

THE THRESHOLD



Towson Unitarian Universalist Church

A Welcoming Congregation
www.towsonuuc.org
Lutherville, Maryland
Summer 2011

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Upcoming Services

Summer Worship 2011 at Towson Unitarian Universalist Church Sources of Our Spirituality

Presented by TUUC's Lay Worship Associates Committee

Sunday/Date	Service Title	Description
7/3/11	Our Ancestors, Our Selves	Barbara Sterne, with TUUC members, reflects on those who walked before us.
7/10/11	TUUC Readers' Theater/ "Our Town"	TUUC's Readers' Theater, under the direction of Suzanne Pratt (formerly of Theater Hopkins), presents an abbreviated, one-hour version of the play 'Our Town' by Thornton Wilder, as a staged reading by local actors.
7/17/11	So, How DID We Get Here?	TUUC's annual Members/Friends Storytelling service, led by Aynsley Hamel ... always fascinating and illuminating!
7/24/11	Music; A Prism	TUUC's music director, Joe Gascho, along with members John Gaccek and Susan Ciaccio, look at the way music can inform our values.
7/31/11	Ramadan Mubarak!	Exploring the ancient beauty and depth of Islam's month-long Ramadan celebration, through 21st century eyes.
8/7/11	UU Heritage - With Our Own Eyes	Aynsley Hamel examines UU thinkers and theologians through history, and their echoes in our lives today.
8/14/11	Poetry as Muse and Map	Tara McIntyre, with TUUC members and friends, shares beloved classic, contemporary and original poetry which has informed our spiritual journeys.
8/21/11	Eating for a Healthy Planet	Guest speaker Don Robertson explores the benefits, to ourselves and the planet, of more conscious food choices.

This summer we'll take a look at the fascinating spectrum of sources of our rich and diverse spirituality. One thing to which most of us can attest is the long and winding exploratory road which brings us here, to Unitarian Universalism in general, and to TUUC specifically. Our experiences and relationships are our most formative road signs. But, seekers that most of us are, we educate ourselves along the way about a wide variety of schools of thought and cosmologies. What do we find most credible? Why? How do we blend the best of what we find over a lifetime into our personal understanding of the universe and our place in it? How do we put those beliefs into action to grow compassion in today's world and in the one we leave for our children? We hope you'll join us Sunday mornings at 10:30 am all summer long to explore the beautiful spectrum of sources of our spirituality. Visit us at towsonuuc.org for directions and more information.

Words, Words, Words

Mickie Grover, church administrator



Summer! The Fourth of July! Fireworks! Cookouts!
Swimming! Dog days! Perseid meteor showers! Vacation!

Medieval lyric

Svmer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!
Groweþ sed and bloweþ med
And springþ þe wde nu,
Sing cuccu!
Awe bleteþ after lomb,
Lhoup after calue cu..
Bulluc sterteþ, bucke uerteþ,
Murie sing cuccu!
Cuccu, cuccu, wel singes þu, cuccu;
Ne swik þu nauer nu.

Translation

Summer has arrived,
Loudly sing, Cuckoo!
Seeds grow and meadows bloom
And the forest springs anew,
Sing, Cuckoo!
The ewe bleats after the lamb,
The cow lows after the calf.
The bullock jumps, the billy-goat farts,
Merrily sing, Cuckoo!
Cuckoo, cuckoo, well you sing, cuckoo;
Nor will you ever stop now.

My view of what one does on the Fourth of July is probably more formal than that of most people. My mother did not like picnics, fireworks or the beach – nor, if it comes to that, rubies, July's birthstone – and she was born on the Fourth of July. A real Yankee Doodle Dandy like George M. Cohan. Of course, my father set off fireworks at home – everyone did when I was a child – but we never went to the local fireworks display, never had a Fourth of July cookout. We took my mother out to dinner. However you chose to celebrate Independence Day, I hope it was a good day.

Last month I ranted about Gay Pride. This month I could go on about the Declaration of Independence, about how we celebrate – and ignore – our national holidays. I will refrain, however, and focus on Towson Unitarian Universalist Church with some familiar, and some new, complaints.

Let's begin with deadlines, shall we? We have deadlines for a reason. We are, as I so often say, a small office and we are a volunteer organization as well. We plan, staff and volunteer our schedules to get the needed work done when it needs to be. If someone misses a deadline, more than that one project can be thrown off. Especially during the summer when we, staff and volunteer alike, scatter on vacation, deadlines are important. Please try to meet them – see box below. If you can't please let the proper person, staff or volunteer, know so s/he can juggle work to accommodate your problem. Sometimes it is not possible and whatever it is does not make the *Weekly News*, or the bulletin board, or the *Threshold* or the order of service. We, staff and volunteer alike, only have so much time and so much flexibility in our schedules. We try.

Now for a summer re-run – and a plea.

Re-run: Channeling Helene (remember her? – the woman who didn't like fireworks or cookouts – or messy people). Please clean-up. Please pick-up. Please lock-up.

Clean-up: As always – do you want to pay the office staff to do dishes? To wash counters? To wash floors? If we are doing those things, we are not doing the work we were hired to do. "Leave it," someone says. A nice idea but we have renters and members coming in for recitals, for meetings, for memorial services, child dedications, art exhibits, to see the minister, and who knows what.

Do you want people to think that we (members, friends, staff, visitors) don't care enough to take care of the church?

Pick-up: If you move something, put it back. Someone will be coming after you – be considerate. If you drop something, pick it up. See “clean-up” above.

Lock-up: Several times in June the alarm was not set. Enough said! If you are the last person out of the building (check if you are not sure) set the alarm. If you do not have a key, don't be the last one out. If you have a key, but are not willing to be responsible for setting the alarm, please return the key.

This summer, with the difficulty in finding space for everyone and everything as we do rehab and welcome the Auburn School as a tenant, we need to be good hosts and guests.

Plea: The hospitality Committee could use some help – please consider signing up to make coffee and clean-up after the coffee hour. All Unitarians love coffee hour – help make it happen!

Now to return to the beginning of this screed – have a great summer. Enjoy the fireworks of July. Watch for the shooting stars of August. Watch out for the “bucke uertep.” And, for those who take summer trips: Travelling mercies!”

DEADLINES

Weekly News: **Wednesday, 3 PM**

Order of Service: **Thursday, 10 AM**

Threshold: **Third Sunday of August for September issue**

Wise Gardening & Pest Management

Louise Harmony



Thanks to Betty Lou Anderson, Amanda Killian, Jen Larson, Carel Hedlund, and Dawn Murr for joining the last work party. Special thanks go out to: Dawn Murr for donating the netting over the pond; to the person who brought wire coat hangers to the shed; to the person who donated the first bottle of Brush-Be-Gone; and to Tom Farrell for moving the heavy ice melt bucket and fixing the shed door.

We accomplished a lot in a very short period of time. The front bed leaves were raked; hoses were connected and left in a neat coil near the two faucets; the fish net was put over the pond; and the poison ivy by the walkway was killed. NOTE: the two "lawn watering heads" are at the back A/C water faucet; the hose near the downstairs side door is connected to a "dial" hand held hose.

ALL MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION ARE INVITED TO WATER THE GARDENS ANY TIME THEY HAVE THE TIME - ESPECIALLY IN HOT WEATHER. Any plant that is drooping or any plant that is normally green and changes to a green/yellow color needs water (the green/yellow color could also be due to an insect infestation but water anyway). DO NOT TURN THE FAUCET OFF AT THE A/C FAUCET, SINCE IT FEEDS THE POND (MOTOR WILL BURN OUT IF FAUCET IS TURNED OFF).

During June, I sprayed six feet on either side of the nature trail and the center of the nature trail. The trail should be passable now and hopefully for the entire summer without any more spraying. The mouth of both entrances to the trail are more passable than the center of the trail.

News

Green Sanctuary Committee

The GSC met after service on Sunday June 26 for two hours in a special planning meeting for the coming 2011-2012 church year. The committee gratefully applauded the excellent work of outgoing chair Marilyn Carlisle and at the same time welcomed our new chair, Samantha Saalfield. The GSC has an enviable legacy of activism in keeping our church and our community green. In the coming year, we will continue to promote sustainability at TUUC and our larger community, through activism in areas including energy conservation, alternative energy issues, and water quality. We are fortunate to have a very well informed, knowledgeable committee with various areas of interest and expertise, as well as three professional environmental specialists.

New ideas discussed at the planning meeting included reaching out to the community to improve the local bicycling infrastructure and recycling in apartment housing, and working with local higher learning institutions to encourage local food purchases for healthier, more sustainable eating for their students. It is always exciting to have fresh thinking, and new ideas from the congregation are always welcome!

A big “thank you” to all those who loyally purchased Zeke’s fair trade organic coffee from the Green Sanctuary Committee during the year. We sold 265 pounds of coffee. The sale proceeds allowed us to subsidize the difference in price between regular commercial coffee and fair trade organic coffee, and we provided TUUC with 71 pounds of fair trade coffee during the year for serving on Sunday mornings. Starting in September, **GSC’s coffee sales will take place on the third Sunday of every month.** The price will be \$12 per pound (increased due to Zeke’s increased prices), so bring your checkbooks or cash. All sales benefit the church with specific focus on efforts to promote sustainability.

Finally, please join us if you have an interest in working with us to help our local and global environment. **Starting in September, GSC will be meeting on the second Sunday of each month (changed from the fourth Sunday) between services,** usually in Reverend Clare’s office. We welcome you all. See you in September as the old song goes.

—Samantha Saalfield, GSC Chair

UU-UNO Merger

The Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office, UU-UNO, has been collaborating closely with the Unitarian Universalist Association, UUA, for some time. The UU-UNO was once part of the UUA, but has operated as an independent organization since 1971.

As of July 1, with the approval of both Boards, the UU-UNO and the UUA will once again be part of the same organization. The UUA would gain the ability to advocate UU values in the UN arena, while for the UU-UNO integration would mean financial stability and greater institutional capacity.

The UU-UNO is expected to keep its current relationships with envoys, member congregations, individuals, donors and funders, even though it will no longer be a separate entity.

To see the UUA announcement regarding the UU-UNO - UUA integration, please see: <http://www.uua.org/news/newssubmissions/175115/shtml>

Dave and Liz Van Wye, TUUC UU UNO Envoys

Gallery Unicorn Summer Listings

JUNE 26 THROUGH JULY 31

Gallery Unicorn is very pleased to present the exhibition "Tapestries", artwork in oils and acrylics, by Mary Magenta. Mary was a long time resident in northern Baltimore County and the Hamilton area before moving to Kentucky.

AUGUST 7 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 11

Gallery Unicorn will have an exhibition by two longtime residents of Baltimore County, Janet Drue-Manson and Helene Ageloff. Both women have painted for many years and are members of the Women Artists Forum. There will be a reception held August 7 from 2 to 4 PM.

Upcoming Events

Anita Gregory Book Group – Tuesday, July 5 at 2 PM

This month's selection is *Reckless Endangerment* by Gretchen Morgenson, a financial writer for the New York Times. She is not afraid to name names regarding toxic mortgages during the meltdown.

Aging Together Group – Tuesday July 19 at 1 PM

The Aging Together group will meet on Tuesday, July 19, at 1 PM at the church. Allan Thorn will lead a discussion on how our childhood experiences impact who we are today. The topic for the August 16 meeting will be Living Alone. Questions or ideas, contact Joan Kolobielski; her contact information is in the TUUC directory.

Come and Join a Chalice Circle

Some participants speak of deepening relationships, some speak of expanding personal horizons, some speak of meaningful service to the wider community. What would you bring to a circle? What would you take away from it? How do you think it might change you?

Now is the time to come and find out. Come and join one of our circles for a little bit of fellowship, a little bit of worship and celebration, a little bit of service, a little bit of spiritual exploration, and a lot of deepening relationships and meaningful times together.

Chalice Circles will meet two times a month beginning the week of September 26. If you have any questions or to sign up for a circle, please visit our information table after the worship services during September or email us at chalicecircles@towsonuuc.org.

Feeding the Hungry

July has a 5th Saturday, so your help is needed NOW! Please sign up to make, buy or donate \$10 for a casserole for Our Daily Bread. Casseroles are due to TUUC by Saturday July 30 by 8:30 AM. Casseroles can be brought to TUUC ahead of time and stored in the freezers. Thanks for all you do to make life better for those less fortunate.

Building Homes with Habitat for Humanity

Spend a rewarding day this summer making life better for someone who needs a home! We will be recruiting TUUC members and friends to help with home renovations in Baltimore. (We need people specifically for Saturdays, but weekday times are also available). There are slots available to help in many ways from pounding with a hammer to indoor/office support. Please contact Samantha Saalfield; her contact information is in the TUUC directory.

Join the TUUC Social Action Committee Sunday August 21

Please join the TUUC Social Action Committee on Sunday August 21 after the service to brainstorm, plan and discuss the coming year's projects and actions. We want to hear your thoughts and suggestions. Bring something to nibble on/share with others.

TUUC Annual Congregational Meeting, June 12, 2011

Greetings from the Board!

We finished out the year with a productive congregational meeting (minutes bellow). These summer months will be filled with renewal -- new tenants (Auburn School Camp) and renovations of the RE space to bring it up to fire/safety code requirements. The staff have been AMAZING in their effort to clear out closets, classrooms and cupboards in preparation for the Auburn School tenancy. Many thanks to Mickie, Joyce, Joe Ellis and Nancy for rolling up their sleeves and moving years of accumulated "stuff" to make way for the Auburn School furnishings. Please **join us** for a "Summer Organizing Party" (announcement in the weekly news) as we continue to sort through many boxes and bins. Stay cool!

Melissa Reuland, President

Moderator Dick Sass called the meeting to order at 6:10PM. The meeting began with a hymn and opening words by Rev. Clare Petersberger.

Dick confirmed a quorum with 55 people attending.

1. **President's Report:** Melissa Reuland

- Melissa began her report with an explanation, for anyone who wasn't aware, that Mike Robinson had to step down as President in April due to changes and added responsibilities at his job as well as his ongoing responsibilities at home. Though Mike was not present, Melissa thanked him for his leadership as President, especially for all his work on securing a new rental downstairs slated to begin in the fall.
- Melissa confirmed the Stewardship Campaign will now be a year 'round effort to ensure the financial health of the congregation.
- She recognized the outgoing trustees, Paul Konka and Betty Lou Anderson.

2. **Treasurer's Report:** Paul Konka

- Paul pointed out the current budget had been approved with a \$6,000 deficit, but as of early June the budget was running \$4,000 ahead of expenses.

3. **Operations Team Report:** Melissa Reuland

- Melissa praised the efforts of those involved in fundraisers this year, citing as an example \$10,000 raised by Social Action.
- She pointed out that the Council Head positions for Finance and House and Grounds had not been filled this year, but she thanked the many people who helped out with maintenance inside and outside the church.
- Significant renovation is needed to ready the downstairs for the new school rental. Regulations are different and more extensive for a school, as opposed to a pre-school such as Montessori. Upgrading fire safety and the two existing bathrooms, as well as adding a third bathroom, are required. Drawings are ready to go to the county for approval of a construction permit. The

cost for the construction (which has not been determined yet) is not part of the proposed 2011-2012 budget. Many possibilities for funding the construction are currently being discussed.

4. Volunteer of the Year Award: Rev. Clare Petersberger

Clare awarded the Volunteer of the Year Award to Melissa Reuland for her exceptional leadership of the Operations Council, her work on the downstairs rental to the Auburn School, and her ready acceptance of the additional role of President on top of her other responsibilities.

5. Election of New Leaders: Catherine Morris

- Catherine introduced the slate of new leaders. She pointed out that all council head positions for the upcoming year have been filled, with the exception of the President Elect. She asked for nominations for President Elect from the floor but none were forthcoming. The Nominating Committee will continue to work on identifying people interested and capable to fill this key position. In the meantime, Paul Konka will chair the Operations Team Meetings.
- Dick Sass asked for nominations from the floor for two open positions on the Nominating Committee but none were proposed.
- The existing slate of officers was approved with a show of hands.

6. Presentation of the Budget: Melissa Reuland

Dick asked for a motion to approve the 2011-2012 budget. Sue Royer made a motion for approval and Joan Kolobielski seconded. The budget was then open for discussion.

- Melissa presented the approach the board used to determine spending priorities. The board voted to prioritize staff salaries and benefits first, facilities management and program costs next, and denominational dues last.
- The Worship Committee budget for the coming year has been raised by \$4,500 because Clare will be on sabbatical from January through May of 2012, and the Worship Committee will need additional funds for guest speakers.
- Other increases in expenses derived from staffing expenses, including: an increase in the Director of Religious Exploration's salary (due to recently-acquired UUA credentials); an increase in the number of hours worked by the church administrator (because of increased responsibilities associated with the new rental); and payment of the employer portion of FICA for the minister (due to a change in the position from a "1099" to a "W2" employee).
- Staff with very good or excellent reviews received a 2% COLA increase as well as a 2% merit increase. The exception to this was the custodian, who received an equity adjustment only.
- Other expenses that increased from prior fiscal year include staffing the nursery with two paid childcare providers (instead of only one) and inclusion of a budget for RE council (which had been paid out of reserves for FY11).
- Denominational dues were funded at 80% to balance the budget.
- A lease has not yet been signed with The Auburn School. A great deal of thought and professional advice went into writing the lease, which includes the requirement that Auburn must give at least six months notice if they wish to leave.
- Paul pointed out that we have had year after year of a \$50,000 structural deficit. This deficient will be covered by the proposed new rental of \$48,000/year.

Ansley Hamel asked that discussion be closed. The budget was approved and the meeting adjourned at 7:40.

Respectfully submitted,
Mimi Marks

Mid-July through August 2011 Calendar

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

July 15	Fri	Men's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
July 17	Sun	Open Discussion Group	11:30 AM
		Music Committee	11:45 AM
July 18	Mon	Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		12 Step Program	7 PM
		PFLAG Steering Committee	7 PM
July 19	Tue	Aging Together	1 PM
July 21	Thu	Chalice Circles	7:30 PM
July 24	Sun	Open Discussion Group	11:30 AM
		4 th at 4 Storytelling	4 PM
July 25	Mon	Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		12 Step Program	7 PM
July 26	Tue	PFLAG	7 PM
		Chalice Circles	7:30 PM
July 27	Wed	Women's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
July 31	Sun	Open Discussion Group	11:30 AM
Aug 1	Mon	Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		12 Step Program	7 PM
Aug 2	Tue	Anita Gregory Book Group	2 PM
Aug 3	Wed	Evening Book Group	7:30 PM
Aug 4	Thu	Chalice Circle	7:30 PM
Aug 5	Fri	Men's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
Aug 7	Sun	Open Discussion Group	11:30 AM
		Gallery Unicorn Reception	2 PM
Aug 8	Mon	Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		12 Step Program	7 PM
Aug 14	Sun	Open Discussion Group	11:30 AM
Aug 15	Mon	PFLAG Steering Committee	7 PM
		Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		12 Step Program	7 PM
Aug 17	Wed	Worship Program Associates	7:30 PM
Aug 18	Thu	Chalice Circles	7:30 PM
Aug 19	Fri	Men's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
Aug 20	Sat	<i>Lectio Divina</i>	10 AM
Aug 21	Sun	Open Discussion Group	11:30 AM
		Social Action Committee	11:45 AM
Aug 22	Mon	Mindful Way Meditation Group	7 PM
		12 Step Program	7 PM
Aug 23	Tue	PFLAG	7 PM
Aug 24	Wed	Women's Breakfast Group	8:30 AM
Aug 28	Sun	Open Discussion Group	11:30 AM
		4 th at 4 Storytelling	4 PM

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Midnight on the third Sunday of the month to:
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Our Leadership

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Finance Council: Paul Konka

House and Grounds Council: Jason Hauf

Inner Life Council: Faith Miller

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