



# Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists Newsletter November 2005

## 11 a.m. SUNDAY SERVICES

### NOVEMBER 6 – SHE CHANGES

Dr. Shirley Ranck

Unitarian Universalism has changed dramatically over the past thirty years and continues to change. What are those changes? Where did they come from? What do they mean to you?



### NOVEMBER 13 – A GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

Dr. Shirley Ranck

Every year the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee invites us to join in their programs to change the world. Guest at Your Table is our UU tradition for educating our communities about human needs and human rights, and sharing our blessings.

### NOVEMBER 20 - MUSIC IN HONOR OF ST. CECILIA, THE PATRON SAINT OF MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

Her actual name day is November 22 and for several years now the choir has offered a larger musical work with orchestra to celebrate the wonders of music.

This year we present Mozart's Solemn Vespers K339 with a chamber orchestra of church, college and community members. To find out more about St. Cecilia – see article on page 2.

### NOVEMBER 27 – AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Worship Committee

### BRINGING TOGETHER GREAT AUDIENCES AND GREAT PERFORMERS!

Singer/songwriter and William and Mary alumnus Greg Greenway ('75) plays "Live Off Five!" on Friday, November 18.

"Beneath the radar of the corporate music world there are gems to be found. Greg Greenway is a multi-faceted one. A rare combination of instrumental expertise, a soulful and moving singer, powerful poet, and sparkling entertainer."

Greenway is noted to be an engaging live performer, blending high energy and musical styles to create a modern acoustic sound. A Richmond native, he has been featured on NPR's "All Things Considered" and nominated for two Boston Music Awards and has played at the Rock-n-Roll Hall of Fame with Judy Collins.

Live Off Five! concerts are presented at Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists. Doors open at 7:00 p.m., and the performance begins at 7:30. Tickets are just \$10 for adults and \$5 for children and students and may be purchased in advance by calling the WUU office—757.220.6830.

Live Off Five! offers a full season of performances featuring regional and national touring acts with a variety of styles. Watch for future announcements about the latest musicians to hit town!

For more information about the series, go to [www.wuu.org/liveofffive.htm](http://www.wuu.org/liveofffive.htm) or call 757.220.6830

—or talk with Natalie Miller-Moore or Sherri Powers.

For more information about the Greg, check out [www.greggreenway.com](http://www.greggreenway.com).



### **FROM THE TOP – THE PRESIDENT’S COLUMN**

I have just returned from my first ever Thomas Jefferson District Fall Leadership Conference held at the Winston-Salem Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, and I’m enthusiastic about what I learned. Joan accompanied me; and our minister, Shirley Ranck, attended as well. The conference was held in their bright and airy facility in a beautiful residential setting. We found the workshops to be very helpful.

Joan and I attended different workshops for the first session on Saturday, thinking that we could share what we learned with each other and thereby learn twice as much! Of course, as you might imagine, our strategy didn’t work out as we had planned because we both chose the same workshop for the 2<sup>nd</sup> session!

First, Joan attended a workshop on RE and came out enthusiastic about resources of which she’d previously heard but had not yet used. The workshop also featured unique ways to involve the children in the service through music, poetry, art, and readings.

My first workshop session was presented by a delightful young lady from Knoxville, Tennessee whose task it was to apprise us of the many possibilities for using Covenant Groups in the activities of the congregation. She provided excellent examples of their use for stimulating interest about various congregational activities. I picked up numerous examples for our own use and will pass them on to Jan Brown, who has indicated that she would like to implement them here.

The second session was taken up with a workshop we attended together, since we both had an interest in the subject matter. It concerned Cluster Relations in the Thomas Jefferson District. Did you know that we were part of a cluster? I didn’t, but I surely came away with some ideas of how we might use this relationship in our own growth. Since we both possess inquisitive natures, Joan and I profited from this workshop that was put on by several members of the Asheville, North Carolina congregation. They felt that they were somewhat isolated due to their geographical location and wanted to interact with other UUs in their cluster. What resulted was a new relationship of congregations of like mind, despite Asheville’s partial separation caused by its mountainous topography.

The other main thing I gleaned from the time spent was the almost total diversity of UUs. We are a really different breed and I encourage us to continue that diversity! We might also learn to practice our faith in ways that others can learn from us. We have a lot to offer. Just look at our covenant! Our faith is one of the very few that encourage diversity (and the practice thereof) while actively seeking others who are different!

May our tribe increase!

All the best,  
Fred



### **WHO WAS ST CECILIA AND WHY ARE WE SINGING THIS HARD MUSIC ANYWAY?**

I heard that question after choir practice the other night and I thought I should try to explain to all of you who have wondered the same thing.

St Cecilia is the patron saint of music and musicians. She had a fascinating life -just try googling her and remember to think pious tradition. Her name day is November 22 so each year we prepare a larger accompanied work to be performed on the Sunday closest to her name day. Why? Because having a day to celebrate music seems like a very good idea to me. It is also fun for the choir to learn (right, choir?) and it is enjoyable for the congregation to hear.

This year we are preparing the Mozart *Vesperae solennes de Confessore* KV 339 which is a collection of 5 psalm settings (109,110,111,112,116) and

the Magnificat, Mary’s Song. Mozart composed this work in 1780 (he was 24) in Salzburg. Mozart had quit his job in 1777, angered by the Archbishop Colloredo for not granting him a leave of absence, but needed to beg for his job back in 1779 after returning without the job offers he thought he would have. He was fired in 1781.

We will be welcoming back our regulars from the chamber orchestra as well as a smashing quartet of W&M soloist including Lizbee Barth, sop, Sarah Froom, alto, Rob Landicho, ten. and Drew Colby, bass. Our very own Pat Rublein, with her sumptuous soprano voice will sing the well-known Laudate Dominum.

This year the celebration is on Sunday, November 20 at the 11:00 service. We hope you all can come and enjoy.

- Jamie Bartlett, Director of Music



### **SHIRLEY'S CAULDRON**

Thanksgiving is coming! It is a time for family reunions, perhaps like the one described by author Judith Viorst:

The first full-fledged family reunion  
Was held at the seashore  
With 9 pounds of lox  
7 pounds of corned beef  
1 nephew who got the highest mark

on an intelligence test ever recorded in Hillside, NJ

4 aunts taking pain pills

1 cousin in analysis taking notes

1 sister-in-law who makes a cherry cheesecake a person would be happy to pay to eat

5 uncles to whom what happened in the stock market shouldn't happen to their worst enemy

1 niece who is running away from home the minute the orthodontist removes her braces

1 cousin who just came out of the closet

1 nephew involved with a person of a different racial and religious persuasion which his parents are taking very well

1 brother-in-law with a house so big you could get lost and carpeting so thick you could suffocate and a mortgage so high you could go bankrupt

1 uncle whose wife is a saint to put up with him

1 niece it wouldn't surprise anyone if next year she's playing at Carnegie Hall

1 nephew it wouldn't surprise anyone if next year he's sentenced to Leavenworth

And me wanting approval from all of them.

For us clergy types Thanksgiving is also a time for interfaith worship services and so we choose to join the family of the interfaith community. As a colleague once described that family "we are Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Muslims and Wiccans; some of our faith beliefs transcend definition. We are men and women, straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered. We are Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, Conservatives, Liberals, Independents; all or none of the above. We are good humored, rude, arrogant, joyful, considerate and condescending. We are your typical family. To quote Queen Elizabeth the Second, herself the matriarch of what some might call the ultimate dysfunctional family, "Like all the best families, we have our share of eccentricities, of impetuous and wayward youngsters and of family disagreements."

As families we agree to disagree with respect. It is wonderfully liberating to disagree and at the same time to recognize the divine, the inherent worth and dignity, within our opponent. May our personal families and our wider interfaith families give us the nurturance and strength we need to nurture and strengthen each other and our world.

*Happy Thanksgiving and blessed be!*  
Shirley

### **MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE**

This summer the MSC contacted the two ministers who were our chosen candidates for minister at WUU for thorough follow-up and discussion. We wanted to receive more feedback from them on their experience with us during the candidating process. These were very helpful phone conversations. We discussed our search process, the weekend, the committee, our physical plant facilities, the financial package. Again each candidate stated that we are a jewel of a congregation and that the primary reason for not accepting our offer was family considerations and pressures. Both of them spoke highly of the committee members, encouraged us to stay together and were definitely recommending WUU to other ministerial candidates. They were encouraging and positive; we found their detailed comments to be helpful in re-evaluating our search process which involves phone interviews as well as 3-day intensive pre-candidating week-end. We felt the follow-up conversations will guide us now as we progress to our next stage of ministerial search.

As a mini-retreat, the MSC invited our own Rev. Shirley Ranck to a recent meeting where we discussed the dynamics of a committee in a second year of search and a congregation eager for a called minister.

Our updated Congregational Record is online and in November we will begin receiving the applications. November and December will be devoted to intensive study of those ministers expressing interest in WUU followed by conference phone interviews with those we feel would make a good fit. Our pre-candidating week-ends begin in January.

*We will keep you posted on the process as it evolves.*

*- Gayle Henion*



### **WE WERE ALL NEW MEMBERS ONCE**

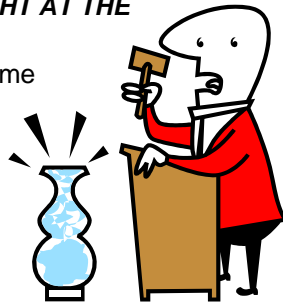
*Greet each stranger as the next great leader, member, volunteer, choir singer...*

One of the great joys of returning to WUU each fall is seeing old friends and discovering new ones. This time of year brings first-time residents to Williamsburg and unfamiliar faces to our congregation. For the next few Sundays, or at any WUU-related event, seek out new folks you've never met, before you catch up with your old friends, and spend time getting to know them. We will all be richer for it.

*- Membership Committee*

## **FOR FUN--A SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE AUCTION**

You can get dinner, bid on some great entertainment packages, and socialize with friends at the WUU auction Saturday night, Nov. 5. Join other WUUs and their friends or neighbors for conversation, cooking and competition (for all those great auction buys).



Here are some enticing auction items:

- Williamsburg Gazette publisher Bill O'Donovan will take the lucky high bidder on a sail boat ride
- The Mellettes will let you stay in their Maine cottage--for a price you name
- Enjoy a special wine tasting--five chardonnays from five continents.

Dinner will feature lasagna for both carnivores and vegetarians; grilled asparagus; salad; garlic bread; cake; and coffee, iced tea and lemonade. A cash bar is set up as usual for wine and beer.

Doors open at 5 for you to look over the silent auction items and begin the bidding. Dinner is served at 6, followed by the live auction at 6:30.

How do you purchase tickets? Stop by the auction table on Sundays after church, contact the co-chairs, or purchase them at the door. For those of you wishing to make a cash donation, send checks marked "WUU auction" to the office or hand them to an auction volunteer after church. To make a donation? Contact Jennifer Rawlins [www.pamperedchef.biz/chefjennifer1](http://www.pamperedchef.biz/chefjennifer1). For more information contact co-chairs Wendy Owens or Ruth Hopkinson.

## **CONGREGATIONAL RETREAT ANNOUNCED**

The WUU Board and the Congregational Planning Committee have announced a Congregational Retreat planned for Saturday, February 25, 2006, from 10 AM to 4 PM. Yes, that's next year but mark your calendars now! Lunch and child care will be available.

This is meant to be an inclusive event - long-time members and new, young and old - we want to hear members' and friends' views in a relaxed atmosphere. We expect to focus on our congregational identity - who we think we are - and where we think we'd like to be headed. There will be opportunity for all to speak - and be heard.

More information - and plenty of reminders - will be in future WUU Newsletters.

## **NON-DENOMINATIONAL MARRIAGE CONFERENCE**

Kingsmill Resort on November 18 - 20, please visit [www.familylife.com](http://www.familylife.com) and go to the link on Conferences. Invitations have been issued to all the local area temples, chapels, churches, and also to various organizations.

## **POTLUCK AND VIDEO – NOVEMBER 11**

The WUU Welcoming Committee invites you to our first congregational event. Please join us for a: POTLUCK AND VIDEO - November 11th at 5:30 in the Sanctuary. After enjoying a healthy meal we will watch *A Love Story--in the Face of Hate* by Dorothy May Emerson. *In 2004, over the protests of the Governor of Virginia, the state legislature went further than any other in the country by prohibiting CONTRACTS which 'purport to bestow the privileges or obligations of marriage' between two individuals of the same-sex. This educational, entertaining, inspiring and disturbing documentary looks at the impact of the law through the lives of one couple, forced to leave the state when the discriminatory and arguably unconstitutional legislation went into effect. This story transcends 'gay rights'--it's about 'human rights'.*

## **TABERNACLE BAND HOLIDAY DATE SET**

There's a nip in the air, Thanksgiving is just around the corner and Christmas will be here before you know it! That means - ta dah! - time for Tabernacle Band. For those who might not know, this is our intergenerational "no fault" orchestra that plays twice a year for services. We will play Sunday, December 11 with one rehearsal before the service at 10am. This is an experience for all ages and instruments (we mean it!). For music or more information contact Vicki Hall.



## **EXPERIENCE THE PEOPLE**

### **AND PLACES OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

A March 18-26 tour has been planned and will be led by the Rev. Dr. Gordon Gibson, who was involved in the early stages of the 1965 Selma voting rights campaign and was the Unitarian Universalist minister in Mississippi 1969-84. He led similar tours in 2004 and 2005. For details and registration information, you can visit the Meadville Lombard website ([www.meadville.edu](http://www.meadville.edu)) or write to the Academic Office, Meadville Lombard Theological School, 5701 S. Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637. Registration is on a first-come basis with some of the 30 seats reserved for theological students who will be taking this as a credit course.

## **THE WELCOMING COMMITTEE ...**

...will meet on Sunday, November 9th at 9 am before service for a breakfast meeting at the Coffee Beanery on Jamestown Road. If you are Interested in attending, please join us. Also, be sure to check out the latest activities of the Welcoming Committee on the WUU website.

## **SPIRITUAL IMPERATIVES**

*It is time for liberal religious people to reclaim the moral agenda*

By [Krista Taves](#)

8.15.05

It is time for liberal religious people to reclaim the moral agenda because those who are controlling it now are damaging our people. And I think that Unitarian Universalists are well placed to do this because our religion provides a truer and better way of approaching human life than religions that view the world through one lens, one truth.

Now this is not something you usually hear from a Unitarian Universalist pulpit, is it, that we are a better way. We are not ones to openly say that what we have is better than another religion. We are historically quiet about who we are, careful not to become like those self-righteous religions many of us left. We are so intent on being different that sometimes it's hard for us to say that we are a religion, much less that we believe the religion we offer is better. And yet, in our quietness, we have marginalized ourselves, failing to spread our liberating message of freedom and equality to a world that desperately needs it.

It is time for us to be clear about what we stand for, because if we don't, others will. If we continue to be quiet, we will be branded the religion that stands for nothing, where you can believe anything you want. Then liberal religion becomes synonymous with permissiveness, immorality, and laxness.

We do stand for something. We stand for freedom, equality, and compassion. We stand for a world that contains many truths. But this is not a religion where you can believe anything you want, because we are called to the free and responsible search for truth. We are accountable for the consequences of our beliefs. So although we promote freedom, it is not freedom at all costs. This is not a religion for lone rangers. This is a religion for lovers of freedom who are called into community, because in community we are held accountable for the consequences of our beliefs.

We believe that all religions have the right to exist. We have a history of practicing radical tolerance of beliefs that differ from ours. But often we think tolerance means affirming all beliefs as equally true. Well, not all religions are equally true. If we were to each look deep inside, most of us see some religions as better than others, but we are loath to say that. In our fear of judgment, we have abdicated our right to judge beliefs that are damaging our society. Those beliefs have the right to exist. And we have the right to judge them.

I want to be clear. There is a difference between judging a person and judging a belief. We are not about judging people. We believe in the inherent worth and dignity of every person. However, we do have the right to judge beliefs. When women are dying, when women are being scarred and their families wounded because one set of beliefs is being imposed on them, it is appropriate to judge.

What I wish for this nation is to reclaim an understanding of life that cannot be confined, where every woman and man has access to a full range of choices so that we can each make free and responsible choices about what we do with and to our bodies.

But that freedom is being dangerously threatened, and so we have some choices to consider making before we are denied the right to do so by this dangerous political agenda. Unitarian Universalists have something to say and something to do. The time for silence is over.

*"The Spiritual Imperative of Choice" is excerpted from a Borden Award-winning sermon originally presented to the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of New Orleans on January 22, 2005, where the author was serving as interim minister*

**MOTIONS OF THE BOARD/ACTIONS TAKEN - October 20, 2005**

1) MOTION: That the Board adopt the Implementation Plan for a Safe Congregation, as written in the October 10, 2005 *Report of the WUU Safe Congregations Task Force*. Moved: Dave Banks - Seconded: Mike Gaus, Jacqui Winther - Approved.

2) MOTION: That the Board approves setting the "Salary plus Housing" figure at \$65,000 for the Ministerial Candidates, with the understanding that such salary may be subject to discussion with the Negotiating Committee. Moved: Dave Stanford – Seconded: Dave Wilcox - Approved.

3) MOTION: That the Board accept the Challenge Proposal from the Auction Committee to participate in the Auction by proposing that: the current Board of Directors provide food and service for the WUU Auction on Saturday, November 5, 2005. Moved: Dave Stanford - Seconded: Dave Banks - Approved.

4) MOTION: The Board endorses the Welcoming Congregations Program; The Board recognizes the Welcoming Congregations Program as a WUU Social Justice activity; and the Board authorizes a WUU website link to the Welcoming Congregations process. Moved: Bunkie Righter - Seconded: Jan Brown - Approved.

5) MOTION: That the WUU Website post a positive statement on its homepage to the effect that Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists are in the process of becoming a Welcoming Congregation. Moved: Dave Banks - Seconded: Dave Wilcox - Approved.

**WILLIAMSBURG UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS**

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