



THE CHALICE

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK (UUFRA-VA)

P.O. Box 1266
White Stone, VA 22578

July 2015

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

July 5

Hank Stupi: The Gifts of Imperfection

Research professor and author, Brene Brown writes, "Let go of who you think you're supposed to be and embrace who you are." Hank will discuss if it is possible to view our flaws as our greatest gifts.

A member of the fellowship since 2009, Hank is the music coordinator for Sunday services at the UUFRA-VA. He worked as a CPA for 10 years before spending three years as an ASE certified automotive technician. After a back injury, he became a professor at Montgomery College in Rockville, Maryland, where he taught accounting (and occasionally automotive technology) for 23 years. Hank retired and moved to Middlesex County with his wife, Nancy, in 2006.

UU For Kids Education Program:
"Celebrating Independence"

July 12

Celane Roden: The Challenges and Gifts of Social Transformation

Celane will explore issues of social justice and disability, and thirty years of hard-fought battles leading to a shining example of national social transformation in disability

policy and practice. Central to the talk are the visionaries with the courage to stay the course, fighting from their own experience with disability and commitment to change.

Celane retired with her husband Hank to Middlesex County in 2008. Her 30 year career was in federal public policy, first as legislative staffer in the U.S. House of Representatives, followed by years in public policy advocacy for disability related issues.

July 21

Eddie Correia: The Role of Prayer

What is prayer? Does it change things? The answers depend on our understanding of God and the nature of the universe.

Eddie is a Washington, D.C. attorney and a university professor. He has worked for the Senate Judiciary Committee and served in the Clinton Administration as Special Counsel to the President for Civil Rights in the White House. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. He is the author of *The Uncertain Believer: Reconciling God And Science*, *Teaching Your Child About God In A Scientific World*, and two novels, *The George Washington Constellation* and *Elysia*.

July 28

**Rev. Laura Jackson: Christ
Consciousness**

What is Christ Consciousness? The topic is vast and holds different meanings for people. Jesus is most commonly associated with Christ Consciousness, yet it's found many places, including Buddha's writings and Edgar Cayce's Readings.

Rev. Laura will share what the evolving term "Christ Consciousness" means in a whole new era on our planet and how it may be unfolding in your life. Rev. Laura Jackson is a speaker, author, coach and musician. While Laura is emerging as a nationally-recognized speaker on Earth Changes, she speaks on many topics, bridging Edgar Cayce's readings and ancient prophecies with modern science and quantum physics.

President's Corner

by **Dave Dustin**

Happy 4th of July!

Our nation's independence from England is one of the most important events in our country's history. Of course, a Declaration of Independence does not an independent country make! Our new "nation" had a war to fight before it could claim that independence, and that didn't happen until the end of the Revolutionary War – on September 3, 1783. But don't forget the war of 1812. Many think the war of 1812 was really the last battle our country had to fight to finally, once and for all, win our complete independence from England.

In between the signing the Declaration of Independence and the winning of said independence, Thomas Jefferson, in 1777, wrote the first draft of his freedom of religion bill.

Thomas Jefferson felt the need to write this bill because, at the time, people were being

forced to pay taxes to support the Church of England, the "official" religion of England ... to this day.

Jefferson felt that people should not be taxed to support *any* church. So, with the support of Virginia's Quakers, Presbyterians, and Baptists, Jefferson worked to get rid of laws that kept the Church of England in power.

The "Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom" declared that "no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever." The bill was introduced to the Virginia Assembly in 1779 but did not pass. However, the process brought together two likeminded people, and neighbors, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

Jefferson became the US foreign minister to France and left for Paris in 1784. James Madison was left to present the bill to the Virginia Assembly in 1786, with minor modifications, and it passed.

Virginia became the first state to officially separate church and state. Other states then used Thomas Jefferson's bill as a model for similar bills in their own states. It was also used as a model for the religious language in the Bill of Rights: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

I believe we owe Thomas Jefferson (father of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom) and James Madison (father of our Constitution,) a great deal of gratitude for having the forethought to enshrine these ideals in our state and national documents. In their time, as in ours, it seems there are always groups of people that would love to enshrine their personal religious beliefs in our state and national documents.

As you celebrate July 4th, this year, please take a few minutes to think of the contributions Thomas Jefferson and James Madison made

to create this unique country we have the privilege to live in today, and for the freedom we enjoy to practice our own particular religion.

-Dave

Phood and Philosophy

Phood and Philosophy, our monthly get-together for shared food and philosophical musings, is madly in search of hosts and venues. The event's always a good time. Keep an eye on this spot next month's doings. Your patience is most appreciated.

A Niche Year To Remember

by Kids First Team

On June 1 of last year, the fellowship voted overwhelmingly that our *Faith In Action* Niche in our four-county community would be breaking the cycle of poverty through high quality early preschool for at-risk 3-year-old children with a parallel nutrition program for those children and younger siblings. Our belief at the time was that we would organize ourselves to begin the preschool in September of 2015, essentially the end of *next* month.

Three days later, we learned a group of Lancaster County children were going to fall through the cracks if we didn't act immediately. And act, the fellowship did!

In this last year, you and your fellow members and supporters furnished a classroom, funded a ECE certified teacher and an instructional assistant, supplied 30 weeks of Wednesday nutritional snacks with a big helping of love for the little tykes and a series of Parent-Child dinners focused upon nutrition and issues surrounding a healthy family. And you fund-raised over \$230,000 to support this effort – including the next two years as well. And the help keeps coming. Calvary Baptist Church joined us in supporting the late April Parent-Child dinner. ,Plus we recently received a donation of \$2,000 from Dominion Power

that helped us fund a summer school to minimize the back-sliding that is typical during vacation. What's next? Keep recruiting more churches and volunteers to spread the impact as well as the load.

Building upon that success, you responded to a February request from Northumberland County School Board to share the concept for their consideration. On September 14, they will decide if they wish our fellowship to repeat this Kids First program for the at-risk 3-year-olds in their county.

The children's test scores are just now coming in, confirming that it works!

Why Do We Need Church?

by Bob Weekley

Excerpt from message of Rev. Ken Hurto, UUA Southern Region Congressional Life Staff

The undeniable decline in church participation rates across all faith communions — with men withdrawing even more so. The fastest growing “religious” group is called “The Nones” by the researchers. Church is becoming an also-ran among the competition for people’s time and devotion.

Some truly wonder: Does anyone have interest in what we have to offer?

Well, yes. There is a great spiritual hunger across the land. People seek to understand the huge cultural shifts and the increasing polarization of our politics, the coarsening of entertainment, and the ugly resurgence of racism, replete with its violence and dehumanization. There is ministry here — a place for a safe, inclusive, respectful community conversation, learning, and service. There is a ministry for these days: to bring more hope, more joy, more love, more courage, and more truth to the world.

I thought this might be worth sharing.

Mysterious Dialogue

by Pirkko Graves

In 1985, my husband Larry and I were touring in Chiapas, Mexico, to learn more about the Maya Indians, their culture and traditions. We attended the colorful market of San Cristobal, where indigenous foods and handicrafts abounded. In its vicinity was the small Mayan village of San Juan Chamula, known for its unique ceremonies of worship and traditional medicine. One afternoon we stopped in Chamula, but finding no local guides we sat down on a bench in the village square. The place was unusually barren, with no greenery or flowering plants. Yet the view over the mountains of Chiapas was enthralling.

An old man appeared, walking toward us. Although other benches were available, he sat down next to Larry. His clothing was a typical Maya outfit: a black tunic belted around his waist, and his profile confirmed his indigenous origin. He stayed silent for a while, looking straight ahead, then began to talk. Although he did not turn his head, he directed his talk to us. He pointed to a large building which I realized was a hospital.

“My old woman is out there. She’s sick. They operate her to-morrow. What will happen?”

Larry and I murmured sympathetically, “So sorry. It will be all right.”

Did he understand our words? Yet our voices showed our caring, and he continued telling us about their long walk from the village, which they had left as the sun rose, his wife so very tired and sick. What will happen to her, he wanted to know.

He became silent. Larry offered him a cigarette, and after smoking, it he got up. Shuffling a worried old man’s walk, he left us.

Larry and I stayed on the bench for a while. The strangeness of the event hit us. We had conversed with a Maya Indian who spoke his

native language, which neither of us knew. We compared our understanding of the Indian’s story, and our reports were identical. How were we able to capture his message, the way we did? In particular Larry, a hard-nosed, fact-bound scientist, was baffled.

I still don’t know how it happened: Two gringos and a Maya Indian in a sincere exchange with each other, breaching the conventional use of a shared language. How were we able to hear his story and believe we heard it right? Had a miracle occurred in Chamula, the center of old Mayan traditions?

Curl Up with a Good Book (or Two or Fifty)

by Shirley Kinney

Need a few good books to read to while away the hours on the beach or on the porch this summer? We have just what you need. Our annual UUFR-VA Book Sale begins August 9th, in our foyer. You can take home some great reads for just fifty cents or a dollar. The sale will last until the end of August, so you’ll have plenty of time to buy an armload of books. All money goes to our UUFR-VA Kids First Foundation to help support our classes for at-risk three-year-olds in our area. Any books not sold will be donated to the Northumberland Library’s Ye Olde Book Shoppe in Heathsville.

Time for a UUFR-VA Get-Away

by Shirley, Thea, Pirkko, Bill

Mark your calendars for a UUFR-VA Adult Retreat at Stratford Hall. The date is Columbus Day weekend, checking in on Sunday afternoon, October 11th, leaving Tuesday afternoon, October 13th. We are back at restful Stratford Hall, by popular request, about an hour’s drive from UUFR-VA. It’s a quiet, beautiful rural setting, and comfortable rooms. We have several varied activities planned for you, with lots of

discussion, a little creative hands-on, quiet walks on your own, looking for sharks teeth, and even some dramatic events to plunge yourself into. This may well be our best retreat ever!

Details on signing up and reserving your room and cost will be coming soon. Just make sure you circle the date on your calendars now!

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:

July 27: *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr

August 24: *The Children Act* by Ian McEwan

September 28: *Florence Gordon* by Brian Morton

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

From Your UUFR-VA Library

“Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics”

Review by Tom Kinney

Author Ross Douthat reviews the cycles of orthodox religion in the U.S. in relation to the high and low points of society. His Thomas Jefferson 1822 quote, “that there is not a young man now living who will not die a Unitarian” illustrates the challenge of predicting those cycles. The book identifies the 1950’s peak in mainstream religious participation paralleling strong economic growth and a general tenor of optimism and cooperation.

That rise turned to a precipitous reversal of the trend in the 60’s and 70’s, more spiritual in some ways but less tradition. Some churches “modernized” toward accommodation and innovation, a feel good focus with near abandonment of traditional church social discipline. He notes that the shift of the Catholic Church and the rise of the Evangelicals and mega-churches correlates with attitudes of general choosing of sides in society, a polarization that moved into the political arena as well. Included are the *God Within* movement and the scholarly research that is revising the New Testament. Douthat offers well annotated quotations to guide the reader to additional sources with the key points balanced, while exercising his right as author to draw his own conclusions and recommended path forward. He emphasizes the magnitude of societal change with:

- In 1940, 45% married the first person they slept with vs. 9% in 1965.
- Deeds replace Dogma – not thought and words, but what people did.
- People that believe competitiveness is foreign to love, meekness, and peace have no idea how hard it is to be meeker than one’s neighbor.
- The U.S. keeps taxes low while schools and the poor struggle, yet Americans give more to charity as a per cent of GDP, double the 2nd place U.K. The religious give four times what secular citizens donate.
- The Prosperity Gospel makes the divine sound like your broker; the *God Within* theology makes the divine sound like your shrink.
- America was founded by deists who found the idea of an ultimate mystery offensive.
- Catholics have more abortions than the national average. African-Americans and Hispanics, the most religious demographic, top the rate of out-of-wedlock births.

One may take issue with his presentation and various points, but likely not escape being encouraged to think about the substance and the future.

Stop and browse the UUFRR-VA library. You will find fascinating books and videos on the world's major religions, individuals that had major impact upon society, break-through UU

congregations, and many items to enhance your life and living. Let Chris Gimpel know of any books or DVD's that you feel would make an ideal addition to our collection. And write a review to share.

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Newsletter

Deadline for articles: 20th of the month
Bob Prescott, Editor (editor@uufrappahannock.org)