



THE FLAME

December 2011

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula

13136 Warwick Blvd
Newport News, VA 23602

www.uufp.org

The mission of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula is to create a dynamic community that celebrates life and searches for truth

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December Services

Theme: Dedication

December 4th: "In Our Hands" — Katrina Thralls

Vigilante justice is an obsession of our culture. Wikipedia lists over 120 films featuring vigilantes, and there's television, literature and an entire culture revolving around super-heroes. There are times when an individual's sense of justice clashes with that of society, but should this individualistic view of morality be appalling or applauded? Are we more moral as individuals or in community?

Katrina Thralls is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist. She has been active in UU leadership as a youth, on the CNU campus, and through congregational internships. She is currently on a path to the Unitarian Universalist ministry.

December 11th: "A Rose in the Wintertime" — Rev. Andrew Clive Millard

Carolyn McDade's "Come, Sing a Song with Me" is a favorite Unitarian Universalist hymn, describing the ways in which we can bring color into one another's lives even at the dreariest time of year. With some newly created artwork based on the hymn decorating our Sanctuary, let's talk about how we bring joy into the world, whether with music, with art or with flowers!

December 18th: "A Great Miracle Happened There" — Rev. Andrew Clive Millard

Most of us are familiar with the story of Hanukkah and the single container of consecrated oil that miraculously kept the Jerusalem Temple's lamp lit for eight nights. More a Jewish family holiday than a religious observance, Hanukkah is celebrated with food and gifts and games; it has also become part of the Unitarian Universalist calendar for its relevance to religious freedom. *Special music will be provided by the talented Tristan van Tine!*

December 24th

Special Service!

5:00pm on December 24th: "Spirit of the Christmas Tree"

Join us for a family-friendly celebration of the Christmas story from a Unitarian Universalist perspective! Enjoy a traditional children's nativity pageant, carols both old and new, and the beloved ceremony of candle-lighting!

December 25th: "Christmas Day" — Rev. Andrew Clive Millard

Christmas for Unitarian Universalists means a lot of different things. For some, it's a big family affair, while for others the holidays are difficult due to family conflict or loss; some love the lights and colors and busy-ness, while others loathe the rampant commercialism. But can we find something for all of us in the season, something that speaks of hope and promise to us all?

It's sometimes hard to get everything I want to say on a particular topic into a single sermon. (Maybe you've noticed!) While I want to emphasize certain points with an illustration to make more concrete what might otherwise remain abstract, such an illustration must be brief at the risk of becoming a distracting tangent or, worse, sidelining the sermon's intended message. Sometimes, however, an illustration deserves considerably more airtime.

My Yom Kippur sermon in early October, for example, mentioned the importance of rejecting "cheap grace" when it comes to healing brokenness and restoring wholeness. I cited the wisdom my mother shared with me that it will take at least as long to mend something as it did to break it. I then said:

Just think about what that means in this country when it comes to something like racism and the legacy of slavery, which existed as a legal institution for 246 years but was only abolished 146 years ago. By my reckoning that means we have at least a century of work still to do — and just because we have an African-American President in the White House does not mean we're done!

Unitarian minister Theodore Parker knew this in 1830 when he spoke of the arc of the moral universe being long but bending towards justice. This understanding was paraphrased 130 years later by Dr. King and repeated more recently by (then Senator) Barack Obama. What for Parker was a matter of faithful intuition, however, became a matter of determined action for Obama: the moral arc bends because *we* put our hands on it and make it bend toward justice.

Picking up on this theme, our newly renamed Southeast District has launched a campaign called "Bending the Arc" which is aimed at taking the racial and social justice work of Unitarian Universalism in the South to a new level. With a vision for transforming the Southeast into the world we dream about, the campaign will, amongst other efforts, focus attention on racial justice in a Southern context, create linkages between congregations to maximize our social justice impact, assist congregations in developing effective interfaith and community partnerships, and seed UU legislative advocacy groups to work on critical social issues.

This is, of course, work that we are called to undertake at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula, and I intend to begin a conversation in the new year about what that might mean for us and how we might engage with it. We'll start with workshops* for youth and adults based on *The Arc of the Universe is Long*, a book recently published by the UUA's Skinner House that presents a history of "Unitarian Universalists, Anti-Racism and the Journey from Calgary" from the mid-1980s to 2006.

Arc is based on original interviews as well as written records and other documents that address matters of race and ethnicity, and traces the work of anti-racist, anti-oppressive multiculturalism from the 1983 report *Empowerment: One Denomination's Quest for Racial Justice* to the 1992 resolution "Racial and Cultural Diversity in Unitarian Universalism" through the renewed commitment expressed at the 2006 General Assembly to address racism and classism in Unitarian Universalist congregations. The five-session curriculum by one of the authors, UU minister Leslie Takahashi Morris, is intended to generate a discussion about race, identity, relationships, social change and faith in ways that are respectful and constructive.

You may have seen in the most recent issue of UU World an article by UU minister Mark Morrison-Reed, whose *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination* is generally credited with renewing the Unitarian Universalist conversation around race and racism in the 1980s. In that article, he notes that UUs remain unreconciled over issues of multiculturalism four decades after our Association wounded itself over "black empowerment", and yet even that failure to live up to our vaunted ideals underscores our common humanity. *The Arc of the Universe is Long* reminds us that our journey toward justice continues, so let us dedicate ourselves to this soul work of redemption and transformation!

* 7pm to 8:30pm on Wednesday evenings, Jan. 4th and 18th, and Feb. 1st, 15th and 29th.

We started our annual Guest at Your Table program in November. A big thanks goes out to the children who passed out the boxes. If you did not receive a box please pick one up from the table with the UUSC holiday cards. Boxes will be collected in January. Remember that if your final gift totals \$100 or more, it will be eligible to be matched dollar for dollar through a grant from the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock, N.Y.

Speaking of UUSC Holiday cards, there are still several styles available at \$10 a package.

We are still looking for a few more people to participate in the Christmas Eve pageant. If you would like to be part of the play this year please let Joanne know. We are looking for children to play animals in the Nativity scene. You will need to attend a rehearsal on Sunday the 18th of December and of course be available for the performance on Christmas Eve. We have a large supply of tunics and a variety of fabrics and supplies that you can use to make costumes.

We are now gathering items for our Re-gift store. This has been a popular event for the last two years. How it works-- Bring in any item that's in good condition, which could make a great gift for someone else. We'll collect them up until the morning of December 11th for sale that day. Children will get first pick, then adults are welcome to join in the shopping spree.

Our annual tree-trimming potluck is happening on December 11th after second service. Please bring a holiday dish to share. RE will provide drinks. Visit with friends and decorate the tree for the sanctuary.

Christmas falls on a Sunday this year and there will be regular services at 9:30 and 11:00. However, we will not have religious education classes. The nursery will be open and staffed by volunteers to give our paid staff a well deserved holiday.

The next RE Committee meeting will be Monday, December 12th at 7:00 in the main building.

See you in the RE!

The following Leadership Development Workshops are being offered by the Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists (3051 Ironbound Road, W'burg) on Saturdays from 9:30 to noon and are open to UUs in the Tidewater Cluster. You can reserve a place at any or all of these workshops by contacting Sally Fisk at [fisk at jlab dot org](mailto:fisk@jlab.org) or (757) 564-0829.

- * Dec. 10, 2011: Can you see me? Relationship — the heart of leadership.
- * Feb. 4, 2012: Tell me your story and I'll tell you mine. Building compassion by sharing leadership experience.
- * Mar. 31, 2012: How do we know? Appreciative Inquiry as an evaluation tool for leadership.



[Amazon](https://www.amazon.com) offers just about everything for Christmas and the good news is that Amazon supports the Fellowship's programs.

Nominating Committee Gears Up

Each year the nominating committee recommends a slate of officers and standing committee heads to the policy board, which is in turn voted on by the Fellowship at the annual meeting. The five-person committee works on behalf of the Fellowship, helping connect volunteers with leadership positions that use their gifts and fire up their passion. The process is straightforward: we first ask board members and committee heads if they wish to continue serving (and are able to according to our bylaws) and then make sure the unfilled spots have nominees. We begin meeting in January, interviewing in person or by phone individuals who have expressed interest in taking on a leadership role or who have been recommended to us. Usually committee heads come from within the committee or have had experience on that committee, but not always! Nominated board members can be members who have had board experience or folks who have not served on the board before.

To make sure that we are aware of everyone who would like to explore a leadership role, we are asking that interested folks contact us in the next couple of months. We can tell you about leadership training opportunities, point you to committees that are seeking members, and connect you to people who have served in various capacities who can share their experiences with you. Wayne Dawkins is the chair of the nominating committee, and members are Donna Briedé, Randy Phillips, Alicia Hofler and Carole Todd. Nab us on a Sunday morning (we will strive to wear our name tags) or drop a line to Wayne Dawkins at wdawk69643@aol.com.

Around the grounds...



It's been a while since the last update, but as you've seen, we've been quite busy...and when it comes to grounds, "we" means everyone in the Fellowship!

First, thanks go to Cornell Burcher for the beds. He's spent hours cleaning up the memorial garden out front, and spread the mulch we created with the July cleanup.

With Cornell's help, we're looking at new plantings for seasonal color and easy care...and this is the first place we need more help. As tempting as it may be to add your own splash of color, please coordinate first with grounds@uufp.org ...we'd hate to pull out an uncoordinated planting because the space was needed for something else.

Fall is well underway, and with the beauty of the color change comes opportunity for yardwork. We'll schedule another Saturday cleanup in early-December, but we have many small jobs that can be handled by a couple people at a time. We have a few bushes that still need trimming, and the fallen leaves don't walk themselves out of the parking lot. And yes, mowing will continue in December! If you can spare a bit of time, please contact grounds@uufp.org and we'll help you get started.

And to help with the big cleanup, we need people who can help haul...to stay on our "green" path, we want to make sure to get branches and yard waste to area composting facilities (instead of the landfill)! Please let us know if you can assist...again, grounds@uufp.org.

Thanks again for the ability to serve...Together, we can keep this a beautiful place to gather.

Goddess Circle

Dec. 4th: Lucina the Roman Goddess of Light

This is an open discussion circle for both men & women. Goddesses are chosen from various world religions as a starting place for group discussion.

We meet the first Sunday of each month right after the 2nd service (about noon) for potluck, fellowship and fun.

*We will meet in the Caum room through January 2012.

Contact Dawn Hutchinson at dhutchin@cnu.edu with any questions.

Dr. Dawn L. Hutchinson

4th Saturday Women's Drum & Pot Luck

7pm - A casual gathering of women to share food & friendship, & to make music together. Mark your 2011 calendar now! 4th Saturdays!

For more info, call Connie 788-8903

Adult Religious Education NEWS

By Dennis Shaw ARE Chair

There will be a varied schedule, with something for everyone, in Adult RE this month. On December 4th, Bob Smith will provide the exciting conclusion to a six part series on "Jesus before Christianity". That will be followed by a session right on time for the busy holidays- "Relaxing Meditation" with Carole Shaw. Just wear normal clothes- this is a series of relaxing stretches (in chair) and a bit of meditation as well- very soothing...On the 18th, Dennis Shaw will provide an opportunity for feedback on the year's offerings in ARE- and suggestions for the future. On December 25th, there will be no session so that all may enjoy Christmas in their own way.

There will also be no ARE on New Year's Day, but we will resume on January 8th with a session on "Famous UU's" with Wayne Dawkins. Please join us. Adult RE is held in the office building from 9:30 until 10:30, coffee is available and we are open to ALL!

UFP: SEEKING VOLUNTEERS AND DONATIONS FOR THE HOMELESS SHELTER.

It's official! The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula has signed their yearly agreement with LINK of Hampton Roads, Administrator of the PORT Winter Shelter Program.

There's plenty to do from checking clients in, cooking meals, serving meals, dispensing bedding, to an overnight shift and in the morning *reverse the order*.

It costs approximately \$525 for each night we serve, so your help is needed to support this so that we have around \$1,000. Beginning on Sunday DEC 4th, a table for volunteering will be set up at the UFP and for contributing. Gifts will be accepted at the signup table or give to Pam Tenney or Donna Sprock or contribute on-line through VANCO. (Please make checks out to the UFP with notation PORT)

Our first night is Sunday January 8th at the First Baptist Church of Newport News on Warwick Blvd. Our second night will be at Warwick Memorial UMC during the week of March 7th through March 14th. Questions? Please contact through the directory or by [email](mailto:). As always, thank you!

Intergenerational Game Night

Post-holiday blues got you down? Tired of staying in on a cold winter night? Bring the family or a friend and come to the UFP Game Night! What: Game Night Where: UFP Sanctuary When: Saturday, Jan. 7, 2012, at 7:00 PM Who: Anyone who wants to have fun!

Why: Support our Green Sanctuary efforts by turning off the TV and carpooling to the Fellowship for some good "old-fashioned" fun. Bring: a game, a snack to share, and a recycled, wrapped gift for our door prize table (optional), but most important, bring yourself!

Contact person: Bobbie Schilling
[va skibums@hotmail.com](mailto:skibums@hotmail.com) or 249-2586

New UU Orientation Class January 28

Interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism in general or the Unitarian

Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula (UUFPP) in particular? Thinking of joining the UUFPP? Come join us for a fun and informative afternoon on Saturday, January 28, 2012, from noon til 4:00 PM. We will start with a warming lunch of soup at noon and get into our class about 12:45. We will meet in the UUFPP Sanctuary. Childcare will be provided if requested in advance. Let Judy Remsberg, Reverend Andrew Millard, or Bobbie Schilling know if you plan to attend.

Attendance

Date	Total	Visitors
October 23	57/71	3/1
October 30	21/56	1/3
November 6	37/66	2/0
November 13	24/84	0/6
November 20	51/55	N/A

Happy Birthday Wishes!

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Ezra Moore
- 2 Robert Drees
- 3 Amanda Young Hicks
- 5 Anne Cunningham
- 6 Jossilyn Garner
- 11 Allison Millard
- 17 Michelle Joers
- 18 Chloe Briedé
- 21 Elena Dernovish
- 24 Pam Luke
- 24 Laura Kilgore
- 25 Catherine Bond
- 26 Jacquie Ream
- 29 Donovan Garner
- 30 Mary-Elizabeth Cotton
- 30 Carole Todd

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Jesse Todd
- 4 Sharlene Becerra
- 6 Lauren Furey
- 8 Daneene Kelley
- 10 Donna Sprock
- 14 Bob Larkin
- 20 Randy Phillips
- 20 Dave Arnold
- 22 Alice Smith
- 24 Jackie Wilson
- 26 Lochlan Fureymoore
- 27 Mason Moseley
- 27 Lynn Oglesby
- 28 Linnea Harper

Second chance drawing

On the night of the auction Judy Remsberg won the newest Kindle Fire, but says, *"It is a fabulous tool, but I don't want it! I have enough technology in my life as it is."*

So, we're raffling it again. All old tickets are still good and you can buy new tickets for only \$5. Everyone gets a chance.

Tickets on sale every Sunday through December 18 and [on-line](#), with the drawing to be held at the policy board meeting on December 21.

HIV testing at UUF

By Bryan Hess

On Saturday, September 24th we had about a dozen people show up for free, confidential HIV testing. The staffers explained to me that the first time they come to a new site that they typically have a small number of visitors. It's at subsequent events that people start to feel more at ease and are willing to come forward. They would like to come back in a couple of months, and I am happy to coordinate again. Out of respect for people's privacy I don't want to say too much about the specifics of who showed up, but we definitely drew from the surrounding community, which made me glad. I'm always happy when we can do something that has a real benefit to the larger community.

The AIDS fund is the blanket organization that includes TACT (the tidewater AIDS community task force), PACT (for the peninsula), and the Williamsburg AIDS network. TACT was formed in 1983 and has been providing services including testing, counseling, and assistance in finding treatment to the community since then. TACT (for short) works with other organizations including the Virginia department of health to treat the under-served. They are funded by grants and donations, which means that they operate on a shoe string. Federal funding is irregular lately, and the state has also cut back services in many areas. As an example of how constrained things are: They showed up with a grand total of 24 testing kits.

Unlike the health department or many local doctors' offices, TACT uses orasure quick tests. These are a quick swab of the mouth, and results are available in 20 minutes. With a positive, then they refer the client to the health department for a full blood test to confirm. This ability to give a quick preliminary result works well for screening people who do not have health insurance, who are not good about follow-ups, or who might simply be afraid to go back for their results.

IntervUU

Lucy van Tine has provided the answers to our questions this month.

1. When did you join UUF? How did you find out about us? Why or how long have you been a UU?

I joined the fellowship in January of 1991, having been introduced to it the previous summer by my then-fiance Robin. I had heard of UU and always had had the best of intentions to rise up out of bed on Sunday and check out the cool big UU church in downtown Louisville (my hometown) but I had never done so.

2. Tell us something about your background: Where are you from originally? Where did you go to school? Careers? Jobs?

I'm the proud stepmom of Tristan (now grown), and mom of Ada (19) and Skye (15).

I am honored and blessed to have worked with the children of Newport News in the NN Public School system for the past nine years. At present, I'm a reading assistant at Lee Hall Elementary working with first graders.

I was raised a Presbyterian (lots of Scots and Scots-Irish in the family). I went to St. John's College (the Great Books school) in Annapolis, Maryland where I was given a wonderful opportunity to learn (an opportunity not fully taken advantage of,

sadly) and where I experienced a soft crab sandwich for the first time. My love for the Chesapeake Bay was born. (Right now I am reading William Warner's wonderful Pulitzer Prize-winning Beautiful Swimmers -- about the crabs and other critters of our Bay and the traditional life of the watermen and their wives.)

3. Why did you become active with the Green Sanctuary Steering Committee?

I am excited about being on the Green Sanctuary Steering Committee. I love envisioning the fellowship as a place where people are taking on green projects within the church and in partnership with the greater community. Wow! How awesome.

4. What do you like best about the UUFP?

The people. The warmth and energy and open-mindedness of the UUs I met on my first day at the fellowship are what drew me in and are what have kept me coming back year after year. We share a lot of the same values. Almost all my friends are here. I look forward to making many more!

5. When you are not doing church things, what do you like to do with your time? Significant others? Family? Other accomplishments?

I love taking quiet walks in the woods and at Grandview beach with Robin and our dogs and do so regularly. (We are extremely attached to Scruffy and Muffin.) Great husband, good (and, yes, some Great—see above) books, dogs, kids (young and old) and wild places. Life would not be worth it without these five basic things.

6. Anything else you would want us to know about you?

Ask me about veganism or GA (General Assembly) and I am liable to give you an enthusiastic earful. Just warning you!

Submitted by Bobbie Schilling, Chair of Membership Committee

If you know a member of the UUFP who would like to be interviewed for The Flame, please let Bobbie know.

Tret Fure in Concert January, 2012!



Once again (and hoping for good weather unlike last time this was scheduled in late August and Hurricane Irene showed up), Young's Mill Music presents Tret Fure at UUFP on Sunday, January 15, 2012 at 3 pm. Tickets for the concert are only \$15 and are available from www.tomboygirl.com for an additional fee of \$1. Tret Fure will also be performing at both morning services the Sunday of the concert. If you have any questions direct them to Lauren Furey. For additional information about Tret read her bio at:

<http://www.tretfure.com/biography/index.htm>