



THE CHALICE

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK (UUFV-VA)

P.O. Box 1266
White Stone, VA 22578

August 2014

Fellowship Services

Fellowship services are held each **Sunday at 10:30 A.M.** at 366 James Wharf Road, White Stone, VA.
Meditation is held each Sunday from 9:30 A.M. to 10:00 A.M. in the sanctuary.
All are welcome. Coffee and conversation follow the service.

Sunday Programs

August 3

Sara Mackey: Creating a Niche

Years of research and planning have brought UUFV-VA to the beginning of a transformative adventure — transformative for the fellowship as well as for the community. Join Sara Mackey, and her friend from Family Lifeline in Richmond, as we reflect together on what this new endeavor might hold for us. Sara lives in Richmond and currently works at Union Presbyterian Seminary, where she earned her M.Div. She has served Williamsburg UU as Director of Faith Development, and she has volunteered in many capacities over the years at UU Community Church in Glen Allen.

UU For Kids Topic: Everyday Courage

August 10

Barbara Haynes: The Art of Happiness

What is happiness, anyway? The Dalai Lama says that the purpose of our existence is to seek happiness. We will consider the ideas of philosophers, spiritual leaders, and medical professionals, including the expertise found in

our own fellowship, as we try to understand what this “happiness” thing is all about. Barbara retired from Henrico County schools where she taught economics, business, and history. She presently serves as an economic education consultant for the Virginia Council on Economic Education located at VCU in Richmond.

August 17

Alane Cameron Miles: Spirit of Religious Freedom

Alane will blend the topics of independent publishing and radio into a discussion on public prayer in light of the Supreme Court decision of *Greece v. Galloway*. Alane received a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary and has served the UU Community Church in Glen Allen, VA, and the First UU Church of Richmond, VA. She works in hospice and is a freelance writer, and also serve individuals and groups through rites of passage, ethics consultations, spiritual guidance, and teaching.

August 24

Hank Stupi: Wake Up!

According to Anthony De Mello (Indian Jesuit priest, psychotherapist, spiritual teacher and writer), spirituality means waking up. Most of us are sleepwalking most of the time. Awareness is an eye-opener.

About himself, Hank, the music coordinator for the UUFR-VA, says, "I sleep-walked through most of my life. It wasn't until my cancer diagnosis in 2005 that I retired as an accounting professor and began the hard work of waking up."

August 31

Shirley Kinney: We Got a Dream

Shirley will interview the last of our group of \$100 recipients to find out how they gave away their money. Last November, Bob Weekley and Shirley surprised ten people in the congregation by handing them an envelope with a \$100 bill in it. Their task was to give away that \$100 to make a difference in someone's life. We've heard from seven of the donors so far, who have given their money to The Haven, to the Kids First Foundation, to our UUFR-VA building expansion fund, to one high school boy who needed the correct shoes to be on the track team. Now we'll discover who the other recipients are. What would *you* do with that \$100?

UU for Kids Focus

For the upcoming school year, the UUFR-VA will focus its UU for Kids program on the UU Principles. Each month will take on a new principle. Look for more info in future editions of *The Chalice*.

Phood and Philosophy

Thea Marshall is hosting this month's Phood and Philosophy, our monthly potluck and discussion, on **Saturday, August 9th**, at **5:30 P.M.**

Thea asks that we all "Come and discuss the best year of our life ... so far."

Please contact Thea, so that she can be sure to have enough chairs, etc. Plan to bring a dish and a bottle of wine to share for a lovely evening and lively conversation.

President's Corner

by Dave Dustin

“More Than Numbers: The Way Churches Grow”

That is the title of a book used as the central discussion point at a recent three day meeting I attended in Richmond. This meeting was sponsored by the Southeastern District of UUA and was attended by twenty people from fellowships in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia.

First, let me say how proud I was to be a representative of our fellowship. For a small fellowship ... we're a true powerhouse! Those three days (day and a half, really) were devoted to exploring how fellowships could “grow” in the number of members as well as other interesting and maybe more important ways.

For instance, fellowships can grow spiritually by becoming more mature in their spirituality. One way to accomplish spiritual maturity is for a fellowship to be well-versed in the various transitions people encounter in life, help their members successfully make these transitions, and help them manage life crises (i.e. birth, marriage, death, divorce, adoption, abortion, health issues, etc.).

Congregations could experience incarnational growth (the physical expression of their beliefs). This type of growth typically happens when a fellowship takes their beliefs out of the physical structure and begins working in their community, be it local, national, or worldwide. Our fellowship is an excellent example of incarnational growth. Our niche project has successfully made a giant leap from an internal concept to a physical expression of our beliefs.

A fellowship can also experience organic growth. This type of growth concerns issues like creating an effective organizational structure, and practices and procedures which

support a stable fellowship and allow it to effectively achieve its mission.

Then, of course, there is numerical growth. This type of growth has to take into consideration more than just the addition of new members. This type of growth needs to consider those members that leave the fellowship by moving away or simply dropping out. There are also members that pass away, are born to current members and people who join a fellowship because they have converted to our faith.

Each of the above events creates a different challenge to a fellowship which must have an effective way to handle each of these events.

An interesting point was made by the leaders of our meeting. They said that a survey was taken among many church leaders on the question “How much growth in membership can a fellowship effectively handle in a single year?”

The unexpected answer the participants of this survey came up with was *one*. The reason they gave was that every year a fellowship is likely to lose 10% of its members. This group of survey participants stated that a fellowship should also realize that it can only properly accommodate the entry of that same number as new members, plus *one*.

Let's take our fellowship as an example, we have about 50 members – so that would mean we should be prepared to deal with losing five members and gaining six new members (5 +1) for an effective addition to our fellowship's membership rolls of *one*.

The take away from this is that a fellowship should be cautious about attempting to grow their membership too quickly unless they are sure that they have the proper organizational structure to accommodate a large number of new members. Otherwise, these new members are at risk of not get properly integrated into the fellowship, becoming alienated and disenchanting, and leaving.

At the end of the gathering, I came away feeling very proud of our membership's high energy, our organizational structure, and our community outreach efforts. It took a lot of work by our membership to get to this level of effectiveness and it will continue to take a lot of work to stay that way!

Sincerely,

-*Dave*



Who's Who in UU: Nancy Ruiz Stupi

by **Eve Jordan**

Nancy Ruiz has been with Hank Stupi, our music director, for 36 years! They have been married for 27 of those years and she says they have an awesome marriage. Their closeness is evident when they sit next to each other at our UUFR-VA services. They met at The Library – a disco that just happened to have book shelves. She spotted him across the room and felt compelled to ask him to dance. She had recently completed disco dance lessons and Hank is an excellent

dancer. Bingo! Nancy believes the stars were aligned that night.

Strikingly beautiful, Nancy has a lovely singing voice, and rarely wears regular shoes – preferring sandals, which show off her lovely pedicure. Check out those toes ... always polka dots. Sometimes red with white polka dots, sometimes with silver polka dots, and always interesting. She also has a tattoo on her right inside wrist which says 'Be the Change.' The tattoo has a very interesting border or frame around it, and is quite a conversation starter. She has had mostly positive responses to the tattoo. This indicates Nancy's belief that it is up to us, as individuals, to make the world a better place. She practices this philosophy through kindness, sweet smiles, and making others comfortable. She does not respond well to negativity, believing that, as we are all children of God, no one is entitled to judge another. Non-judgment is an opportunity for spiritual growth.

On October 9, 2011, she and Hank were on the Piankatank Bridge, and were hit by a car coming head on. Since then, she has experienced pain every day, and has been (for the most part) able to surrender to it and not let the pain be the sum total of her life. Spirituality plays a big part in accepting that she will wake up with a headache and go to bed with one. She will not let it define her. She has found that the tumeric in mustard actually helps relieve some of her pain, so she eats lots of yellow mustard! Also in her arsenal of pain management tools is Dixie Dew Drops, naturally made from hemp oil, and available on line.

Nancy was born in Okinawa, Japan, to a first generation Mexican-American father and an Anglo-American mother. Dad was an Air Force colonel, a pilot and a meteorologist. When she was three years old, the family moved back to the United States, to Massachusetts. When the family moved to Laurel, Md., for her sixth grade year, she was

as tall as she is now. She also came in with a Massachusetts accent, and stuck out like a sore thumb. Just the thought of what she went through is painful! She graduated from high school at 16, went to work and began college.

As she says, Hank and Nancy have an awesome marriage, despite their differences. They have an abiding acceptance of who they are and, although they are built very differently, there is a deep level of sameness that has been the bedrock of their relationship. So it was not really a surprise to the congregation when Nancy became a member at the UUFR-VA ... some of us thought it was devotion to Hank, but it ran much deeper. Nancy and Hank take classes at her old church, going every Thursday night for The Explorers, a group of like-minded people who do not accept traditional church dogma and are studying other ways of looking at traditional religion. They have studied Joseph Campbell's *Power of Myth* as well as religions of the world. This is an intellectual and spiritual journey that they share.

As a frequent visitor to the UUFR-VA, Nancy was familiar with the congregation, and was a lovely addition. When she officially joined, she became a service leader, and found that this is the perfect function for her. She is not interested in carrying the whole service but is indeed comfortable introducing the service. She considers this to be a big part of her goal to 'Be the Change.' We love having her with us and, clearly, Hank does too. She is a charmer!

Summer Book Extravaganza!

by Shirley Kinney

Our UUFR-VA Annual Book Sale begins August 3rd and continues for three weeks, in our foyer. Hardcover books are \$1.00 and paperbacks and videos are fifty cents. We have lots and lots of good summer reads.

Some books are in like-new condition, so they would make great gifts. All proceeds go to our Kids First program.

Kids First Update for August

by Tom Kinney

Congratulations! Together, we reached the July 1st \$100,000 goal in commitments from the community and ourselves. The old music room at the Lancaster Primary School (LPS) is now being prepared for twelve at-risk three year olds – the second early preschool class. The *Kids First* team is pursuing the additional \$125,000 from foundations and businesses, the balance of the three years of the seed money bridge to LPS – easing the program into the annual school budget.

LPS has welcomed *Kids First* ideas for nutritional and other hands-on support of the early preschool kids and their families. Possibilities include nutritious afternoon snacks, group family dinners (both healthy and informational,) reading time, and class and family photographs focused upon strengthening the child-parent-teacher relationship. Another idea is gift baskets for at-risk new mothers with important supplies and information to get the newborn off on a nutritious path.

This is a call to arms (actually hands). If you have been receiving the periodic updates on our Niche progress, you are already a part of the Niche team ready to bring your hands to this *Faith Into Action* program. If you have not been in the info loop and would like to be a part of UUFR-VA's *Kids First* program, please visit www.kidsfirstfoundation.us, to contact us. Or, just tell Dave Dustin, Mike Knez, or me that you wish to put your *Faith Into Action* on behalf of these children.

Which county should be next for early preschool is now being researched.



UUFR-VA Has a Partner Church in England

by Bob Weekley

Have you wondered about people in other places that share your outlook and might be on a similar spiritual path? Our fellowship now has spiritual 'brothers and sisters' who are members of Walmsey Unitarian Chapel in Egerton, Bolton, England. The congregation dates from before 1672, and the Walmsey Unitarian Chapel itself is a beautiful small stone church in the northern English countryside built in 1713.

The Walmsey membership is about the same size as our own, and their Sunday attendance is about like ours. Like us, they look forward to attracting more young families and children.

For an introduction to the Walmsey Unitarian Chapel, you can take a look at their website: <http://www.ukunitarians.org.uk/walmsey>. There, you can see some photos and read more about their history, activities, and congregation.

On July 27th, Rev. Helen Mills, the minister at Walmsey, held a Sunday service to introduce the Walmsey congregation to this new partnership with the Rappahannock UUs. I have sent Rev. Helen some background on our area, how we got started and have grown, and what our own fellowship means to us. They have looked at our web pages to learn

more about us. Like us, they will be exploring ideas about how our partnership can lead to personal and spiritual growth. Our own fellowship will hold a similar service on December 28th.

This partnership came about by the efforts of the UU Partnership Council that has established similar partnerships between UU churches in the USA and Unitarians around the globe. After this partnership was proposed to us by UUPC, our Board of Stewards unanimously voted approval. I think we have been matched with a church that will be mutually rewarding to both congregations over many years.

Rev. Mills wrote the following to me recently: "I have looked at quite a bit of your website material (and with plenty more to look at yet); it's very interesting and informative. At Walmsey chapel, many are into meetings where food is involved so your 'phood and philosophy' made me smile. It's amazing that you've built/set up your fellowship yourselves and it looks beautiful. At Walmsey, we are close to towns and busyness yet have some lovely gentle countryside too and the chapel is in a lovely position surrounded by natural beauty." Sounds wonderful!

What could this partnership hold in store for us? I can visualize we might send each other some personal stories about who we are individually and begin to know each other. For their special service on July 27th, they introduced some hymns from our hymnal. I could even see where we might individually, or as small groups, hold exchange visits. Shirley Kinney said, "Let's hold our congregational retreat there!" What are your ideas? Please let me know.

Annual Picnic

by Tom Kinney

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, September 21st**, for our Annual Picnic by the River. Roger and Liz Failmezger have once again offered their lovely home on the Rappahannock as a place for us to gather after the Sunday service for good food and warm fellowship. The September issue of *The Chalice* will include time and directions.

River Readers

The book discussion group meets on the **fourth Monday** of each month at **2:30 P.M.** at the Lancaster Community Library. Everyone is welcome. Please read the book and join us. The upcoming selections are:

August 25: *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes

September 22: *Nobody's Fool* by Richard Russo

If you have a recommendation for a noteworthy book to discuss, please contact Elaine Weekley.

Seriously: Save the Dates!

Sunday, October 12 – Tuesday, October 14
2014 All Congregation Fall Retreat
Stratford Hall

About one hour from Whitestone

We have reserved the Cheek House with 15 rooms (eight with kings and seven with twins) at a rate of \$133 per night per room. The Cheek house also has a small kitchen, large living room, and a beautiful deck overlooking the woods below. The Stratford Hall Manor House is a short walk as is the dining room/restaurant. Accommodations include a free continental breakfast, a tour of the Manor House, and free access to the nature trails down to the cliffs on the Potomac River. Limited scholarship funds may be available.

Additional information will be published in future issues of the Chalice.

Please go to www.stratfordhall.org to explore and learn more about the “Home of the Lees of Virginia” and the birthplace of Robert E. Lee.

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