

THE THRESHOLD



Towson Unitarian Universalist Church

A Welcoming Congregation

www.towsonuuc.org

Lutherville, Maryland

February 2012

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Upcoming Services

February 5, 2012: Services at 9:30 and 11:15 AM

Annual Youth Group Service

One of the more interesting and illuminating services TUUC presents each year is the one developed and presented by the high schoolers of TUUC's Youth Group. Each year, they offer a new perspective on timely issues relevant to their perception of the world and their place in it. This year, the Youth Group has chosen to use the music of the Beatles as a prism through which they'll examine what matters most to them at this place and time in their lives. They'll give us a glimpse of the world through their eyes and share their commitment to make it a more just and peaceful place. Come see tomorrow's leaders today, truly in the process of Becoming, and share in their hope for the future.

February 12, 2012: Services at 9:30 and 11:15 AM

TUUC Giants: Past and Future

Next week the nation celebrates Presidents' Day. How appropriate then to review some of TUUC's past presidents (giants if you will) and their contributions and what lessons we can learn for our future success. Service will be led by Paul Konka, Finance Council Head and Chair of the Operations Team.

February 19, 2012: Services at 9:30 and 11:15 AM

Imbolc Service

What will you grow? The beginning of February is the half-way point between the winter solstice and the vernal equinox. Known, among other names, as Imbolc and Brigit's Day by Pagans, and as Candlemas or the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin Mary by Christians, the day celebrates the growing light of the Sun as it begins to warm and purify the Earth. Imbolc is all about new beginnings. In Western Europe, Imbolc was the time to start preparing the fields for the first planting, and rituals included blessing the plows, crop seeds saved from the last harvest, and newborn or pregnant animals. Hearths were swept clean and relit with fresh wood. Although today we are less agriculturally-focused, we can still honor the maiden time of the year by making a mental spring cleaning and taking stock of our lives in preparation for planting the seeds of new ideas and opportunities for personal growth. What will you grow in 2012? TUUC Lay Worship Associate Karyn Marsh will facilitate this service.

February 26, 2012: Services at 9:30 and 11:15 AM

Guest Minister Rev. Abhi Janamanchi

This morning's service will be led by guest minister Rev. Abhi Janamanchi, a dynamic UUA minister from Clearwater, Florida who has graciously offered to visit and lead worship at TUUC this week.

Words, Words, Words

Mickie Grover, church administrator



People take different roads seeking fulfillment and happiness.
Just because they're not on your road doesn't mean they've gotten lost.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Optimism is a strategy for making a better future.
Because unless you believe that the future can be better,
you are unlikely to step up and take responsibility for making it so.

Noam Chomsky

January is already flying past. I missed last month's deadline with a nasty cold – I actually took two sick days! And I slept and slept! Today the wind blows and winter seems to be on the way. My friends worry about climate change and fret at the warm winter we've had. I agree and at the same time I feel delighted that on New Year's Eve it was warm and pleasant when Kathryn and I went for a long walk on the NCR trail in Monkton. I delighted to go walking with a friend and her Labrador at Stony Run last weekend. I delight in the lengthening days which one can do with no guilt – no connection to climate change.

This has been a church year in which we have lost several members, including Jay Cherry, Lu Fisher, and Alex Kaufman. In January Rev. Clare returned to conduct a memorial service for Connie Griffin. Dr. Griffin was mourned by many friends, colleagues and family members. It was a beautiful expression of a life well-lived.

As the Church Administrator, what it brought home to me was the issue of space. I had asked the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints if we could use their parking lot for the overflow and as usual the bishop was gracious. The family had arranged to shuttle people from the lot. We needed it. Our lot was so full people were parked in and others parked on Dulaney Valley Road – not recommended.

In addition, adults cannot use the bathrooms set aside for Auburn School during school hours. We had three hundred people here – and only the single-stall in the office and a single stall, handicapped-access bathroom next to the kitchen area downstairs. I was accused of being "absurd" by one person I chased, politely if I do say so myself, out of the women's room. Glad to know the law is absurd on this issue as on many others.

The point, however, is that we are crunched for space and many members hope, in effect, that we become more so. That is, the question of growth is always being mooted at churches. Growth in and of itself is not necessarily a good. Growth must be in aid of something. If TUUC were larger what projects could we take on? And some members oppose growth – we are "just right" now. They may be right. Both positions are right – different roads.

If, however, TUUC wants to grow, or just grows without our paying attention, the congregation needs to consider the ramifications. We have an aging infrastructure and with growth we will need more repairs, more updates, and more space – for parking, for people, for whatever we want to fill our lives and our building and our land with.

Unitarian Universalism has always been a religion of optimism. Even as we struggle with the day-to-day issues of running a church and trying to embody TUUC's mission, even as we struggle with the question, and reality, of growth, we need to embrace optimism about our future as TUUC and about the future of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

And if TUUC decides against growth, decides to take another path, – even should you, the members, decide to emulate some churches who have stripped themselves of their buildings to concentrate on their mission – remember to do so with optimism, “Because unless you believe that the future can be better, you are unlikely to step up and take responsibility for making it so.”

Make the future better by taking responsibility now and remember when we quarrel about ways and means and paths to the future (as we will), that “just because [other TUUCers are] not on your road doesn't mean they've gotten lost.”

To quote an old sixties favorite, “keep on truckin”.

Youth Religious Exploration

By Sue Royer, YRE committee chair

Joyce Duncan, TUUC's Credentialed Religious Educator, is doing well after her surgery. She felt well enough to attend the Christmas Eve service at TUUC! At press time, we don't know when Joyce will be returning to work, but we look forward to seeing her!

Parents of children in the YRE program have seen some new faces in the classroom in January. Please take the time to introduce yourself to your child's RE teacher(s). RE Teachers for the Winter/Spring semester attended orientation and planning on January 14 and overlapped in the classroom with the Fall semester teachers on January 15 and 22. Thank you to all who taught in the Fall and to those who are teaching now through the end of the church year. Some have volunteered to teach all year – thank you!

Wendy Werkheiser and members of the Youth Religious Exploration committee led the teacher orientation and planning on January 14. Teachers had the opportunity to get copies of their curricula, learn the logistics of how we share our classroom and storage space with the Auburn School, and plan their teaching schedules. On February 12, we will be assembling pans of lasagna during class. If you have a child in YRE, please look for a flyer and the weekly parent email for details. All church members are encouraged to take home a pan of lasagna for baking (instructions are included), freezing and returning the following week to TUUC. The lasagna will be donated to Our Daily Bread to feed the hungry.

We remind families that parents or guardians of children in 4th grade and younger need to come to the classroom at 10:45 (early service) or 12:30 (late service) to personally pick up your child. Please take a moment to get feedback from your child's teacher on what was covered in class that day. Parents of students in 5th grade or older are also encouraged to stop by their child's classroom to say hello to the teachers. Parents of children in diapers or who need assistance with toileting should leave their cell phone number with the nursery staff/teacher and keep your phone on vibrate. You will be contacted (by text or in person) if your child needs a diaper change or needs to use the bathroom.

The YRE Committee will meet on Tuesday, February 7 (one week early due to Valentine's Day) at 7:30 PM, downstairs. Please join us! If you would like to get involved as a teacher, substitute, YRE greeter or to help with a social action project, please contact any member of the YRE Committee: Ginger Ashley, Joyce Duncan, Donna Fox, Annette Hottenstein, Collen Knipp, Larry Magder, Sheila Malenski, Sue Royer, and Wendy Werkheiser.

Interested in Adult Religious Exploration?

If you are, then I'd like to talk to you! Right now, TUUC doesn't have an Adult Religious Exploration Committee. I'm trying to fill that gap because I'm the Religious Exploration Council Head. but I can't do this on my own. At a minimum, this committee would help people who wish to teach adult classes get organized, scheduled, and help with advertising. If the group is enthusiastic, the work can include looking for people to teach new classes, asking people what kind of classes they're interested in, and looking at UUA curriculum for classes our members would find interesting. If you are interested, please contact Robin Sinn, RE Council Head (info in directory).



Notes



Joseph Gascho, music director



Feb 5: Musicians from the TUUC Youth Group

Feb 12: The TUUC Choir and Joseph Gascho, piano

Feb 19: Marianna Mujica, Spice Kleinmann and friends

Feb 26: The TUUC Choir and Joseph Gascho, piano

A week or so ago, the great gospel singer Lea Gilmore wrote me to ask if the TUUC choir would help sing backup for her at an upcoming concert on February 3 for the Common Ground on the Hill series. Of course, I was incredibly honored she asked us, and said yes right away. The concert is at 8 PM on Friday, February 3 at Brown Memorial Woodbrook Presbyterian Church at 6200 North Charles Street. I hope you'll come.

As I write this, I'm thinking about last night's great concert at TUUC's Saturday Night Concert Series where the Bald Mountain Band opened up for the Hillbilly Gypsies. Tish Michel says it was the best turnout ever, and I was happy to play a few tunes with Bald Mountain and enjoy some great bluegrass from the Hillbilly Gypsies.

Music in January has been really enjoyable. Our singing the six sources services in early January was a wonderful chance to learn about the six sources of UU faith in music, and I felt it was a great experience of singing together. The drumming of Andy Peterson, Al Peabody and Al Muehlberger was a great addition, as was the song leading of Spice Kleinmann. I also had a great time working with Wendy Werkheiser as we revised and fleshed out a service that I had initially planned with Rev. Clare and RE director Joyce Duncan back in the fall.

February promises some great music at TUUC, and I invite your participation in our music program. It's been great to have some new members in choir, and to have more interest in choir and our music program.

Outside of TUUC, I'm looking forward to playing Bach cantatas in Princeton later this month, and pianist Chungwon Chung will be performing in my place here. My solo recording is nearly finished, and I have some upcoming recitals in DC in February. Elena and I are both playing concertos with the Washington Bach Consort in March, and I also have some great concerts in DC, featuring new works especially written for my ensemble, Harmonious Blacksmith.

House and Grounds

By Leslie Mandell

Nothing to report concerning the grounds around the church. Winter continues to be mild, good news, and the trees and plants are sleeping. Here's hoping that we will continue to have a temperate and benign January and February. There is however news about the downstairs of the church in that walls have been put up (yea!) which gives members who are holding meetings more privacy and quiet. It really looks good and apparently the construction guys have done a good job. That's it for now. Stay warm!

Upcoming Events

Evening Book Group: Wednesday, February 1, 7:30 PM

We'll meet to discuss *NEMESIS* by Philip Roth. Set in Newark during a polio outbreak, it "explores beautifully how people cope with loss, and how people react in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles. It also delves into the decisions we make, the motivations behind those decisions, and the repercussions that only become clear in hindsight" according to one reviewer. Contact Carel Hedlund (info in directory) if any questions.

The Greater Good: Friday, February 10, 7 PM

The award-winning documentary *The Greater Good* will be screened at TUUC on Friday, February 10, 7 to 9 PM. The documentary explores both sides of the childhood vaccine controversy. It was a winner of the Cinematic Vision Award and the Koroni Award in 2011.

The screening is being held in conjunction with an Arts and Healing Exhibition at the Towson University Art Gallery in the Towson Commons at York Road and Pennsylvania Avenue. The exhibition is sponsored by the Towson Arts Collective. The show runs through February 24. Gallery hours are noon to 5 PM, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and by appointment, 410-916-6340.

Chalice Messengers Concert: Saturday, February 11

Potluck at 6:30 PM, Concert at 7 PM

Come hear the swinging and grooving sounds of the Chalice Messengers jazz sextet. The Messengers were founded in 2007 as part of the Jazz Program at the UU Congregation of Columbia (MD). Their repertoire includes jazz classics from the swing and bebop era, originals, and selections from the Great American Songbook. And be sure to bring your dancing shoes! Personnel are: Tom Benjamin (tenor sax and clarinet), Al McLaine (bass), Mark McPherson (drums), Tom Monroe (piano, tenor sax and flute), John Shea (alto sax) and Jim Stivers (guitar), along with some special guest vocalists.

Cover: \$20 DOOR or ADVANCE BY February 6 \$15.00 adults/\$10 students/\$40 family. Please bring something to share. Potluck starts at 6:30 PM and the show runs from 7 to 10 PM. Call TUUC at 410-825-6045 for additional information or contact Tish Michel at concerts@towsonuuc.org.

ARE: The Power of Myth, 5 Sessions, Feb 15–Mar 14

An Adult Religious Exploration program, The Power of Myth, will be held on five consecutive Wednesday evenings, February 15 to March 14, from 7:30 to 9 PM at TUUC. Reacquaint yourself or introduce yourself to the life-transforming experience of Joseph Campbell's interview with Bill Moyers in the **Power of Myth** Series. Classes will watch major episodes of the series, have probing discussions of what was watched, discuss the relevance of mythology to our culture, introduce personal mythological observations, and where appropriate, apply these observations to our spiritual lives.

The course will be led by Michael Magrogan. Class will be limited to 10 participants. If interested, please send an email to churchoffice@towsonuuc.org.

Gallery Unicorn: Anne Griffith, February 19 to March 25

Gallery Unicorn is pleased to present "In the Time of the Ice Moon" by Anne Griffith, February 19 to March 25. "A solo show of new paintings on themes of crooked trees, snow, night and fog – touching on the moods and meanings of the season, mystery, and the strange meandering roads our lives take to their conclusion." On February 19 at 1:30 PM, join Anne for the "Artist Talks", an insight to the artist's thoughts and intentions. A reception will immediately follow.

Aging Together: Tuesday, February 21, 1 PM

We will meet at the church. The topic of discussion will be books or other writing that have influenced our lives. All are welcome. If you have questions or suggestions, call Joan Kolobielski (info in directory).

Blood Drive: Saturday, March 17

Working with the American Red Cross, we've scheduled Saturday, March 17, 2012 – St. Patrick's Day – for the next TUUC Blood Drive. Our last four blood drives were very successful, with more than 100 total participants, and it would be great to continue to have such good participation from our members and friends. With March 17 coming up fast, please check your calendar and consider donating blood at our St. Patrick's Day drive. Since the Red Cross requires 56 days between donations, potential donors should be eligible to donate on March 17 if their previous donation was before January 20. We'll soon set up our appointment sign-up sheet in the church lobby, so please look for it and stop by and pick an appointment time between 9:00 AM and 3 PM. Please contact Barry Marsh (info in directory) if you'd like to help organize the drive. "Give the Gift of Life – Give Blood!"

Outreach Council

ACTC Report

Activity is still high at the Assistance Center for Towson Churches (ACTC). TUUC has become a big food donor. Unless you work at the Center assisting clients or restocking the shelves you cannot imagine how much help is given. And the request for homeless lunch bags continues to be high. We can be proud of TUUC's continuing help. The basket at church is overflowing on most Sundays and a group of dedicated volunteers donate the food and help pack twelve homeless bags each month.

— Sue Shankroff

April 14 Concert: Spice & Friends

Mark your calendars now for Saturday, April 14, when Spice & Friends will present a very special concert to raise funds for TUUC's Social Action Committee. The concert will feature a wonderful group called Beggar's Ride <http://www.beggarsride.com/> a Baltimore-based duo of women who write poignant fabulous songs; another superstar, pianist Baltimore songwriter Teporah <http://www.myspace.com/teporahmusic> ; and of course me, with my friend Judith Geller who is a Baltimore phenomenon or should I say, her whole family is one! A Klezmer goddess to say the least!! We are hoping to get a good showing of support to raise some much needed funds for all the projects that we support and work towards. We are asking for \$10-15 sliding scale and \$25 for families. We hope it is a fun educational evening. Please come and bring your friends. Thanks for your support!!!!

— Spice Kleinmann



Spice



Beggar's Ride



Teporah

Banner Reading Club

Banner Reading Club resumed its Monday and Wednesday after-school sessions on January 12 with twelve children in attendance. Students are looking forward to a trip to the Maryland Science Center on January 26 when they are out of school for teacher professional days.

We will miss Betty Lou Anderson's faithful presence at Banner due to her move to Broadmead. She had been a volunteer since the beginning of TUUC's involvement with the reading club. If you are available on Mondays and/or Wednesdays from 3-4:45 PM and can travel to 2900 E. Fayette Street near Patterson Park in Baltimore City, we can always use extra volunteers. We serve refreshments and help children with homework or reading a book and playing games. Contact Lois Hybl (info in directory) for information.

Green Sanctuary Committee

With the beginning of the Maryland General Assembly session in January, the Green Sanctuary Committee (GSC) will be following environmental legislation and providing information on how to contact your legislators. Legislation will likely include bills to promote offshore wind power, fund The Chesapeake Bay Trust through a tax on disposable shopping bags, and promote water quality through various mechanisms. Look for more information in *Weekly News* and at our monthly Fair Trade sales tables in the lobby.

GSC is planning to host vegetarian potlucks followed by screenings of environmental films this Spring. Documentary possibilities include *The 11th Hour*, which explores the perilous state of our planet and the means by which we can change our course, and *The Great Squeeze*, which explores our dependence on cheap and abundant fossil fuels through a historical lens, and advocates for a transition towards a more sustainable economy that values our environment. Stay tuned to the *Weekly News* for the details on the screenings.

The next Green Sanctuary Committee meeting is February 12 between services. The next fair trade coffee and chocolate sales will be February 19. Contact Samantha Saalfield (info in directory) for more information or to be added to our email list.

Bald Mountain Band & Hillbilly Gypsies

The Saturday night concert January 14 featured the Bald Mountain Band and Hillbilly Gypsies.



A big crowd showed up for a fine Potluck supper and some really fine music.



Picking and Singing



Andy mixed the sound and Tony plucked and sang with spirit and joy.



February 2012 Calendar

<http://my.calendars.net/towsonuuc>

Feb 1	Wed	Wednesday Writers	11 AM
		Improv Group	7 PM
		Chalice Circle Coordinators	7:30 PM
		Evening Book Group	7:30 PM
Feb 2	Thu	Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
Feb 3	Fri	Men's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
		Caring Committee	10 AM
Feb 5	Sun	Worship Service	9:30 & 11:15 AM
		Social Action Committee	10:30 AM
		Open Discussion Group	12:30 PM
		Imbolc service	5 – 7 PM
Feb 6	Mon	Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		12-Step Meditation	7 PM
		Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
Feb 7	Tue	Chalice Circle	12 N
		Afternoon Book Group	2 PM
		Operations Team	7:30 PM
		Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
		Rainbow Youth Alliance	7:30 PM
Feb 8	Wed	Wednesday Writers	11 AM
		Improv Group	7 PM
Feb 9	Thu	Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
Feb 10	Fri	McDowell Memorial Service	12 N – 3 PM
		Coming of Age Social	6 – 10 PM
		ARE Film	7 PM
Feb 11	Sat	Rental – Zen Community	9:30 AM – 5 PM
		TUUC House Concert	7 - 10 PM
Feb 12	Sun	Worship Service	9:30 & 11:15 AM
		Green Sanctuary Committee	10:30 AM
		Open Discussion Group	12:30 PM
		Performance - <i>Edenwald Remembers</i>	2 PM
Feb 13	Mon	Rental - Handel Choir Rehearsal	6 PM – 10 PM
		Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		12-Step Meditation	7 PM
Feb 14	Tue	Board Meeting	7 PM
Feb 15	Wed	Wednesday Writers	11 AM
		Improv Group	7 PM

Feb 15	Wed	Worship Program Committee	7:30 PM
Feb 16	Thu	Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
Feb 17	Fri	Men's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
Feb 18	Sat	Work Party	9 AM – 12 N
		Struckhoff Memorial Service	2 PM
Feb 19	Sun	Worship Service	9:30 & 11:15 AM
		Social Action Committee	10:30 AM
		Open Discussion Group	12:30 PM
		Gallery Unicorn Reception	2 PM
Feb 20	Mon	Rental - Handel Choir Rehearsal	6 PM – 10 PM
		Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		12-Step Meditation	7 PM
		PFLAG Steering Committee	7 PM
		Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
Feb 21	Tue	Chalice Circle	12 N
		Aging Together	1 PM
		Rainbow Youth Alliance	7:30 PM
		Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
Feb 22	Wed	Women's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
		Wednesday Writers	11 AM
		Improv Group	7 PM
		Rental – Zen Community	7 PM
Feb 23	Thu	Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
Feb 25	Sat	Kaufman Memorial Service	3 PM
Feb 26	Sun	Worship Service	9:30 & 11:15 AM
		Open Discussion Group	12:30 PM
		4 th at 4 Storytelling	4 PM
Feb 27	Mon	Rental - Handel Choir Rehearsal	6 PM – 10 PM
		Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		12-Step Meditation	7 PM
Feb 28	Tue	PFLAG	7 PM
Feb 29	Wed	Wednesday Writers	11 AM

TOWSON UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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