

# Universalist Anchor



Words by Rev Lillie

## Reading

Often I am asked for suggestions on books to read. Most of the time, the requests are for books on Universalism. However, I have two favorites that I'm recommending this month. Below you'll find my thoughts on them. If anyone reads them and wants to begin a book discussion group, let me know; I'd be glad to participate.

*Why God Won't Go Away* is a book by Andrew Newberg, Eugene D'Aquili, and Vince Rause. It is a very good read. It is the kind of book that can be meaningful for every kind of theology one might hold—from mystics to secular humanists. It explores and offers a deeper understanding of the physiological roots of mysticism. In it we find:

Logic suggests that what is less real must be contained by what is more real, just as a dream is contained within the mind of a dreamer. So, if Absolute Unitary Being truly is more real than subjective or objective reality—more real, that is, than the external world and the subjective awareness of the self—then the self and the world must be contained within, and perhaps created by, the reality of Absolute Unitary Being...

Again, we cannot objectively prove the actual existence of Absolute Unitary Being, but our understanding of the brain and the way it judges for us what is real argues compellingly that the existence of an absolute higher reality ... is at least as rationally possible as is the existence of a purely material world.

Another fantastic book on science and religion is Stephen Jay Gould's *Rocks of Ages*. His premise is that science and religion are *non-overlapping magisteria*. In other words, one does not have anything to do with the other, and it is all right to believe in both! Gould writes:

The magisterium of science covers the empirical realm: what is the universe made of (fact)

and why does it work this way (theory). The magisterium of religion extends over questions of ultimate meaning and moral value. These two magisterial do not overlap, nor do they encompass all inquiry... To cite the old clichés, science gets the age of rocks, and religion the rock of ages; science studies how the heavens go, religion how to go to heaven.

Both books offer something to us for our spiritual journey. Both have very different ways of looking at science and religion. Neither can be called Universalist or Christian, yet I believe they can impact our faith life and religious yearnings.

See you in Church, Pastor Lillie

## ***FROM "G" STREET TO GAZA: FOOD SECURITY FROM DC TO PALESTINE***

**Saturday, March 8**, at 7:00 in Perkins Hall, we will celebrate the work of Food For All and the United Palestinian Appeal. There will be a panel discussion on the ministry of *food security* and the effort it takes to provide food for the most vulnerable populations of Washington, DC, and Palestine.

Come hungry—we will have Palestinian food! There will also be Palestinian crafts and music.

Member Marti Martinson will speak on his experience in sponsoring a Palestinian child in Gaza. There will also be presentations and slides from members and friends who have visited Israel and Palestine in the last year. Contact the office at 202-387-3411 or [office@universalist.org](mailto:office@universalist.org) if you have questions or would like to volunteer.

## ***VOICES OF JUSTICE, HANDS OF CHANGE***

Plan to attend the **Joseph Priestly District spring conference, Friday-Sunday, March 28-30**, at the Doubletree Inn in Bethesda. This is a great opportunity to share with others the good news of what's going on at UNMC, to worship with members from neighboring UU churches, and to learn from their successes in worship, pastoral care, social justice, governance, young adult programs, and more. Plus, it's Metro accessible! A complete brochure is posted on the bulletin board, or you can register online at <http://www.jpduua.org>. Register by March 4 for the best rates. For more information, contact the office at 202-387-3411 or [office@universalist.org](mailto:office@universalist.org).

## Children/Youth Religious Education

In Sunday morning RE we have been covering Lent and its origins. We have also looked at the story of the Israelites in Egyptian captivity and the birth and adoption of Moses. We have enjoyed a variety of students, including our new friend André.

THANK YOU for all the cans of soup “cast” in our Soup-er Bowl poll. Last year, the UNMC tally ended in a tie. This year UNMC picked the winning team . . . the Giants beat the Patriots by one can of soup! And Food for All was the overall big winner as our designated recipient of the total of 35 cans of soup. Thank you, UNMC!

### **YOUTH GROUP** (7th grade and above)

In April the Youth Group will sign up for a Social Hour TBA. The 2nd Saturday of April, April 12th, there will be a pizza party at the McCully/Sandberg home to introduce next year's members with this year's members. I would especially like to have those who normally can't be at the meetings there if at all possible.

Upcoming meetings: **7:00 p.m. March 2, 9, 30** at the McCully/Sandberg home,.

**NO MEETINGS:** March 16th & 23rd (Palm Sunday & Easter)

During April we will meet each Sunday evening. Our last meeting will be May 4th.

### **MAUNDY THURSDAY FEAST OF FRIENDS**

On the Thursday of Holy Week, **March 20 at 7:30 p.m.**, we will gather in Perkins Hall to commemorate the table fellowship that Jesus enjoyed with his disciples by holding a Maundy Thursday “Feast of Friends,” including dinner and communion. Bring your friends and your kids to this very special service! Main dishes are being organized by Jeff Jacobs. Please call the church office or email [office@universalist.org](mailto:office@universalist.org) to confirm your attendance, so we can get a rough head count. Mark on the sign-up sheet in the parlor whether you will bring an appetizer, salad, dessert, or beverage. Volunteers are also needed to help with setup and cleanup. For more information, contact the office at 202-387-3411 or [office@universalist.org](mailto:office@universalist.org).



### **Chancel Flowers**

**Mary Templeton, Coordinator**

**March 2:** Chancel flowers are given in memory of Richard E. Fogwell, Sr., and Richard E. Fogwell, Jr., by Esther and Hope Fogwell.

**March 9:** Chancel flowers are given in memory of his grandparents, Paul F. Hannah, Sr., Elizabeth J. Hannah, the Rev. Floyd J. Taylor, and Margret S. Taylor, by Paul Hannah

**March 16:** Chancel flowers and palms are given in memory of Norman and Martha Brace by Douglas and Julie Brace, Marcia and Carol.

**March 23:** Chancel flowers are given in memory of her brother, Ben Hansford Thompson, by Amy Thompson Tipton.

**March 30:** Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of Frances Marin Pepper, beloved daughter of Vicki and Brian, beloved sister of Stephen and Irina, and beloved granddaughter of Pi-Rung.

### ANOTHER FLORAL OPPORTUNITY:

If you would like to give palms for Palm Sunday and/or an Easter lily for our sanctuary during Holy Week, please notify the office at 202-387-3411 or [office@universalist.org](mailto:office@universalist.org). Tributes will be listed in the Order of Service. The donation for palms will be \$10; for Easter lilies, \$30. Thank you!

### **WELCOME & MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

The Welcome and Membership committee has re-vamped our welcome brochure to a tri-fold that can be left at information centers, libraries and neighborhood retail bulletin boards. Sue Mosher has also written a story about the process of writing out Statement of Faith to be submitted for publishing in the Joseph Priestly District Newsletter and UU World. In addition, we're investigating ordering banners to be installed on DC light poles outside the church. News releases regarding Holy Week services will be sent to Craig's List and to the local media.

## Parish Notes

Clint McCully and Jennifer Sandberg proudly announce that their daughter, Linnea McCully, has accepted a 1st grade teaching position at Escuela Jorge Washington (George Washington School) in Cartagena, Colombia, from the 2008-2010 school years. Cartagena is on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, and the school is within a few steps of a white sand beach. Book your trip now!

### *COVENANT GROUP*

The Prayer & Spirituality Covenant Group's first meeting was very well attended on Sunday, February 24 before church. This month the group learned about the contemplative tradition within Christianity and left with a few contemplative prayer exercises to try at home. All are welcome to attend any or all of the monthly meetings. If you are interested, please the office at 202-387-3411 or [office@universalist.org](mailto:office@universalist.org). The next meeting will be on March 30 at 9:30 am in the library on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

### *LELAND PLACE*

Leland Place Dines Vegetarian in February

The men of Leland Place went vegetarian on Saturday February 16. A full house of men in transition from homelessness dined on pasta fagioli (pasta, beans, tomatoes, onions, carrots, garlic and spices) and Nick Bowden's mom's broccoli and cream of mushroom soup. Steaming hot homemade apple crisp, served a la mode, topped off the repast.

Volunteers included the aforementioned Nick, Angela Khaminwa, Mike and Alex Dillon, and Emily and Dave Skidmore. Thanks, also, to Marti Martinson, who couldn't attend, but contributed toward the cost of the meal.

Our next dinner is **Saturday March 15**. We will gather in the church kitchen at 2:30 p.m. and then car pool to Leland on North Capitol Street to serve the meal. Volunteers share the cost of the meal (usually contributing between \$15 and \$25 each). If you'd like to contribute, but cannot attend, use one of the marked pew envelopes when the collection plate comes around Sunday morning. Likewise, if you'd like to volunteer your time but not a monetary contribution, see Pastor Lillie or Dave Skidmore.

## *SUNDAY SERVICES*

**Saturday, March 1 5:30 p.m. Vespers** Contemplative Vespers Service in Chapel

**Sunday, March 2 11:00 a.m.**— “The Least Expected” a sermon by Rev. Henley. What we expect to see or to happen is often very different than what actually occurs. We may hope, wish, pray for a certain outcome, but sometimes we are surprised. Inversely, challenging opportunities, trials and tribulations may turn out to be affirmations of life! 1 Samuel 16:1-13

**Sunday, March 9 11:00 a.m.**— Deacon Sue Mosher preaching: “Ritual 101,” With the help of West African tribal elder and a valley of dry bones, we’ll explore the mystery of what we do here on Sunday morning. Ezekiel 37:1-14.

**Sunday, March 16 11:00 a.m.**— Palm Sunday Our children will pass out our palms for everyone to take into the service. Rev. Henley’s sermon “When Jesus Entered Jerusalem” will have us ask the question, “Where would I be, if I were in Jerusalem this week?” Matthew 21:1-11

**Thursday, March 20 7:30 p.m. – Perkins Hall** Everyone is invited to participate in this spiritually affirming Maundy Thursday service. See the article on page 2 in this newsletter for more information on the Feast of Friends.

**Friday, March 21 12:00 Noon** – Good Friday Service. This service will acknowledge the sacrifice of Jesus’ call to create God’s kingdom here on earth.

**Sunday, March 23 11:00 a.m.**— Easter Sunday “The Women Hurried Away” The good news of the historical Jesus. When life gives us far more than we would have asked, how wonderful and blessed it is. Matthew 28:1-10

**Sunday, March 30 11:00 a.m.** – “Blessed Are Those Who Believe the Unseen” a sermon about “Doubting Thomas” who only believed after he witnessed the post-Easter Jesus. What does it take for us to believe that which we do not and cannot see? John 20:19-31

**Sunday, April 6 11:00 a.m.** — “Anything Can Happen on the Road to Where We’re Going” A sermon by Rev. Henley about Jesus’ appearance on the Road to Emmaus. He walked with two disciples and they did not recognize him. How often in our lives have we walked along the road and did not recognize or appreciate the blessings Life gives us? Luke 24:13-35

### **SHARING OUR PLATE**

Each month we share 10% of our free-will plate collection with a non-profit organization that works in our neighborhood and gives to those in need. For March, the recipient will be Food & Friends. Along with nutrition counseling, Food & Friends prepares, packages and delivers meals and groceries to more than 1,400 people living with HIV/AIDS, cancer and other life-challenging illnesses throughout Washington, DC, 7 counties of Maryland and 7 counties and 6 independent cities in Virginia. Since 1988, Food & Friends has provided food and companionship to their clients, their loved ones and caregivers.

At a rate of six-days-a-week, 52-weeks-a-year, Food & Friends feeds their clients. They deliver each day, Monday-Saturday, including Holidays. Since their inception, Food & Friends has provided more than 9.75 million meals to more than 15,000 individuals. In 2006, Food & Friends served more than 700,000 meals to more than 2,300 individuals.

#### **Upcoming Food & Friends Event:**

March 6: Dining Out for Life

On **Thursday, March 6th**, more than **150 restaurants**, in the Washington region, will donate **25-100%** of their proceeds to Food & Friends. Simply by dining out, you will ensure that thousands of individuals facing HIV/AIDS, cancer and other life-challenging illnesses, will receive the daily, nutritious meals so vital to their care. Dining Out for Life is a true expression of how a community can join forces to save the lives of their neighbors. Choose a restaurant from their website: <http://www.diningoutforlife.com/participating.php>.

### **PETER, PAUL, AND MARY: THREE EARLY CHRISTIAN VOICES**

Scholars from the Jesus Seminar, which seeks to understand the historical Jesus, will be in Washington, **Friday-Saturday, April 11-12**, at St. Mark's Episcopal Church on Capitol Hill (<http://www.stmarks.net>), presenting a lecture on Mary Magdalene and two workshops on the origins of Christian beliefs and on Peter and Paul. For more information and to register, visit <http://www.westarinstitute.org/Events/JSORs/DC2008.html>. Discounts are available for registration by March 21 and for attendance by more than one family member.

### **SAVE THE DATE: UNIVERSALIST CONVOCATION IN MAY**

The **2008 Universalist Convocation** will be held **May 2-4** in Oxford, MA, just outside Boston, at the Barton Center for Diabetes Education (<http://www.bartoncenter.org/>), long known to UNMC members as the "Clara Barton Camp." This facility was established in 1921 by the Women's National Missionary Association of the Universalist Church and was long supported by an annual collection at UNMC, even though the camp passed out of Universalist hands. The property also houses the Clara Barton birthplace museum. The convocation gathers Universalists from around the country each year.

### **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE**

Several items merit mention. On February 23, 2008, several folks participated in a training session in use of the church's electric device for transporting folks in wheel chairs up the steps into the entryway, and then up the steps to the area outside the sanctuary. The device can also be used for access to the basement, but not for access to the second or third floors. The device is in good working order, and ready for customers.

Plans are afoot for making bottled water available to those seeking drinking water at the church who do not wish to rely upon tap water. This service is in the nature of an interim solution pending replacement of the drinking fountain formerly in the first floor hallway just outside the new bathroom.

The newly-painted basement, particularly Perkins Hall, are awaiting the finishing touches of cleaning up the paint smudges that inevitably are left after the completion of a major painting job such as occurred in the basement. In addition, several small improvements in the nature of spiffier looking lamps have been added to the women's bathroom in the basement.

### **SONG AS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE**

Experience the possibility for renewal and reinvigoration of worship through song as John Bell of the Iona Community (<http://www.iona.org.uk/>) leads a free community sing at the Washington National Cathedral, **Tuesday, April 8** at 7 p.m. All levels of musical ability are invited. If you're interested in carpooling from northern Virginia, contact the office at 202-387-3411 or [office@universalist.org](mailto:office@universalist.org).

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Sunday, March 2: 7:00 p.m. Youth Group** (7th grade and above) at the McCully/Sandberg home, 2621 Lake Ridge Court, Oakton, VA.

**Monday, March 3: 7:00 p.m.** Board Meeting in Parlor

**Saturday, March 8, 7:00** in Perkins Hall, From “G” Street to Gaza: Food Security from DC to Palestine.

**Sunday, March 9: 7:00 p.m. Youth Group** (7th grade and above) at the McCully/Sandberg home, 2621 Lake Ridge Court, Oakton, VA.

**Saturday, March 15, 2:30 p.m.** Church kitchen: **Leland Place** ministry—Meet at the church and cook a meal for those living at Leland Place, transport it and serve it.

**Sunday, March 16: Fireside Chat** with Pastor Henley in the library on the second floor. All are welcome, newcomers, friends, and members. Discussions have ranged from Universalism to God to “how does UNMC work?”

**Friday-Sunday, March 28-30 Joseph Priestly District spring conference**, at the Doubletree Inn in Bethesda.

**Sunday, March 30: 9:30 a.m.** Covenant Group meets in the 2nd floor study.

**Sunday, March 30:** after hospitality, **How UNMC Works—a Workshop.** Members and friends meet with newcomers over lunch and share stories and insights into the works and ministries of UNMC. Hosted by the Welcome & Membership Committee.

**Sunday, March 30: 7:00 p.m. Youth Group** (7th grade and above) at the McCully/Sandberg home, 2621 Lake Ridge Court, Oakton, VA.

**Sunday, April 6:** after hospitality, **Universalist History**, a preview of a Universalist history course which Eric Stetson will offer the congregation in the spring. Eric is a newcomer to UNMC and is the founder of the international Christian Universalist Association.

His new book, *Christian Universalism: God’s Good News for All People*, will be available soon on Amazon.com.

Pastor Henley will make sure everyone has a healthy repast before the workshop begins!

**Introduction to “A Course in Miracles”**

Sunday morning, **April 6, at 9:30 a.m.** in Perkins Hall, UNMC member William Spruiell will introduce “A Course in Miracles” as an adult religious education course. William has studied theology, religion, the Bible, and many spiritual paths over the last thirty years. He has been studying “A Course in Miracles” as a lifetime Christian spiritual and religious path.

He writes, “The message of ‘The Course’ and its teachings help us remove the blocks that keep us from experiencing the Peace and Love God wants us to have in our lives. It also helps us have better relationships with our fellow human beings. ‘The Course’ was revealed to the world about 40 years ago to two people in New York. It was published in June 1976. There are many organizations and teaching centers throughout the world. In October 1993, William took a nine-month introductory course to ‘Miracles’ in Alexandria, Virginia. In September 2006, I found a teacher, through the Internet, who has a teaching center in Arizona. And I am still learning and studying with this teacher and school.”

William will provide handouts and show portions of a DVD in this introductory session.

**Canvass Breakfast  
February 17, 2008**

Thanks to Megan Moore for the photographs!

Right: Jeff Jacobs, chair of Budget, Finance, and Stewardship committee talks to Sally Segal and Mike Dillon about our pledge canvass during our kick-off breakfast.



Left: Canvass breakfast attendees from left to right: Dave Gatton, our moderator; Perry King, Building & Grounds Committee member; Paula Harrison, Committee on Ministry member.