



# Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists Newsletter January 2006

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES – 11 A.M.

### JANUARY 8 – *THE FREE MIND AND THE RELUCTANT RADICAL*

Dr. Shirley Ranck

An exploration of the life of William Ellery Channing, one of our 19<sup>th</sup>-century Unitarian leaders. **New Member Recognition**



### JANUARY 15 – *THE DREAM AND THE LIE*

Dr. Shirley Ranck

The legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other African Americans and the challenges we face today.

### JANUARY 22 – *AFFIRMATION!*

Dr. Shirley Ranck

It takes courage to face the uncertainties of life with nothing to sustain you but an open question. What can we heretics affirm? In what shall we place our faith?

### JANUARY 29 – *BREAD AND ROSES: NOURISHING OUR COMMUNITY*

Worship Committee

There will also be a Pot Luck Brunch.

#### WORSHIP WORKSHOP

Sunday January 8, 12:30 – 2 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Do you have great ideas for worship?  
Would you like to help make them happen?

Do you like to read poetry aloud?

Do you like to make music?

How would you go about lighting the chalice?

Should we re-arrange the furniture?

Come learn to be a Worship Associate and create more meaningful worship!

## LUNCH & CULTURE; SAVE THE DATE! JANUARY 22 AT 2 PM!

Stay after the Sunday service on Jan. 22 for lunch and a very special musical presentation!

Glenn Winters, the Community Outreach Musical Director of the Virginia Opera, will give a presentation on *The Marriage of Figaro*, the upcoming production of the VOC. "His passion for opera is infectious, his ability to communicate with audiences is irresistible."

The program is free and there is a \$5.00 per person charge for the lunch that will be provided.

Contact Bobbi Fisler [social@wuu.org](mailto:social@wuu.org) with any questions, or to sign up to attend.





### **SHIRLEY'S CAULDRON**

So here I am indulging in one of my favorite pastimes--sitting in a coffee shop watching the parade of other coffee fans step up to the counter and place their incredible orders. A venti decaf, fat-free gingerbread latte please, with whipped cream. I made that up but it probably exists. When they ask me what I want and I say "Just a tall coffee," they stare at me in disbelief, then say, "Oh."

We all need our moments of comfort as we party through the holidays and then ponder our dreams for the New Year. Personal dreams but also our heartfelt hopes for this religious community. In his book *The Almost Church*, Michael Durall writes admiringly of a Christian mega-church where you can order fancy lattes and cappuccinos at the coffee bar after the service. How cool is that?! Personally I'm more impressed with our selling Fair Trade Coffee. But what would you like to see us do?

- What makes a community religious anyway?
- What are we doing here that means the most to you and causes you to keep coming?
- What else could we do to bring your ideals for this congregation into reality?
- Do we need more meeting space, more programs, more social action, more fun?
- What kind of religious community would you like to be when you welcome your new settled minister?
- Who are the Williamsburg UUs and what do we stand for out in the wider community?

I hope you are pondering such questions as we begin this momentous New Year. Please plan to come to the **ALL CONGREGATION RETREAT ON FEBRUARY 25**. Your Strategic Planning Committee wants everyone's input in order to plan for the future. Our District Executive, Laurel Amabile, will be coming to facilitate the retreat. Maybe we could set up a coffee bar and serve lattes and cappuccinos? Whatever we do it will be a very special day for Williamsburg UUs. Come and enjoy!

- *Blessed be!*  
Shirley

### **GREETINGS FROM THE TOP SPOT**

I am struck this month with the admonition of my dear late mother who reminded me that "it is more blessed to give than to receive". As I look at the activities of this congregation, that fact stands out loud and clear. The giving to the community from our small group is truly wonderful.

\*Take a look at what Beth Kennedy and the group she got started was able to do. They raised over \$1,200 and with it provided gifts and food for two families this season, with an additional cash gift going to Jim VanderWeele's congregation in New Orleans!

\*Take a look at what Kit Fournier and Ellen Graham are doing in offering the hospitality of our members to fellow UUs from throughout the Commonwealth during the inauguration of our new Governor, Tim Kaine.

\*Take a look at what Dolores Moyer is accomplishing with the plan to provide clothing for those in need through Fish, the local collecting place for those whose needs are greater than our own.

\*Take a look at WALT, the brainchild of Roy Snyder, in offering diverse educational experiences to the area that our congregation serves - where area learners can whet their skills in such things as photography, sewing, and sailing, to name but a few.

\*Take a look at Live Off Five, the concert series thought up by Sherri Powers, which provides live entertainment for the local area with outstanding musical groups such as Coyote Run, Greg Greenway and Arcona Reel Band.

\*Take a look at our Social Committee Chair, Bobbi Fisler, who has planned and offered such diverse programs as the one this month where the Director of the Community Outreach for the Virginia Opera will speak on their production of "The Marriage of Figaro". Another very popular venue is local theater after dinner out!

\*Take a look at the more than generous contributions from members and friends of this congregation to the worthy causes of Hurricane Katrina relief and the Asian earthquake relief. The amount of the donations from a congregation of our size absolutely warms the heart.

\*Take a look at the WUU "Guest At Your Table" donations selflessly given to feed the hungry, which are now beginning to come in.

When you think of it, Mom was right; "it is more blessed to give than to receive" and give we do! And this is only a small sample! Let's keep it up!

All the best,  
Fred L. Adair, President

## **"TOWARD A COMPELLING COMMITMENT"**

What's this slogan mean? It's simply an attention-getter - you'll see it often. It's meant to pique your curiosity about our Congregational Retreat - to find out more, come out on Saturday, February 25, 10-4, in our Sanctuary, with lunch and child care provided. The Congregational Planning Committee and the WUU Board expect this will be a significant event in moving the WUU forward in ways that will strengthen the fabric of our religious community in these key areas: Professional Ministry; Lifespan Faith Development; Facilities; and Social Responsibilities.

Why do we have a Congregational Planning Committee? Simply put, the CPC was established to formulate and recommend strategies to the Board and the Congregation that would help guide our actions over the next few years. Of course, the CPC can't do this in isolation because we are a democratic religious society, so this Retreat is intended as a sounding board to openly discuss and collect your perceptions of our WUU "needs and wants". We want to hear from all segments of the congregation, new members and long-timers.

What kind of child care will be provided? Thanks to a collaboration between the CPC and the RE folks, we will offer age-appropriate activities for the youngsters. The older ones might sit in on some of the adult sessions. Our youth are unquestionably one key to our future and must be considered in our planning.

How can I find out more about the Retreat? Please check the items in the November and December WUU Newsletters, online at <http://wuu.org>, and the future Sunday programs. Or email [planning@wuu.org](mailto:planning@wuu.org) with your questions and comments. Packets of background material will be available for registrants at the two Sunday services prior to the Retreat.

Do I need to register? We do need to know that you'll be there, for logistics planning. Please contact the WUU Administrator, at 220-6830, or [office@wuu.org](mailto:office@wuu.org), with names of those attending, and the ages of children.

- Roger Baldwin  
Congregational Planning Committee

## **CHALICE GAZING: NOTES FROM THE DRE JANUARY 2006**

The lights, sounds, flash, and dazzle of Christmas and New Year are over, and now we're in the time of bleak mid-winter. When we can convince ourselves to sit quietly in this dark and cold time, there is much for us to learn. This is the time when we prepare, when we ask the sun to warm our seeds, ask the sky to drench our roots with rain.

What can we do at Williamsburg UU to prepare? And what should we be preparing for? Two things come to mind: clearly, a new minister, with all the excitement and new energy and anxiety and transition that the presence of a new minister is bound to raise. As we anticipate the coming of a new minister and a new phase in the life of WUU, wouldn't it be a wonder if we could also begin to prepare new, appropriate, attractive space for our children? Adding a desperately needed RE wing to the sanctuary will require a leap of faith. It will take, as the saying goes, stepping off into the darkness and finding that either there will be something there to stand on, or you will be taught how to fly.

We are Unitarian Universalists. We are people of faith. We are called to act when the need arises, even if we are afraid to act. We don't have to drive the fear away. Rather, we can invite it to our table, let fear be our companion and not our enemy, until we learn that fear does not have to stop us. We can declare that *somehow* we are going to raise this money and we are going to give our children the beautiful space that they ought to have.

Spirit of Life, warm our seeds, drench our roots with rain. Nourish us, keep us, grant us strength, wisdom, and courage for the year to come.

Blessed be,  
Sara

## **MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE - Getting Closer**

One prominent image that emerges as the Ministerial Search Committee continues its mission is the passion and love for Unitarian Universalism that the pre-candidating ministers have shared through the written word and their phone interviews. They are truly engaged; they embrace all that UUs have to offer; we have found them to be wise, humble, intellectual, caring, sincere, creative, and energetic. Each in her or his own way would offer Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists a special gift.

The MSC is casting a wider net this year. In addition to studying pages of applications, reading volumes of heartfelt and moving sermons, appreciating a variety of theological statements, this year we have received videos, CDs and computer clips as well as the individual ministerial profile packet/book. It has been a monumental task sifting through the many applicants. Yet, we are grateful for the trust and honesty we share with one another as a committee and with our ministers in search.

To date we have had 16 extended phone interviews followed by shorter phone conversations with those we are most interested in. We are in the process of narrowing the list and offering invitations for neutral pulpit weekends in January, February and March. We now begin the reference checking, another involved process.

As David Doersch reminded the congregation during the December solstice service, our beloved community is comparable to a butterfly emerging from caterpillar to cocoon to a full fledged beauty. We have the potential to become the dynamic and thriving beacon of liberal religion in Williamsburg. These ministers in search have sensed that potential; they have expressed enthusiasm about our worship services that speak to the head and the heart, about our outstanding in-place music program, about our religious education or life development curriculum, about our outreach on many levels, about our inviting space, about our talents and gifts that are shared by so many as indicated by our Wall of Honor, and particularly by our commitment to include highly qualified and professional staff members, from our Director of Religious Education to music/choir director and accompanist to administrative.

Sometimes we forget to appreciate what we really have here in our congregation. These pre-candidates are looking at our online profile book and web site with fresh eyes and it is exciting to us to hear their reactions and enthusiasm.

This is a daunting task but a gratifying experience for all seven members of the MSC - Diane Abdo, David Doersch, Vicki Hall, Gayle Henion, Debra Hill, Jim Kent and Jane Reilly. The truly unsung heroes are our significant others who have supported us throughout this long endeavor. So next time you see Bob, Liz, Jim, Jim, Camilla, Phoebe or Richard....how about a big thank you to them.....they also deserve all of your love!

Watch WUU Announce for updates as we head into the homestretch.



Five Alaskan UU fellowships invite other UUs to our eco-cultural programs in June, July and August 2006. See the *REAL Alaska!* Alaskan UUs provide B & B accommodations in their homes in Anchorage, Seward, Fairbanks, Juneau and Sitka, lead tours and hikes and host parties. Visit with Tlingit, Inupiat and other Native Alaskans. See whales, sea otters, sea lions, seals, bears, moose, caribou, wolves, puffins, eagles

and other birds in the wild from the Arctic Ocean to the Inside Passage in the south, and visit Denali and other national parks. Rev. Dick & Mary Weston-Jones, leaders. Visit website [www.wuurld.org](http://www.wuurld.org), e-mail [dick@wuurld.org](mailto:dick@wuurld.org), or phone toll-free 1-888, 998-8753 for a brochure. Taking reservations now.

## **SOCIAL ACTION NEWS**

Around 80 people from the community were at WUU on December 3rd to see "Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price," shown by the Social Action Committee. The movie documents some of Wal-Mart's harsh personnel practices and its negative impact on communities and the environment. For more information go to [www.walmartmovie.com](http://www.walmartmovie.com) or contact the Social Action Committee at [socialaction@wuu.org](mailto:socialaction@wuu.org).



## presents **Zoe Speaks in January!**

Contemporary Appalachian singer/songwriters “Zoe Speaks” bring their rich musical style to WUU’s Live Off Five! concert series on **Friday, January 20**. Zoe Speaks are Mitch Barrett and Carla Gover, a couple who play everything from traditional ballads to guitar-thumping contemporary acoustic tunes—in addition to delighting audiences with Carla’s energetic clogging and Mitch’s engaging storytelling!

Mitch and Carla’s original music is drenched in the sounds of their Appalachian roots but also draws from a variety of other influences. Their relaxed performance style and accessible nature allows audiences to feel as if they are getting to know Mitch and Carla personally. They accompany themselves on guitar, clawhammer banjo, and dulcimer.

Live Off Five! concerts are presented in the sanctuary. Doors open at 7:00 p.m., and performances begin at 7:30. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students.

For more information about the concert series, please contact Sherri Powers or Natalie Miller-Moore, or go to [www.wuu.org/liveofffive.htm](http://www.wuu.org/liveofffive.htm). For more information about the artists, check out [www.zoespeaks.com](http://www.zoespeaks.com).

### ***UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS' OPPOSITION TO THE CONFIRMATION OF JUDGE SAMUEL ALITO JR. TO THE UNITED STATE SUPREME COURT***

After evaluating the record of Judge Samuel Alito Jr., the Unitarian Universalist Association has decided to oppose his confirmation to the United States Supreme Court. Below you will find an explanation of the criteria used in our decision, as well as a review of Judge Alito’s key rulings on civil liberties issues.

The decision to take a position on a judicial nominee is not one the UUA takes up lightly – or frequently. Indeed, it was only in 2004 that the General Assembly – our highest policy-making body – approved policy explicitly stating that the Association would oppose nominees. That policy, can be found at [www.uua.org/actions](http://www.uua.org/actions)  
Address any questions to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, Washington Office for Advocacy, 1320 18th Street, Suite 300B, Washington DC 20036, (202) 296-4672, fax (202) 296-4673  
[rkeithan@uua.org](mailto:rkeithan@uua.org) or [www.uua.org/uuawo](http://www.uua.org/uuawo).

### ***NEWS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE***



We received two new members on December 4, 2005. Anna and Randy Drake came to Gloucester in 1968 and now live in Ordinary. Randy is an instructor at the College of William and Mary, and Anna is an engineer and manager of environmental programs for York County. They are both greatly concerned with environmental issues and are gardeners as well as raisers of sheep and chickens. They are both canoers/kayakers, and Randy is a cross-country skier. Anna enjoys reading and knitting. Their family is constantly changing, as they are foster parents. They have been UUs for some time - Randy grew up UU in Iowa and New York, and Anna was a member of a UU church in Norfolk. They look forward to opportunities for community service and fellowship with a group that shares their desire to work for change. We welcome Anna and Randy to our loving fellowship and wish them well in their many interests and achievements.

## **A HOLIDAY MESSAGE FROM THE REV. WILLIAM G. SINKFORD**

December 2005

Dear Friends,

In this holiday season, as we approach the New Year, we pause to look back over the year past. For so many it has been so hard.

I traveled to New Orleans just a few days ago and saw the physical devastation left by the hurricane. Mounds of debris on virtually every street. Many thousands of houses destroyed or standing empty, too severely damaged to ever be homes again. I heard stories of the trauma of these last months.

[The people of New Orleans](#), hundreds of thousands of them, had to flee, becoming travelers often with destinations out of their control. A modern day Diaspora. They had no choice but to rely on the hospitality of strangers.

But I also saw our congregations in the city coming together for worship and support in a Presbyterian church which opened its doors to us. Planning has begun for a vital Unitarian Universalist presence in a rebuilt New Orleans. I am profoundly grateful for the [outpouring of support](#) from Unitarian Universalists for our New Orleans churches and for the citizens throughout the Gulf Coast. We will use some of those funds to encourage long term change in that region.

In November [I went to Chad](#) in north-central Africa with Charlie Clements, President of the UUSC. Charlie and I visited the refugee camps for those who had fled the genocidal war in the Darfur region of western Sudan. The refugees fled most often with only the clothes on their backs, and it was three months before United Nations aid arrived. But the people of the terribly poor villages of eastern Chad found it in their hearts to welcome these travelers. They opened their granaries and shared with the refugees all that they had.

In the Christian story of Christmas, a pregnant woman and her husband are forced to leave their home, becoming travelers in this season, relying upon the generosity of others. There is no room at the inn; the only hospitality offered was a place in a stable.

As we look back on this last year, we must hold its tragedies in our hearts. But we can also hold the reality that our response to those tragedies has been open-hearted and generous.

As we end 2005, Unitarian Universalists will celebrate Hanukah and Christmas, Kwanzaa and the Solstice. These are celebrations of hope and light in the days of long darkness. May we remember that hope can be found not only in the faith that the days will once again lengthen into light, but also in our response to these recent dark days. It is the work of Christmas.

### ***The Work of Christmas by Howard Thurman***

When the song of angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
    to find the lost,  
    to heal the broken,  
    to feed the hungry,  
    to release the prisoner,  
    to rebuild the nations,  
    to bring peace among the brothers,  
    to make music in the heart.

Blessings of the season.



- In faith,

*William G. Sinkford*  
President Unitarian Universalist Association

# January 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
NEW YEAR'S DAY No R.E. Sara off - holiday 11:00a Worship ... 12:30p Spirit Play-A 2:00n WYO-FH	Office Closed (for ...	6:30p Silent ...	4:00p Congregational ... 7:30p Choir practice-S	5:30p MAA- PH 7:00p Worship Comm ...		10:00a UCG Sanc 10-... 1:30p WYO-FH
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
New Member ... 11:00a Worship ... 11:00a RE all ages... 12:15p RE Committee ... 12:30p Spirit Play-A 12:30n Worship	7:00p Dream Group...	6:30p Silent ...	6:15p LiveOff5 ... 7:30p Choir practice-S	12:30p Separate ... 3:00p SetUp for MGD... 5:30p MAA- PH 6:00p Master ...	Gala B&B Inaugural ... 5:00p WYO Concerto ... 7:00p Personnel ...	Gala B&B Inaugural ... No UCG 1:30p WYO-FH
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
9:00a Finance ... 11:00a Worship ... 11:00a RE all ... 2:00p WYO-FH 4:00p WYO ... 4:00n Manir	M L King Day - office ...	6:30p Silent ...	7:30p Choir practice-S	5:30p MAA- PH 6:30p Right Relations ... 7:15p Board Meeting...	Newsletter Deadline 5:00p set up 7:00p LiveOff 5 ...	10:00a UCG Sanc 10-... 1:30p WYO-FH
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
11:00a Worship ... 11:00a RE all ages... 12:15p Lunch and ... 2:00p WYO-FH 4:00p WYO Brass ... 4:00n Manir Class-S		6:30p Silent ...	7:30p Choir practice-S	5:30p MAA- PH		10:00a UCG Sanc 10-... 1:30p WYO-FH
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				
11:00a Worship ... 11:00a RE all ages... 12:15p Pot Luck ... 2:00p WYO-FH 4:00p WYO Brass ... 4:00n Manir Class-S		6:30p Silent ...				

## **NEWS FROM UUA**

### **HATS OFF!**

The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations celebrates and thanks the individual and congregational donors who so selflessly made possible the work of our Association in 2004-05. Their gifts are chronicled in the *Annual Report on Giving*, now online at <http://www.uua.org/giving/annualreport2005.pdf>. The report gives examples of ways that such generosity furthers our shared vision of a strong faith and a more just world. Thank you, all.

### **INTERESTED IN UU SOCIAL WITNESS?**

UUs will debate, discuss and vote on several issues of vital importance when they gather in St. Louis, MO for next June's General Assembly. It's important for our delegates to have considered input, so check out the material from the Commission on Social Witness at [www.uua.org/csw](http://www.uua.org/csw). There's a resource guide for a new study item called Moral Values for a Pluralist Society and a draft statement on global warming. When our Washington Office lobbies on issues, they ground their work in the decisions made at General Assembly.

### **CONNECTUU**

ConnectUU is a nationwide online database of Unitarian Universalist youth and young adult groups. You can find a group or event near you, register to get information about upcoming events and much more! Over two dozen new groups and events have been added to ConnectUU in the past month -- everything from conferences to weekly Soulful Sundown services to movie nights to campus ministry groups. So check it out! You may find exactly what you've been looking for at [www.connectuu.com](http://www.connectuu.com).

## **WILLIAMSBURG UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS**

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