's unique value are perfect fits with the UU philosophy.

Carol's professional life was involved with children. Whether teaching in public schools, operating her own child care center, or directing Mission Hospital's Child Development Center, Carol shone. James began his professional career in corporate America then moved on to private non-profits, where he served as Executive Director. The final years of his career, James spent in public service with the city of Clearwater, FL. As Community Development Manager he secured federal and local grants for the city.

The Sheelers have two sons. One lives in Asheville with the Sheelers' two grandsons. The other lives in Clearwater, with their only granddaughter. Spending time with their grandchildren is a priority for both Carol and James.

After such an active and consuming professional career Carol is reveling in reading and gardening, now that she is retired. But she is willing to find a place to volunteer in the vital life of UUCSV. James, a self-proclaimed political junkie, has worked on the campaigns of various local candidates. He is also active in the campaign for a living wage, the Move to Amend, and the anti-nuclear campaign. James also hopes to be a willing volunteer. The Sheelers have already stood as greeters for our Sunday services.

When asked what they found especially appealing about UUCSV, both James and Carol cited the size, friendliness, and sense of direction of our congregation. James also applauded the work of the ministerial search committee and the Sunday Service Associates in securing both supply speakers and a part-time minister. The Sheelers are eager to welcome Michael Carter in August.

Wherever they chose to volunteer at UUCSV, James and Carol Sheeler are valuable additions to our congregation.

### Jill Tagudin and Ray Culotta

Jill Tagudin and her husband, Ray Culotta, are new members at UUSVC. After 20 years sweltering in the Texas and Louisiana flatlands, they finally escaped last year to a new mountain home near Bat Cave. Their one son, Forrest, is a junior at UT-Austin.

Jill grew up in Florida and despite watching every Apollo launch from her back yard, she eventually went to Virginia Tech & UC Santa Cruz to study the earth instead of the stars. Ray grew up in Connecticut, and also studied geology at Yale & Cornell. Jill works as a geophysicist and Ray is preparing to teach Geology at Blue Ridge Community College next Fall.

An ad described the UU faith as "Where Reason Meets Religion" and they both became UU's in 1997. They are happy to live in a great hiking area and a climate where tulip & daffodil bulbs don't have to spend half the year in the fridge!

## Sunday Programming

**Sunday, 1 July 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **To Do One Thing Well**

**Rev. Robin Tanner**

Religious traditions the whole world over ask adherents often to do one thing well. For some, it's the Golden Rule. For others, it is keeping kosher. Some traditions ask for a single confession of faith, a belief to be stated. What is it that Unitarian Universalism asks us to do well? What is your one thing you will do well in this life?

Originally from upstate New York, Rev. Robin Tanner now serves as the minister of the Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church in Charlotte. Prior to moving to Charlotte, she lived in Albuquerque, New Mexico where she completed a year-long chaplain residency at Presbyterian Hospital. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Religious Studies from the University of Rochester, and earned her Master of Divinity from Harvard Divinity School, where she was awarded the Williams Fellowship. She was ordained as a Minister in December 2009 and was called to serve at the Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church in 2010.

**Sunday, 8 July 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **Got Free Will?**

**Rev. Dr. Marc Mullinax**

Marc Mullinax returns for his final scheduled visit on July 8. In a "Last Lecture" mood, he will touch on the theme of "Free Will" in ways that "rhyme" with his previous six UUSV messages. His talk, entitled "Got Free Will?", will outline the operating philosophy he wishes for his students, and reflect on how living these themes means living responsibly in this complex and often dangerous world. Living freely, responsibly, and ethically may not make one rich, so why live freely, unencumbered by the puppet strings society and institutions



would have us wear?

Marc Mullinax is a Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Mars Hill College. He will be embarking on a year long sabbatical with his wife, Grace, to South Korea in August. We wish them well!

**Sunday, 15 July 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **Bubba Calls 911: A Lesson in Location**

**Michael Carter**

Where we look for meaning determines where that meaning will take us; how it heals or hurts us as individuals and as a species. We often consult maps we believe can guide us on the journey. Too often these maps come from mapmakers that suggest somewhere other than now and here holds all the promise. The post-modern wasteland is better navigated with a compass, rather than a map.

Meet the Other Michael Carter (not "our own" Michael Carter, but still a good Michael Carter, and aren't we lucky to have multiple Michael Carters?): Michael is a graduate of the Emory University Chandler School of Theology. He served in the United Methodist Church for eight years working in parishes in Georgia and Kentucky, as well as serving on the staff of one of the oldest statewide peace organizations in the United States. He spent many years in the corporate world and now is a starving entrepreneur living near Brevard.

## Sunday Programming

**Sunday, 22 July 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **Identity and Belonging, and the Embrace of Heresy**

**Rev. Jennifer Slade**

What goes into shaping an identity—for an individual or a community? What are the things we have chosen to claim, and what are the things we haven't consciously chosen but that shape our individual and collective identities nonetheless? Throughout history, Unitarians and Universalists have been called heretics and not in a nice way, but a definition of heretic is "one who chooses." How can we embrace such heresy in how we define ourselves and where we choose to belong?

The Reverend Jennifer Slade has been a UU minister for over twenty years; she has served congregations and the UUA in various capacities during that time. Having just finished a year as an Interim Minister in Illinois, she is pleased to be back in the Southeast, especially in Durham, NC where she lives with her husband John and children Sam, age 18 and Emma, age 15.

**Sunday, 29 July 2012, 11 a.m.**

### **Call to Forgiveness, Call to Love**

**Judith Toy**

In the gentle tradition of Vietnamese Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh, Judith will lead us in mindfulness meditation, and then read from her nonfiction book, *Murder as a Call to Love, A True Story of Transformation and Forgiveness*. Replete with the teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh, Judith's book tells the story of how three of her family were brutally murdered, and how, through mindfulness practice, she came to forgive the man who committed the crime. Her book has been described as both memoir and instruction manual. For details, go to Amazon.com Customer Reviews, and to <http://www.murderasacalltolove.com>.

Judith has practiced meditation since 1973, when she



first read Siddhartha, by Herman Hesse. She was ordained by Thich Nhat Hanh as a core member of his order in 1997. She has made her living as a teacher, writer, editor and poet. She and her husband, Philip Toy, are co-founders of Cloud Cottage Community of Mindfulness in Black Mountain. They have led mindfulness

retreats across the US and in Ireland, Findhorn in Scotland, and Romania.

**Sunday, 5 August 2012, 11 a.m.**

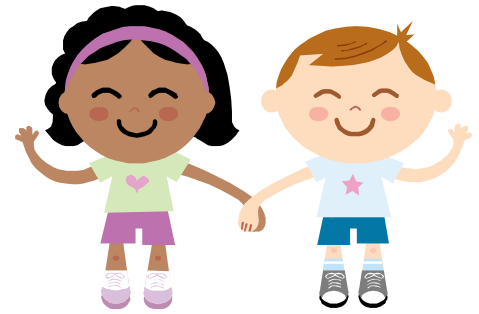
### **Islam and the Significance of Ramadan**

**Afaf Omer**

Afaf Omer is Associate Professor of Sociology at UNC -Asheville. She is from Sudan, and is the wife of Elmoise Abanura, who spoke at UUCSV a few years ago about the situation in Sudan.

Professor Omer will speak about the basic tenets of Islam and on the significance of the holy month of Ramadan, which will be about half over on August 5.

## Religious Education Corner



### Curriculum Plans for the Fall

More details will be sent over the summer, but here's what we have planned for next year! Our theme will focus on our seventh principle, "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part". With that in mind, our preschoolers will continue with a cooperative play setting with some special stories and activities about the environment, while our children in Grades K through 6 will explore rainforests, including creating their own forest in the classroom! The high school group will expand to include our recent high school graduates, with a covenant group setting. There will also be additional opportunities for these students and other college-age students in the community to take part in some special classes focusing upon diversity education. Details to follow soon!

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)

Summer has officially begun, a time when most of us kick back a bit and take some time off from attending services every Sunday. We will continue to offer a great line-up of Summer Sunday programs (see below), but we also want all RE families and members/friends of the congregation to join together with us in fellowship for several fun events. Mark your calendars for the following:

Friday, June 22: Tourists Baseball Game (\$1 hotdogs and fireworks!) 7 p.m.

Saturday, July 28: Hike and picnic at Craggy Gardens (cool off from the heat!) 2 p.m.

Saturday, September 15: RE Kick-off picnic and music jam at Lake Tomahawk 2 p.m.

### Summer Sundays K-5 Classroom

June 24 Sant Hans Ann Sillman; Milt Warden assists

July 1 Making Clay Chalice Nels Arnold, Sybil

July 8 Printmaking Bette Bates

July 15 World Percussion Linda Metzner

July 22 Walk/hike/feet wet Heidi Blozan, Tina Rosato assists

July 29 OPEN (sign up now—share your special talents!!)

### Welcome Sarah G!

We welcome Sarah G, one of our high school youth, as our preschool caregiver for most Sundays through the summer. Sarah also works with children at the Friends Meeting one Sunday per month, and has experience working with our

youngest UUs. On Sundays when we don't have preschoolers present, Sarah will help in the main classroom or will assist with another RE-related project! We still need volunteer preschool helpers the first Sunday of every month when Sarah is not available, so SIGN UP NOW!!

### Journey for the Earth: Daily Travel Adventures

We have eight campers signed up for our week of summer environmental adventures! We'll be building recycled creatures, visiting a solar farm, seeing how fair trade coffee is grown and roasted, visiting the community garden, the Nature Center, Montreat Park, the North Fork Reservoir, and making animal habitats! Sound like fun? We have a few spaces left for this camp, July 16 - 20, from 9 - 4, with before and after childcare available. Payment in full is due by July 1, so see Sybil if you are interested, have grandchildren visiting then, or know of others in the Black Mountain community. Counselors will be Beata Ball, Aaron Eliot-Gaines, and a UUCA youth, Morgen Cobb, who will be leading the recycled musical instruments activities, including a jam session the last day of camp! Cost for church members/friends is \$140 for a full day, full week of camp! Non-church member fee is \$150. Some scholarship funds are still available.

### Important Dates to Remember

May 27 Summer Sundays begin

June 3 Summer Sunday program: Field trip to Brother Wolf Animal Rescue

June 9 RE Committee Retreat 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., home of Susan and Scott Shaw



**I Heard it Through the Grapevine . . . Or, News from your Membership Committee**

Our hard-working committee decided to take the summer off, even though we'll miss our monthly meetings. We will, as always, welcome visitors, friends, and members every Sunday. Serving as a Greeter is guaranteed to bring a smile to your face so be sure to say YES when you're asked to volunteer.



On June 3rd, we formally welcomed our newest members in a Recognition Ceremony during the Sunday service. You'll be reading more about them as members of our committee interview them for articles in upcoming newsletters. Tina Rosato introduced James and Carol Sheeler to us in this month's newsletter. Jill Tagudin and Ray Culotta have also introduced themselves in the newsletter. Be sure to read them!!

Our next Membership Committee meeting will be Sunday, September 9th, at 10:00 a.m. Ann Sillman has graciously agreed to be Committee Chair. We love having folks join our Committee; by doing so, you'll have the opportunity to share with others the joy of being part of the UUCSV!!

—Angie Underwood, Membership Committee Chair, Retired

**Room in the Inn Update**

Thanks to everyone who has signed up to help out with Room in the Inn on Friday, July 20 at the Black Mountain Methodist church annex. We still need drinks (iced tea, soft drinks, or juice), a couple salads, and one more vegetable dish.



We could also use breakfast items, either a cooked breakfast casserole that can be reheated, or ready-to-eat foods like cereal. The breakfast should be dropped off the evening of July 19 so the women will have it on Friday morning. A sign-up sheet is in the foyer, or contact me at 828 686 3112, flora258@isp.com. We do appreciate all the volunteers who have helped with Room in the Inn.

—Connie Krochmal, Social Action Room in the Inn Coordinator

**Birthdays in July**

- July 13<sup>th</sup> Elaine Stennett
- July 14<sup>th</sup> Betty Bates
- July 15<sup>th</sup> Laine Everly
- July 15<sup>th</sup> Judy Lutvack
- July 22<sup>nd</sup> Bob MacDicken
- July 26<sup>th</sup> Jey Hiott



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

**Choir News for July**

The UUCSV Choir continues to attract wonderful new singers! We are always welcoming to new members, and we are very friendly! In July, we will be singing on the 22nd. We will rehearse on the 15th at 12:15, again on the 18th at 6:30, and on the day of performance, the 22nd at 10 AM. Come sing with us!



—Linda Metzner, Choir Director

**Friday Fling**

July's Friday Fling, a fun party for grown-ups every third Friday of the month, will be held on 20 July 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 Trip to Bountiful" (1985; Geraldine Page; "Endearing! Uplifting! A demonstration of the human spirit!") will be shown. For further information call Norm Kowal (458-4537).



## Hospitality News

### The Mountain Retreat

Save the Date: On the weekend of August 17-19 three UU congregations from WNC are invited to join forces and have a joint congregational retreat at The Mountain, the UU Camp and Retreat Center located near Highlands, about 2 hours from Black Mountain. Members of the Swannanoa Valley congregation will collaborate with the fellowships of Hendersonville and Brevard to plan a fun and relaxing weekend. Ministers from all three congregations will be attending and participating. Six healthy and delicious meals are included, starting with Friday's dinner and ending with lunch on Sunday after the worship service.

The Mountain is located on top of Little Scaly Mountain at an elevation of 4,200', so if you want to beat the heat of the dog days of August, put this on your calendar. Our host will be Lee Reading, Interim Director. There will be opportunities to hike, swim, nap, stretch, play, make new friends, and enjoy a concert by Lee Knight, a great musician, folklorist and storyteller.

Go to [www.mountaincenters.org](http://www.mountaincenters.org) to learn more about the Mountain and to use the on-line registration system. We hope you will join us!

Members and friends of our church, we all seem to thoroughly enjoy the coffee hour after the service, even some like to get a cup of coffee before church service begins. The making and setting up of this great tradition is currently carried by only a few people and they are getting worn out. What would you think of a church service which just ended, no coffee, no nibbles? I think not. We like our social time after church too much.

Will each one of you who likes this to continue please choose just one, two or more Sundays a year to take on the responsibility to provide the refreshment after the Sunday service? There are only 52 Sundays in the whole year and we have around 80 members plus many friends who come regularly to our services. It should not be impossible to cover every Sunday this way and no one will get burned out and all will learn how to prepare and serve this much loved tradition.

If you like the idea and are willing to participate please e-mail me, Ann Sillman, at [crugerhan-sen@gmail.com](mailto:crugerhan-sen@gmail.com). I will tabulate how many are willing and come up with a calendar so you can choose which Sunday is best for you to serve Coffee. It will be noted eventually in our weekly and also monthly newsletter so you will not forget.

I trust I will be hearing from enough of you to make this work for our church.

—Sincerely, Ann Sillman

### Women's Spirituality Group



The Women's Spirituality Group will meet at a special time in July. We will meet at the home of Judy Curtis, 806 Holly Ave., Black Mountain for a salad/cold food potluck lunch on Sunday July 15 following church. All of our women friends are welcome for a "nourishing" time. Please call Judy, 669-6290 or Teresa Ballinger, 275-8453 to RSVP or for more info.

### From the Editor—The Last Word



“Strange is our situation here on Earth. Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why, yet sometimes seeming to divine a purpose. From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know: that man is here for the sake of other men—above all for those upon whose smiles and well-being our own happiness depends.”

—Albert Einstein