



# The HUU Review

*The purpose of our religious community is to support each other in our various inward journeys toward truth. We will endeavor to do this in an atmosphere of mutual acceptance, openness and friendship. Committed social action on behalf of the local and global communities will be a natural expression of this purpose.*

*Harrisonburg Unitarian Universalists since 1989*

*Summer, 2006*

## **A marriage debate moment**

**Christine Robinson shares the following:** On Wednesday, March 1, 2006, in Annapolis at a hearing on the proposed Federal Constitutional Amendment to prohibit same-sex marriage, Jamie Raskin, Professor of Law at American University, was requested to testify. At the end of his testimony, Republican Senator Nancy Jacobs said: "Mr. Raskin, my Bible says marriage is only between a man and a woman. What do you have to say about that?"

Raskin replied: "Senator, when you took your oath of office, you placed your hand on the Bible and swore to uphold the Constitution. You did not place your hand on the Constitution and swear to uphold the Bible."

The room erupted with applause. **(By the way, did you know Virginia has its own proposed "Marriage Amendment" – going on ballots in November? For details and what you can do, read Chris' account on page 5.)**

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## **ST. LOUIS: visioning through The Arch**

Five members of our congregation attended the annual UU General Assembly on June 21-25 in St. Louis, Mo.: David Lane and Grayson Sless (serving as HUU's delegates) plus Eric Milnes, Charlotte Shnaider and Merle Wenger. Merle shares the following report (with contributions from David):

Sitting in my east-facing hotel room 18 floors above the banks of the Mississippi River, a viewpoint focused homeward toward Harrisonburg through the eye of The Arch of St. Louis, that arch built to commemorate the Westward expansion of Lewis and Clark and the development of the Louisiana purchase, I realize that Thomas Jefferson and America did not benefit from Lewis and Clark's exploration over the continental divide and off to the "Sea of Peace," the Pacific Ocean, until two years later when the explorers returned to Washington. Returning from "GA" feels the same. We return with our minds filled with ideas, questions, suggestions and thoughts, but it is in passing on that information that the journey to GA feels complete. It is when we intertwine those new ideas with our own stories, and share them with you, that the trip gains real permanence. Here is a sampling of what we heard in St. Louis:

**"I'm not willing to let bad actors lay sole claim to the discussion and explanation of Western religion."**

**—William Sinkford**

**"Humanism is a theological idea that says we ourselves make the difference. At heart, all UU's are humanists."** **—William Sinkford**, answering a question pertaining to the debate between humanists and UU's who don't identify themselves as such.

**"Progressives must put aside ego and tiny differences in theology and politics in order to build partnership on big issues."** **—Peter Laarman**

**"A God that picks and chooses is no God at all."**  
**—Rob Hardies** from *All Souls in Washington DC*

**"A religion that embraces some souls has been called Good News, but Unitarian Universalism – embracing all souls—is even better news."** **—Rob Hardies or William Sinkford (?)**

*(continued)*

**“In our survey of UU churches, churches with declining attendance often described their church as feeling ‘like a close-knit family.’” –Peter Morales**

**“Pastoral care from person to person is what keeps people coming to church...” and “A church will only grow proportionately to its ability to bear pain.”**  
–Peter Morales

**“Children are not our future, they are our right now.”**  
–overheard by Merle

**“When you have white hair, you have to take advantage of it.”** –Charlotte, on her adventures crossing the continent for her daughter’s wedding, then reaching St Louis in time for GA.

**“When you sit in a wheel chair, you sometimes have to take advantage of that, too.”** –Eric Milnes

**“Fear of ministers getting loose (out of control) is an ongoing theme of the Association.”** –overheard by David

**“Successful ministers discover their mission is to realize the vision of the congregation rather than the opposite.”** –overheard by David

**“Every task a committee tackles also has a spiritual dimension.”** –reported by Grayson

**“It’s a bit shocking to see my Mom turning more radical, you know, in spite of the fact that her odometer just keeps turning . . .”** –Eric

**“Ministers and members need to follow the same road map.”** –reported by David

**“Moments of despair are opportunities for theological breakthrough.”** –Rebecca Parker, president of Starr King Theological Seminary

**“Looking back over the past sixty years, I wonder how much more devastation do we need to experience before we realize that the Apocalypse has already happened.”** –Rebecca Parker

**“My favorite T-shirt from a friend reads ‘555—A Lesser Evil.’”** Also: **“We can not rely on a Hallmark greeting card faith. The deepest answers only arise when we try to answer the deepest, most painful questions.”** –Rebecca Parker

**“How bad was the coffee at Econolodge? Mom drank my coffee and offered me her tea without even realizing she had made the switch!”** –Eric

**“Religion is a niche market.”** –reported by Grayson

**“When things get ugly—that’s when we need to stay in community.”** –Reported by David

**“A mistake about creation will necessarily lead to a mistake about God.”** –Michael Dowd, the evolution evangelist, quoting Thomas Aquinas

**“We are the universe becoming aware of itself.”**  
–Dowd, quoting de Chardin

**“Why are we always teaching leadership? What about teaching followship?”**  
–Connie Goodbread and Susan Smith (A team of church problem solvers)

**“In our opinion, most congregations have a few sacred cows they need to run through the meat grinder.”** –Connie Goodbread and Susan Smith

**“There is no one right way to interpret, model and think about the whole of creation.”** And, **“God is a legitimate though not necessary proper name for the ultimate reality.”** –Michael Dowd

**Want to hear more? Think about going to Portland, Oregon for GA 2007!**

## **SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD**

The board met on June 11 at the Harrisonburg church. New member **Linda Royster** – who joined our congregation and was quickly elected for a seat this spring -- visited and got an idea of what she is getting into as our newest member. **Sarah Cheverton** has completed her term of office, but will continue as Social Justice Committee chair. Thanks to Linda and Sarah.

The major act of business was to set up a congregational meeting on July 9 to add another board member (having remained short one member since Fall 05) and to vote on a change in our bylaws that will permit people to be notified of congregational meetings by e-mail. We will continue to “snail-mail” those notices for those who do not have Internet access or prefer USPS mail notification. The entire congregational meeting should not last more than five minutes.

On July 16 we have planned a BYOE (bring garden equipment) clean-up and barbecue to do lawn and garden type work at the church. The event will begin at 5 PM (see pages 3 and 4). As a fringe benefit, this means our grounds will be in tip-top shape when the New Jersey congregation youth overnight here on the following weekend. Once again we plan to have a “greet our visitors” Saturday July 22 evening picnic followed by sleepover for those interested.

The membership committee reported that they had at least three new people ready to join HUU. The social justice committee reported on plans to put an informational ad in the Daily News-Record concerning the Marriage Amendment. –Merle Wenger

## HUU CALENDAR

*Events not otherwise indicated take place at the church. Services and children's religious education both begin Sundays at 10:30 a.m. Please join us after church for a potluck meal the first Sunday of each month.*

*ASTERIX\*\*\* mean look for details in the "EVENTS" section following this calendar.*

*Everything listed here is subject to change!! – for updates, see the weekly Order of Service, the e-news and/or the website, [http://huuweb.org/sunday\\_services.htm](http://huuweb.org/sunday_services.htm). Inclement-weather closings are called in to WSVB (550 AM) and WHSV TV-3 and posted on the website.*

**Sunday, July 2:** Scott Cole will present "Patriot's Voices"

**Saturday, July 8:** *First "Adopt-a-Highway" pickup.*\*\*\*

**Sunday, July 9:**

- Pat Peason will present "Empty and Wonderful: Experiencing the Brilliant Clarity of Ever-present Awareness."
- **Congregational meeting following the service.**\*\*\*

**Sunday, July 16:**

- The Rev. Robert Hughes will present "Our UU Ancestor: William Ellery Channing"
- **Buildings-and-Grounds cleanup starting at 5 p.m.; potluck BBQ.**\*\*\*

**Friday & Sat., July 21-22:** *HUU Summer Yard Sale (at House of Oak)*\*\*\*

**Saturday, July 22:** *Potluck and campout with NJ youth group.*\*\*\*

**Sunday, July 23:** Mike Mohajeri will give a presentation related to the Baha'i Faith.

**Sunday, July 30:**

- Frank Albrecht will present "It Rains on Everybody, So Why Give Thanks?"
- **Town Hall meeting following service.**\*\*\*

**Sunday, Aug. 6:** Carol Quintero will present "A Native-American Journey"

**Sunday, Aug. 13:** Sarah Cheverton will present our "Blessing of the Animals" – pets are invited!

**Sunday, Aug. 20:** (Tentative) – Those who attended UU General Assembly will report.

**Sunday, Aug. 27:** CYCORE (Children and Youth Committee on Religious Education) will present a service.

**Sunday, Sept. 3:** The annual "Water Communion." Bring water from your journeys (real or symbolic).

**Sunday, Sept. 10:** The HUU Board will present a service on "Beloved Community."

**Sunday, Sept. 17:** David Lane and Michele O'Connor will present a "Coyote" service.

**Sunday, Sept. 24:** Merle Wenger will present "Losing Faith."

**Sunday, Oct. 1:** The Red Tent Group will present "Forgiveness and Atonement."

**Sunday, Oct. 15:** Merle Wenger will present "Finding Faith."

**Sunday, Oct. 29:**

- All Souls' Day service (details TBA).
- **Town Hall meeting.**\*\*\*

**Sunday, Nov. 19:** The Social Justice Committee will present "Guest at Your Table"

**Sunday, Nov. 26:** "Bread Communion" (TBA)

**Sunday, Dec. 17:** Winter Solstice service (TBA)

**Sunday, Dec. 24:** Christmas service (TBA)

**Sunday, Dec. 31:** **Town Hall meeting**\*\*\* following Sunday service.

### \*\*\*EVENTS

#### \*\*\*First Adopt-a-Highway Pickup, July 8:

The Social Justice Committee is sponsoring HUU's involvement in the Virginia Adopt-a-Highway program;

we have adopted 2.39 miles of Rawley Pike, including the road in front of the HUU building. HUU is committed to picking up trash along this area 4 times a year.

The first pickup is scheduled for Saturday morning, **July 8**. Chris Spiller is organizing this event and needs at least 5-6 volunteers who are willing and able to walk part or all of the 2.39 mile section. Trash bags, safety vests and other supplies will be provided. Chris will provide a safety orientation before we leave.

Please contact Chris if you can help out. His email address is [cspiller@alumni.virginia.edu](mailto:cspiller@alumni.virginia.edu). Or call the church number (867-0073) and leave a message.

This event supports our 7th UU Principle: Respect the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

-- Sarah Cheverton (*Social Justice Committee Chair*)

\*\*\*The board is requesting a **5 minute congregational meeting** immediately following the Sunday morning service on **July 9** (see "Splinters" on page 2).

\*\*\*The board is planning a **BYOE (bring you own equipment) building and grounds clean up and potluck barbecue**, **Sunday July 16** at 5 PM.

\*\*\***The HUU Summer Yard Sale** will be held in the parking lot of House of Oak & Sofas at 2475 South Main Street, Harrisonburg **July 21 and 22**. We need stuff to sell, people to price and sell, and buyers to buy. Please talk to Merle Wenger ([mrfurn@msn.com](mailto:mrfurn@msn.com)), Charlotte Shnaider, or Elinor Fankhauser if you have questions (see contact info on the back page). At the last two yard sales, Friday sales have exceeded Saturday's so bring your things as early in the day as possible on Friday. Someone will be on-site from 8 AM until 8 PM on Friday and 6 AM until 4 PM Saturday. If possible, bring your goods on Friday morning, or have someone bring them for you; it saves the extra burden of storing and setting up. E-mail Merle if you can help "mind the sale." We're looking for 3 people Friday 8-12, 3 people 12-4, and 2 people 4-8. Saturday we need 2 people 6-10, 2 people 10-2 and 3 people 2-6 for cleanup.

\*\*\***The Morristown, NJ UU Fellowship youth group** that we hosted last July will be returning again to use our church for an overnight stay **Saturday, July 22**, during their annual journey to build Habitat for Humanity homes in South Carolina. We plan to eat dinner with them, potluck style, and invite anyone who wishes to join CYCORE for their summer evening campout.

\*\*\***Town Hall Meetings** – regularly scheduled after church on fifth Sundays – provide opportunity for HUU members or friends to make suggestions and raise concerns for our fellowship. Please take part!

## **AMNESTY AND UU: from William F. Schultz's journey**

The Spring 06 issue of *Amnesty International* includes a column titled "Rage Against the Dying of Light." In that column, William F. Schultz writes, "I went into the ministry more than 35 years ago because I couldn't stand the fact that life entails death, that

everyone I loved would eventually die, that no matter how kind, generous-hearted, wise or robust, each one of us eventually succumbs to that fate. I took Dylan Thomas' words as my mantra: 'Rage, rage against the dying of the light.' I didn't think that by becoming a minister I could ease the hard facts. (Had I thought that, I would have chosen a different faith than Unitarian Universalism!) But I wanted to live intimately with death, to not run from it, to accompany others into its world and therefore to understand something more about life. I expected to spend a lifetime as a parish minister who comes up against death and hardship all the time.

"Well, it didn't work out as I had planned. I was a parish minister for less than three years before I was asked to resuscitate the UU denomination's national social justice program. I went on to become president of the church and then was appointed executive director of Amnesty International USA. As a religious bureaucrat, I managed to keep some distance from death. But interestingly, through Amnesty International, death and I have become reacquainted. You can hardly be a human rights activist and not be on intimate terms with death, torture, 'disappearances,' political killings and state executions that occur in so much of our world..."

These paragraphs come from Schultz's farewell message as the former Unitarian Universalist Association president retires from 12 years of heading AI-USA. He concludes on a hopeful note that in working for human rights, "We can actually sometimes defeat death's dominion—at least for a time."

See [amnestyusa.org](http://amnestyusa.org) or look for AI's Spring 06 magazine on our community info table.



***"There may be coarse hypocrites, who consciously affect beliefs and emotions for the sake of gulling the world, but Bulstrode was not one of them. He was simply a man whose desires had been stronger than his theoretic beliefs, and who had gradually explained the gratification of his desires into satisfactory agreement with those beliefs. If this be hypocrisy, it is a process which shows itself occasionally in us all, to whatever confession we belong, and whether we believe in the future perfection of our race or the nearest date fixed for the end of the world; whether we regard the earth as a putrefying nidus for a saved remnant, including ourselves, or have a passionate belief in the solidarity of mankind."***

***—George Eliot, from Middlemarch***

*An introduction to this novel says "Bulstrode is the first serious study of the religious hypocrite." He is a pious stuffed shirt whose ill-gotten riches catch up with him and bring about his disgrace. Yet one thing that grabs me about Eliot (born Mary Anne Evans; 1819-1880) is her knack, without sentimentality, of sparking the reader's compassion toward even the most villainous characters...perhaps by showing us some uneasy glimpses of ourselves in them.— c.e.*

## THE MARRIAGE AMENDMENT: Acting on my faith

When you go to the polls in November, you'll be asked to vote "Yes" or "No" on the following question:

**Question: Shall Article I (the Bill of Rights) of the Constitution of Virginia be amended to state: "That only a union between one man and one woman may be a marriage valid in or recognized by this Commonwealth and its political subdivisions. This Commonwealth and its political subdivisions shall not create or recognize a legal status for relationships of unmarried individuals that intends to approximate the design, qualities, significance, or effects of marriage. Nor shall this Commonwealth or its political subdivisions create or recognize another union, partnership, or other legal status to which is assigned the rights, benefits, obligations, qualities, or effects of marriage."?**

A friend of mine said to me recently that defeating this proposed Constitutional amendment "will take an enormous amount of courage; perhaps more courage than any of us has ever had to summon before in all of our lives. It would take all of us, young and old... and, except for the few of us that seem aware of what is at stake, I feel very much alone." I share my friend's thoughts and feelings. When I look around me, it seems as if those who want to amend Virginia's Constitution understand the implications and want this more badly than those of us whose lives are most directly affected. This is a moment in history that could set us back for decades; for many of us, **for the rest of our lives**. I don't want to look back and lament that I had not done what I could to protect my family.

The arguments behind this amendment are essentially religious, even though its proponents try to couch them in terms of inaccurate history, rejected psychological theories, and poor social science. What you can do:

- Help the people in your life understand what is at stake and encourage them to vote.
- Make a donation on-line to Equality Virginia ([www.equalityvirginia.org](http://www.equalityvirginia.org)).
- Volunteer for The Commonwealth Campaign by email [volunteer@votenova.org](mailto:volunteer@votenova.org); by phone, 804.643.2050; or website: [www.votenova.org](http://www.votenova.org)
- Attend Equality Virginia's Annual Statewide Meeting and Activists' Conference Saturday, July 22, 9:30am-5pm. Keynote speaker Candace Gingrich will address learning how to become an effective advocate for change. Register at [www.equalityvirginia.org](http://www.equalityvirginia.org).

There is nothing more important to me than protecting my family. I believe that we can defeat this amendment if we commit ourselves to this, that we can do a lot of necessary educating along the way, and that we will be transformed in the process.

– Christine Robinson

## ABOUT COMMUNICATIONS

**This newsletter's** next submission deadline and publication date remain, as we go to press, To Be Announced. This issue is dated "Summer 2006," not the usual "July-August." Normally, on our every-other-month schedule, a September-October issue would appear the first week of September, but Chris and Robin (Chris Edwards, newsletter editor, and Robin McNallie, communications committee chair) expect to be away from Aug. 15 until around Sept. 25.

Can an angel(s) out there pick up the job?? If you might be interested in doing so, or helping, talk with us, or, after we have sailed, contact other communications committee members (Pat Geary or Meredith Moore; Pat will be away from Aug. 30-Sept. 15), or board/committee liaison Amy Thompson. Contact info is on the back page of this issue. If no one should jump to this challenge, we can plan for a "Fall 06" issue in October.

**The HUU Members and Friends Directory** continues to be faithfully updated by webmaster Pat Geary. We have not printed directories recently because the information changes so fast -- however, anyone who would like an online copy in pdf format may email her at [Pat@huuweb.org](mailto:Pat@huuweb.org). (Also, a printed copy can be made available for the computer-challenged; if you would like one, contact Chris E.)

## NOTES

**WhaleCoast Alaska 2006:** Five Alaskan UU fellowships invite fellow-UUs to eco-cultural programs through summer. See [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.

**Skyline Literacy Coalition needs volunteers** to help adults improve their reading and writing skills and/or learn English. Please consider becoming a tutor -- many adult learners are waiting. For information on tutor-training workshops or other questions, call 879-2933.

**An Alcoholics Anonymous meeting** is held at 8:30 each Sunday evening in our church's Religious Education building. AA meetings are open to all who seek recovery from alcohol addiction.

**UU singles:** For a matching service, see [www.uusingles.com](http://www.uusingles.com), write to "UUSingles," PO Box 21805, Seattle, WA 98111, or phone 206-760-4999.

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**Who would have remembered Patrick Henry had he written, "What's wrong with giving up a little liberty if it protects me from death"?**

–columnist Robert Steinback

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**HUU MEETS:**

**Adult RE:** Discussion group Thursdays, twice monthly. Contact Norm Lawson, 438-8327

**House Church:** Contact Elizabeth Scott, 434-8283; [elizabethscott@att.net](mailto:elizabethscott@att.net).

**Board:** 2nd Sundays, 12:15 pm

**Building & Grounds:** 4th Sunday, 12:15 p.m., 433-5183; chair, Merle Wenger

**Campus Ministry (JMU):** Contact Kevin

Caran, 434-6314, [kevincaran@yahoo.com](mailto:kevincaran@yahoo.com)

**Caring circle** Contact Elinor Fankhauser, 438-8558 or [EliFank@aol.com](mailto:EliFank@aol.com).

**Choir:** Rehearsals on break for summer.

Detains: call 540-886-0517; director, Charlotte Shnaider

**Communications:** 434-0457, chair, Robin McNallie (see "Communications" note, p. 5)

**CYCOR (Children's religious ed.):** Carol

Quintero, DRE (director of RE), 249-8718; [Carol@HUUweb.org](mailto:Carol@HUUweb.org)

**Finance:** Chair, Barkley Rosser; 434-5575

**Knitting Guild:** Contact, Elinor Fankhauser, 438-8558 or [EliFank@aol.com](mailto:EliFank@aol.com).

**Membership:** Chair, Mary Hahn, 833-5156

**Social Justice:** Last Tuesdays, 6:30 pm, except during break through summer; chair, Sarah Cheverton, 879-9432, [Sarah@hUUweb.org](mailto:Sarah@hUUweb.org)

**Sunday Services:** 3rd Sunday, 12:15 pm, chair, Bernie Mathes, 433-3424;

[mathes@rice.edu](mailto:mathes@rice.edu)

**THE "HUU REVIEW" TEAM:**

Chris Edwards, Pat Geary, Deb Stevens-Fitzgerald, Norm Lawson, Meredith Moore, Robin McNallie

**SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 a.m. weekly  
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM during school year,  
10:30 a.m. Sundays  
POTLUCK first Sunday of the month following service.  
All are welcome!**

**INFO CHANNELS --**

- **HUU Review:** next deadline, [TBA](#) (see "Communications" note, p. 5)
- **Weekly e-news and Sunday Orders of Service:** give items to **Pat Geary**, 433-1040; [pat@HUUweb.org](mailto:pat@HUUweb.org). E-news Items must be in by Wednesday morning; info. for Orders of Service by Thursday noon.
- **[hUU-announcements@hUUweb.org](mailto:hUU-announcements@hUUweb.org)** – Use this address to send brief announcements to HUU members and friends about events of interest to the HUU community.
- **For any HUU online-related questions:** contact Pat Geary, webmaster, 433-1040; [Pat@HUUweb.org](mailto:Pat@HUUweb.org).

*Visit our website, [hUUweb.org](http://hUUweb.org)*

*Unitarian Universalist Association website: [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)*

***I claim to be no more than an average person with less than average ability. I have not the shadow of a doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith.***

***--Mohandas Gandhi***

**Harrisonburg Unitarian Universalists**

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***(Return Service Requested)***