



The Flame

September
2011

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula



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

September Services

Theme: Covenant

September 4th: "We do not stand; we move!"

Rev Andrew Millard.

Let's celebrate our coming together in community through the uniquely Unitarian Universalist ritual of the Water Communion, recognizing our common humanity as well as the intentions and promises we bring to this religious community. Looking at our living tradition through the symbolism of water, the second service (at 11am) will also include the Dedication of Children.

For the Water Communion, please bring an ounce or two of water from home to the service.

September 11th: "Ten Years Later"

Rev Andrew Millard.

Historians suggest that the events of 1492 ushered in a modern, Eurocentrist age. September 11th 2001 marked a similar watershed in global history, with effects that are still being worked out a decade later. How did you experience that day? How have you been affected in the

ten years since? Using a "large group ministry" format, let's share together what's in our hearts.

Special music will be provided by the ChorUUs.

September 18th: "Who Are We When We Are At Our Best"

Strategic Planning Committee

TBD

September 25th: "Living into Covenant"

Rev Andrew Millard.

From 1648's Cambridge Platform connecting New England's congregational churches to the Principles of today's Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, our faith tradition has responded to the challenge of our interdependence through covenant, not creed. Why is this our preferred response? And what might it imply for our congregations in southeastern Virginia?

Special music will be provided by Ember Swift.



For all that is our life!

Rev. Andrew Clive Millard

“The people’s covenant is a covenant with the essential character and intention of reality. It is not merely a covenant between human beings; it is a covenant between human beings in the face of reality. The fundamental demands and possibilities of reality are not created by humans but exist in its very nature. The understanding of reality is appropriate only when it is seen in terms of an ethical covenant. The covenant is with the creative, sustaining, commanding, judging, transforming power.” — “The Prophetic Covenant and Social Concern”, James Luther Adams

A couple of years ago I visited the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durango, Colorado, where I had been invited to preach. My sermon was entitled “The Dance of Freedom and Responsibility”, referring to the Fourth Principle — “We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote ... a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.” — and the struggles we face in our everyday lives between the “fundamental American ideology of individualism”, as linguist Ronald Scollon named it, and the inescapable inevitability of our interdependence within families, cultures and societies, not to mention the biosphere itself.

During my sermon I used the word “covenant” a few times, and in discussion over coffee following the service I was asked what I meant by it. Now in part because I was nearing the end of my years in theological school but also because I was working with District staff and ministers, I knew that Unitarian Universalism was beginning to rediscover the power of covenant. I was beginning to understand how it was the gift of our religious tradition — indeed, how it is our gift to the world. I was starting to see how covenant connects us in the process of becoming human, recognizing that we may not always get it right and that success comes through faithfulness not fallibility, and how it embraces us, in the words of James Luther Adams, as “the charter and responsibility and joy of worship in the face of death as well as life.”

What came to mind, though, was the Homeowner’s Association where we lived, and how visitors to the

development were greeted first by big letters on a wall ominously spelling out “A Covenant-Controlled Community”, and then by a number of other signs forbidding some activities and threatening others. With this mental image I realized that, in some people’s vocabulary, “covenant” might not be an altogether positive word. (Even those free of the often petty tyranny of an HOA might have heard of it as the name of a crime organization in the television show “Alias” or the mysterious force that wreaks havoc on Jim Carrey’s character in the movie “Yes Man”, neither of which are glowing recommendations!)

So, trying to undo some of the damage done to the idea of covenant, I proceeded to talk to the Durango UUs about it in terms of the promises we make with one another concerning both our individual and collective behavior, promises to bring our best selves to our relationships so that, as UUs, we can be “a church of the open mind, the loving heart and the helping hand.” It has since occurred to me, however, that covenant isn’t just about voluntary promises — and, indeed, the HOA use of the term (and even its part in “Yes Man”) isn’t completely off-base.

For there are “fundamental demands and possibilities of reality” that constrain our behavior as human beings. From the impossibility of exceeding the speed of light — as the bumper sticker says, “186,000 miles/second: It’s not just a good idea; it’s the law!” — to the inadvisability of changing ecosystems in unsustainable ways to the illegality of neglecting turn signals while driving, there are plenty of times we find ourselves part of arrangements not of our own making nor often of our own choosing. Aside from the hard laws of physics or even the soft laws of biology, though, we are nonetheless faced with choices when it comes to human laws, whether the covenants of HOAs or the rules of the road. How do we respond to what we see as injustice, for instance? Bearing responsibility for the character of our own society, how do we speak truth to power? If working within the system fails to bend the arc of the moral universe, when is civil disobedience justified?

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Born into a world we did not create, it is through the choices we make that we help one another become human. What do your choices say about your becoming? ■

RE NEWS

by Joanne Dingus

Fall classes are beginning soon, September 11th. So what can you expect to see in children's religious education this season?

At 9:30-Love Surrounds Us. Children ten and under will enjoy discovering a deeper understanding of our seven Principles. Our Principles encompass all the ingredients of a good and faith-filled life based on equality, freedom, peace, acceptance, truth, care, and love. This program explores all the Principles in the context of Beloved Community of family/home, school, neighborhood. Participants engage in activities that emphasize the love they feel in community.

Middle school and high school students who come at 9:30 are encouraged to attend the morning worship service or the 9:30 Adult Religious Education program.

At 11:00- Spirit Play is a class for 3-6 year olds. In Spirit Play a doorkeeper welcomes the children into class and the Storyteller leads the circle in the story of the day, followed by wondering time. Children determine which activities they want to do after the story and learn to share the intentionally limited supplies.

Love Will Guide Us is offered to 2nd-4th grade students. In this program, participants learn to seek guidance in life through the lens of our Unitarian Universalist Sources, with an emphasis on love. Together we will ask questions such as, "Where did we come from?" "What is our relationship to the Earth and other creatures?" "How can we respond with love, even in bad situations?" "What happens when you die?" Sessions apply wisdom from our Sources to help participants find answers.

In addition: Once a month they will have a lesson on a specific Unitarian Universalist from history.

Riddle and Mystery will be taught to students in

5th-7th grades. Eighth grade students who do not enroll in OWL may opt for this class. The purpose of Riddle and Mystery is to assist students in their own search for understanding. Sessions introduce and process Big Questions such as those echoed in Paul Gauguin's famous triptych: Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going? And, Does God exist? or What happens when you die? Also included are some increasingly Unitarian Universalist questions: Can we ever solve life's mystery? How can I know what to believe? What does Unitarian Universalism mean to me?

Our Whole Lives (7th-10th grade this will be a closed class, only those registered may participate)

OWL, a sexuality education program for youth that models and teaches caring, compassion, respect, and justice. A holistic program that moves beyond the intellect to address the attitudes, values, and feelings that youth have about themselves and the world. OWL helps teach youth about sexuality in healthy, age appropriate ways. OWL also focuses on helping people discern their values and make healthy decisions about their sexuality and is grounded in our Unitarian Universalist faith.

** Parents interested in enrolling their students in OWL must come to the parent orientation meeting. See Joanne for specifics.

Thinking the Web: A Moral Issues Curriculum for High School Youth in grades 10-12. Ninth grade students who opt out of OWL may choose to attend this class. Thinking the Web helps youth discuss complex legal issues that have broad moral implications both historically and in today's society, especially focusing on UU perspectives articulated in resolutions passed at annual General Assemblies.

** Don't forget you can register on our website or at the Fellowship.

http://www.uufp.org/Religious_Education/reg_form.htm http://www.uufp.org/Religious_Education/religious_education_registration.htm

Have you been setting aside your \$2 A Day To GA? A round trip flight to Phoenix, AZ costs \$326. At \$2 dollars a day, you could have that set aside by January!

See you in the RE! ■

Blood Drive

by Nan Procyson

The Tuesday Evening Fellowship Circle will sponsor its annual Blood Drive in memory of 9/11. It will be held on Sept 11 from 2:00-7:00 in the main building. Please see Nan Procyson for an appointment. ■

Adult RE

by Dennis Shaw

Join us in Adult RE on September 4th as we kick off the fall "semester" with a highly-anticipated series titled "Faith and Reason", facilitated by our own Dawn Hutchinson. A professor of Religious Studies at CNU, Dr Hutchinson blends great knowledge with humor and a low key approach in order to explore the subject fully. All sessions in ARE are designed to be interactive, so plenty of time for questions and comments. Faith and Reason will be presented each Sunday in September. Sessions are held from 9:30 until 10:30 Sundays in the administrative building. Come check it out and still get to the second service. ■

Fall UU Orientation Class

by Bobbie Schilling

Fall UU Orientation Class Date: Saturday, Sept. 24, 2011 Time: 8:15 am - Noon Place: Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula Childcare available with advance request. Come join the fun and find out what we at UUFP are all about. Meet new friends and learn more about Unitarian Universalism. We will begin with a breakfast at 8:15 and start the class by 9:00. RSVP to Rev. Andrew Millard or Bobbie Schilling, Membersip Committee Chair (va_skibums@hotmail.com, 249-2586). ■

Save the Date

for the

UUFP Fall 2011 Retreat!

**October 14 - 16th, 2011
Pocahontas State Park**

Attractions include:

Canoeing, yoga, Socrates cafe, camp fires,
intergenerational games, and more!

More information is coming over the next few
weeks, but for now...

Save the Date!

"Living the Welcoming Congregation"

From: Andrew Clive Millard

The work of dismantling oppression is not a one-time project but an on-going commitment to justice. About two-thirds of Unitarian Universalist congregations in the United States are now recognized as Welcoming Congregations, having completed an extensive program covering the areas of education, congregational life and community outreach — but the work of committed inclusion continues!

"Living the Welcoming Congregation" is a new curriculum designed to deepen understandings, create change and make a difference. Developed over seven years by the UUA's Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Concerns, it offers resources on oppression while recognizing that congregations know themselves best, with options for reflecting on personal growth, congregational life and work within the larger community.

UUFU is launching "Living the Welcoming Congregation" this Fall, with an initial set of sessions co-facilitated by Lauren Furey, Rev. Andrew Millard, and others. The sessions will take place in the Office Building on first and third Wednesdays, starting at 7pm and ending by 9pm. They're intended to be pragmatic with a fair amount of fun and creativity thrown in for good measure! Whatever your sexual orientation and gender identity, whether you've experienced oppression or just want to make the world a more compassionate and equitable place, we encourage you to sign-up for this program!

Sept. 7th: Setting the Stage, Building Agreements, Looking Ahead
 Sept. 21st: Values, Assumptions, Interests
 Oct. 5th: Dismantling Heterosexism and Homophobia
 Oct. 19th: Examining Our World, Understanding Ourselves
 Nov. 2nd: Exploring Our History, Imagining Our Future. ■

EXTRA!

EXTRA!

EXTRA!

Recovering the Jewish Jesus

Bishop John Shelby Spong to Speak

John Shelby Spong, an internationally known theologian, author and lecturer will speak at Warhill High School, 4615 Opportunity Way, Williamsburg on Saturday, September 17th at 7:15pm. His lecture is entitled "Recovering the Jewish Jesus".

According to Spong, "The Christian faith was born among synagogue-attending Jews, who heard the Jesus stories in a Jewish context, which means they heard them quite differently from the way we today hear the same stories. I will seek to put the earliest gospels into a Jewish context and invite you to read them with Jewish lenses. They will never be the same!"

Spong was Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark for twenty-four years before his retirement in 2001, and has family roots in North Carolina and Virginia. He is considered the champion of an inclusive faith by many, both inside and outside the Christian church, and is renowned for making contemporary theology accessible to the ordinary lay-person. Spong delivers more than two-hundred public lectures annually to standing-room-only crowds and has authored many books with total sales of more than one million.

The lecture is open and free to the public. It is sponsored by the Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists, with Stonehouse Presbyterian Church (Williamsburg) and the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula assisting. Several of Spong's books will be for sale, including his most recent book "Eternal Life: A New Vision: Beyond Religion, Beyond Theism, Beyond Heaven and Hell". There will be a book-signing opportunity after the lecture.

For additional information, please contact Anne Luchingser (WUU) at (757) 345-3984 or speak to Joanne or Andrew. ■

SECOND SUNDAY LUNCH

Ahh...Japanese cuisine this month! The HIBACHI GRILL and SUSHI BUFFET is our restaurant of choice in September. I have tried it and I like it! A great buffet selection of Chinese, Japanese and American foods. Located: 12745 Jefferson Ave. behind Dunkin Donuts. Come join us for fun, conversation and food. --Sunday, September 11 at 12:30.

50 & Better

On Thursday, September 1st there will be a luncheon get-together at 12:00 noon. Our summer siesta will end and we will welcome anyone who has past their 50th birthday! This gives us opportunities to visit with our peers, enjoy a nice lunch, and get a fresh start by sharing ideas for the fall season's activities.

Please call Esther at 369-1858; yall come!

4th Saturday Women's Drum & Pot Luck

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

For more info, call Connie 788-8903.

Membership

Membership Committee Want to get to know new people? Interested in helping to make others feel at home at the UUFP? Think about helping out through the Membership Committee. Our next monthly meeting will be Tuesday evening, Sept. 20, at 6:30 pm in the Annex. Come join us! Bobbie Schilling, Membership Committee Chair.

Contact person: Bobbie Schilling, Membership Committee Chair, 249-2586, va_skibums@hotmail.com.

Caring Committee

Call Meg Glenn-Albiez, Chairperson at (757) 874-4368 or e-mail caringcommittee@uufp.org.

Share the Good News!

submitted by Bobbie Schilling

The Membership Committee would like to request that UUFP members recycle their UU World magazines by donating them to be put in welcome bags for visitors. Please place your donated World magazines on the shelf in the Art Nook near the podium. Thank you!

The Goddess Circle

The Goddess Circle will feature Yoruban goddesses on September 4th. This is an open discussion women's circle that meets the 1st Sunday of each month.

The format is similar to a fellowship circle. Goddesses are chosen from various world religions as a starting place for group discussion.

This month we will be discussing the Yoruban goddesses Oya, Yemaya and Oshun.

The Goddess Circle will meet September 4 after the 2nd service in the Annex. Try to bring something to share for a light lunch, but if you forget to bring food, please be our guest.

If you have any questions, you may contact Dawn Hutchinson and dhutchin@cnu.edu.

FELLOWSHIP CIRCLES

OUR SMALL GROUP MINISTRY PROGRAM

Our new season of Fellowship Circles begins mid September and will continue for about 18 months. We have found that it takes a group about 6 months to really bond and develop close friendships. An additional year together allows time for deepening these relationships at a "spiritual" level. Meeting twice a month, having confidence that what is spoken in the group is confidential and our process of Compassionate Deep Listening allows for friends to bond in a way not found in other social groups. For the first time we have a Circle meeting Saturday morning. If you're interested in this program contact Bob Smith at bob_m_smith@aol.com / phone: 989-0989.



September Birthdays

If your birthday is this month and we overlooked you, please contact Bobbie Schilling at va_skibums@hotmail.com or 249-2586.

4 Larry Baer

6 Clyde Hunter

6 John Kelly

8 Sara Drees

10 Bob Smith

10 Lin Chambers

11 Rachel Bevins

11 Victoria Schmidt

14 Vittoria Christensen

16 Mary Faia

16 Alexander French

19 Wayne Dawkins

24 Ken Goodrich

25 Aiden Cotter

25 Jack Dougher

26 Meghan Fureymoore

27 Steve Warner

28 Marcy Stutzman

28 Gus Grissom

29 Jane Weaver

30 Xavier Claridge

