



# 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 ~ One Journey, Many Paths ~ Winter (Jan. -March), 2009*

*WELCOME to new congregation members **Thad Christophel** and **Martha & Rich Sider**. . . and new HUU Board member **Jim Tibbetts!***

## **WHEEL OF LIFE**

Our thoughts have been with **David Lane**, whose father, Harold (Hal) Lane, died just before Thanksgiving in Michigan, at the age of 89; **Jim Tibbetts**, whose mother, Dorothy L. Tibbetts, died on Thanksgiving Day in New Hampshire, at 93; and **Martha Sider** following the recent death of her father, Merle Ebersole, at 85, in Harrisburg, Pa.

Welcome to **Elijah James**, new son of **Holly Labbe** and **Scott Cole**, born Dec. 29. He's the baby brother of Ada and Wyatt.

Blessings on **Meredith Moore** and **Eric LaFrenière**, who have announced their engagement.

We wish the best to **Kai Degner**, a familiar face at HUU, as he picks up the gavel as Mayor of Harrisonburg...and to **Elinor** and **Don Fankhauser**, long-time HUU members, as they move to Myrtle Beach, SC.

*(Let's thank **Bernie Mathes** for creating the above, new column to help keep members and friends in touch with each others' joys, sorrows and life transitions. Have something you'd like to share? Contact Bernie before the next "HUU Review" issue (tentative deadline, March 29), [bernie@huuweb.org](mailto:bernie@huuweb.org); 433-3424. (Note: this newsletter is posted online, so information cannot be protected.)*



## **From Her, We've Received. . .**

Sadly for HUU, **Charlotte Shnaider** has resigned as music director. A decade ago, this long-term pro joined our congregation and took on the work, as a volunteer, of shepherding its fledgling choir. (Heard that joke about

Unitarians not being able to sing because we get hung up pondering what the words mean? That was us, pre-Charlotte.) Since moving to Staunton, she's faithfully made the long drive here for each Sunday service and rehearsal. Charlotte expects to continue attending HUU frequently, and playing the piano. As she hands over a wealth of materials, she points out that we have several other very musical members. We'll keep singing – yet we'll sorely miss her songful leadership, as attested in the following tribute (sung to the tune of our Call to Worship, "May We Have Eyes," and first printed here when penned by Merle Wenger three years ago).

*May we have ears that delight in music  
Enraptured by Puccini, in time with J.S. Bach,  
Let us glory in Charlotte's perseverance.*



**Songstress Charlotte** (photo from HUUweb.org) . . .  
**Mayor Kai** (from hburgnews.com)



## ***SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD***

### **October:**

The month's big event was that we were approached by Al-Jazeera USA to be a location for pre-election television coverage. However, they decided to film at Clementine Café instead. — *Judith Hollowood*

### **November:**

- The Board began considering a Finance Committee request to provide guidance on long-term goals and whether there might be support for an active canvass to support (or maintain) those goals.
- The Board is grateful to Elizabeth Scott for taking on the Scrip program, and to David Lane and Julie Caran for serving as a nominating committee for the Shared-Ministry Team.
- The Aesthetics Committee is meeting to consider a new sign.
- Thanks to the efforts of many in the congregation, the church had a successful yard sale. --*Lincoln Gray*

**December:** The board met at Judith's home with Emma, who will facilitate the board retreat. At the business portion of the meeting, we handled routine business, primarily follow ups from earlier meetings. No unusual items in the financial report. -- *Linda Royster*

## ***BOOK REVIEW***

***Hot, Flat, and Crowded*, by Thomas Friedman**  
Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 412 pp

In a profile of Thomas Friedman, who writes reassuring books about unsettling things, Ian Parker in the Nov. 10, 2008 New Yorker, says: "*Hot, Flat, and Crowded* is impressive for its synthesis of data, and for its attention to unglamorous detail." That may be a problem. The example after example that Friedman gives reminds me of the story of the reviewer of Darwin's *Origin of the Species* who said, "We assure him over and over that he has made his case, and to please leave the courtroom."

Nevertheless, Friedman's book holds your interest, perhaps because of the convincing details and for the dark days they portend. This is a big important book that, in this reviewer's opinion, is a must-read by anyone interested in the quality of life in the near future and not-so-near future.

The dust cover says Friedman "takes a fresh and provocative look at two of the biggest challenges we face today: America's surprising loss of focus and national purpose since 9/11, and the global environmental crisis." I think this is a fair description. Friedman told Parker that his book "takes the five subjects that are written about separately — energy and resource supply and demand, climate change, petro-dictatorship, biodiversity loss, and energy poverty — and says they all have a single solution, which is abundant,

cheap, clean reliable electrons." Energy.

You won't find "petro-dictators" in the dictionary. By it Friedman means the authoritarian companies of the Arab world and elsewhere that are getting rich from the massive amount of wealth being transferred to them by the oil-hungry countries of the world, especially the United States and China.

In its first weeks the book sold 40,000 copies a week. It has been on the Washington Post bestseller list for 14 weeks as of this writing (late December). Friedman's earlier book, *The World is Flat*, sold nearly four million copies in 34 countries.

In his first chapter, Friedman quotes a Chinese proverb: "When the wind changes direction, there are those who build walls and those who build windmills." Then he asks if we are going to hunker down and build more walls, "or will we build windmills that we will use ourselves and export to others in every shape, color, flavor, and style?" He says "we have been living far too long on borrowed time and borrowed dimes. We need to get back to work on our country and on our planet. The hour is late, the stakes couldn't be higher, the project couldn't be harder, the payoff couldn't be greater."

Then, he writes, the rest of the book is about how to make it happen.

Friedman says the reason "adopting a Code Green strategy" is so necessary, so relevant, and so opportune "is that we are entering the 'Energy-Climate Era'."

I am not downgrading the importance of this book when I say that, to me, there is something of the pie-in-the-sky attitude in some of Friedman's writing. For instance: he says that two "enormously powerful forces are impacting our planet in fundamental ways: global warming and soaring global population growth." He thinks we can reverse these. My faith in human nature is not so strong that I think these forces are going to be reversed, or even slowed down, until there is widespread suffering, not just in the Third World countries, but also in the United States and other rich countries of the world. But Friedman is an optimist and I tend to be a pessimist when it comes to changing human nature. I hope he is right.

Friedman finds many scientists who agree with him and who furnish him with statistics. But the politicians, who must please the majority of their constituents, have to contend with the immediate and selfish interests of the voters — with human nature.

However, most of us know he has a legitimate concern. He says: "So as we enter the Energy-Climate Era, we are leaving an era in which whatever effects we were having on the climate and the environment were perceived to be manageable and reversible — acid rain, ozone depletion, conventional pollution, for instance — and entering an era in which our effects on the climate and earth's natural systems are becoming potentially unmanageable and irreversible."

--*Jim Geary*

## *HUU Calendar*

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

**Everything listed here is subject to change! – for updates, see the weekly Order of Service, the e-news and/or the website, [HUUweb.org](http://www.huuweb.org). For inclement-weather closings, check WHSV-TV, WSVB (550 AM), <http://www.wHSV.com/closings> and/or <http://HUUweb.org/>**

**Sunday, Jan. 11:** The Rev. Kirk Ballin will present "Conversations with a Baha'i Friend."

**Sunday, Jan. 18:** Harvey Yoder will present "In a World of Barriers, Can We Build More Bridges?"

**Tuesday, Jan. 20:** *Presidential Inauguration Day.*

**Sunday, Jan. 25:** Den Frumen will present "Mystery and Miracle: Music and Lyrics to a Spiritual Journey"

**Sunday, Feb. 1:**

- Barkley Rosser will present "The Economy."
- Potluck following the service.

**Sunday, Feb. 8:** The Rev. Robert Hughes will present today's service.

**Sunday, Feb. 15:** Judith Hollowood and friends will present a poetry service.

**Sunday, Feb. 22:** The Rev. John Irvine will present "Living in a Great Story."

**Sunday, March 1:**

- Cheryl Talley will present "Moving Beyond Racism."
- Potluck following the service.

**Sunday, March 8:** Rev Emma Chattin will present a service.

**Sunday, March 15:** The HUU Finance Committee will present today's service.

**Friday, March 20:** *Spring Equinox*

**Sunday, March 22:** JMU Campus Ministry will present today's service.

**Sunday, March 29:**

- David Lane and Grayson Sless present "About GA" (the annual UU Association's General Assembly)
- "Town Hall Meeting" (our 5<sup>th</sup>-Sunday discussion of congregation concerns), scheduled following the service.

### *Midwinter Thoughts:*

**1:** Have you noticed the evenings have been getting lighter since early December, but the mornings seem to be getting darker? Whats going on here? Isn't Dec. 21 the shortest day in the year? Well, yes, but through some quirk of astronomical relations between the sun and the earth, the sunsets have been getting earlier since about the 11th of December while the sunrises keep getting later well into January. (You can verify this; see [http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/RS\\_OneYear.php](http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/RS_OneYear.php))

--Jim Geary

**2. Note from a December Caribbean cruise:** Dark, in those latitudes, only arrived about half an hour later than at home. Except for one or two brief showers, every day was perfectly beautiful, shirtsleeve weather; occasionally hot in the port towns, though not stifling like summers at home. So my internal compass quickly programmed itself to Summer, and expected days to last longer; I kept getting surprised when stepping on deck around 6 pm and finding it dark.

--Chris Edwards

**3.** January 20 will still be winter. Maybe overcast, likely cold. Yet the sun will set a minute later than the day before. Days will already have been lengthening for about a month. . .

*Could that be a metaphor? :-)*

\*\*\*\*\*

***"Sit down in the room and work it out, and if you can't, it doesn't belong to any of you."***

-- This advice, from a 6-year-old in a Palestinian or Israeli classroom, came in response to a question on what any groups might do if they have a conflict that is leading toward war. Peter Yarrow (of Peter, Paul and Mary) reported asking that question, and getting that child's wise answer, while visiting international schools for an anti-bullying and conflict-resolution program (see [www.operationrespect.org](http://www.operationrespect.org)).

## Our "Spiritual Demographics"

In the Fall '08 "HUU Review," we reprinted results from a "Spiritual Demographics" survey taken in the Providence, R.I. U.U. congregation (see the website, "UU Glue," <http://www.uufaq.com/#glue>). Then we asked HUU members and friends for input. The three questions were:

**What are you?** -- *By religious orientation?* (Abbreviated henceforth as, "**What**")

**How would you label your religious philosophy or theology?** (Abbr.: "**Philosophy**")

**Into what church, or with what family religious identity, were you born** (Abbr.: "**By birth**")

The ten answers received so far are a delightful mix. Here they are (with no attempt at data analysis. If you haven't sent a response, feel free to send it for next time.) Enjoy!

### Julie Caran

**What:** Unitarian, Universalist, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, and Pagan, in that order. (Hence, a good UU! So don't put me in the "don't know" or "searching" categories.)

**Philosophy:** Intellectual, spiritual, and meditative; rooted in the traditions of my ancestry, growing through my own encounters and experience. See above theologies.

**By birth:** United Methodist and Jewish

### Chris Edwards

**What:** A universal worshipper who doesn't know the ultimate metaphysical answers, and doubts they are knowable.

**Philosophy:** Humanist/existentialist in practical philosophy; deist in my sense about origins. I'm a tree-hugger who sees a universe filled with power; order; awesome beauty. The source of those things can be called God. Yet though I fervently hope Desmond Tutu was right, in some ultimate sense, when he testified to faith in "a moral universe," I can discern no justice in the fates of individual humans other than whatever justice we ourselves do. Most religions, and humanism, speak of justice and mercy; the tough part is walking the walk.

**By birth:** Father, agnostic; mother, skeptical Episcopalian. I was confirmed Episcopalian, and later for some years adhered to the Baha'i Faith. I found Unitarian Universalism easy to join, since it requires no profession of a creed. Yet having discovered it also has no scriptures, mantras or prayers to fall back on in dark nights of the soul, I have held on to those from my earlier faith traditions and remained open to others.

### Gordon Fisher

(Erstwhile occasional visitor at HUU. Gordon and his wife, Dawn, niece and nephew-in-law of the late Gail Benedict, now live in South Salem, NY, but like to stay in touch.)

**What:** None-ist

**Philosophy:** Outsider-ist

**By birth:** Ancestors: Puritans; maternal grandfather: Christian Scientist; maternal grandmother: Congregationalist (I think); father: If any, I don't know what; mother: played organ in a Congregational church

when young, and sent me to one a few times when I was a child; paternal grandfather (a Grand Army of the Republic Civil War veteran): Methodist Episcopal (at least to get married); paternal grandmother: Presbyterian (at least to be given last rites).

### Jim Geary

Although I was born into a Christian tradition, Methodist on one side and Catholic on the other, I grew up under the influence of my free-thinking mother and uncle. I would say that I am an agnostic simply because I think it ridiculous to say any of us can say for sure there is no god or creator; although my intellectual thrust is that the universe had no beginning nor will it have an end, it is eternal. It is hard to say what my religious philosophy is -- somewhat humanist, somewhat Buddhist, totally determinist.

### Ralph Grove

**What:** Daoist, Humanist

**Philosophy:** All is one; human perception is inadequate to understand the reality of existence so we see only the parts. We create beliefs and myths in order to help us structure our perceptions but our beliefs are not reality.

**By birth:** None (Atheist)

### Ginny Holbrook-Heggie

**What:** Buddhist and Unitarian (not Universalist).

Affiliated with: UUBF – UU Buddhist Fellowship; Insight Meditation Community (Meets in Friends Meeting House, Dayton); and HUU.

**Philosophy:** "Label" is not the word I would use to share my religion/philosophy. However, for the survey, one would say that I follow the teachings of the Buddha and the occasional UU Buddhist or any other wayward stranger if the words impact truth. As with all teaching, if it does not make sense then I continue the search. Below are two teachings that perhaps come the closest to where I sit today.

Said the Buddha: *I do not care to know your various theories about God.*

Said the Buddha: *Do good and be good, and this will take you to freedom and whatever truth there is.*

The Rev. Don Beaudreault--- Minister at UU Church at Sarasota:

Unlike Fundamentalist religion of any hue (Christian, Islamic, etc.), Buddhism, in its basic philosophical approach toward life, allows the individual to interpret and act upon basic humanitarian precepts, rather than to force the individual to respond in absolutist, lock-step patterns as established by a religious leader, crazed or otherwise.

In effect, Buddhism provides an ethical blueprint upon which to act upon one's loving beliefs.

**By birth:** None

### **Robin McNallie**

**What:** An agnostic, but one who hopes to escape from the trap of a reductive materialism.

**Philosophy:** Difficult to find an adequate label. Maybe I need to coin a new one: "Neo-Hamletarian." I like Hamlet's admonition to Horatio about there being "more things in Heaven and Earth" than one philosophy can dream of.

**By birth:** My mother was a second generation Unitarian; my father never, in my memory, discussed religion, but, in general, possessed a skeptical mind, so I assume he was a secularist. The neighborhood I grew up in was heavily Jewish, so I formed friendships with many Jewish kids and belonged to a Jewish Cub Scout troop. My church attendance was at a liberal Congregational church.

### **Rich Sider**

**What:** a UU, embracing the inclusive concept of spirituality and the values of the UU community.

**Philosophy:** I recognize a mysterious creative and redeeming spirit force that infuses all of creation and which transcends all religions and philosophies.

**By birth:** Mennonite

### **Paul Tolar**

**What:** Unitarian Universalist, with all the clarity and ambiguity that goes with it.

**Philosophy:** I acknowledge the Christian tradition, with all its flaws and sometimes shameful history, as being derived from this truth: that there is a God who acts out of love. I do not know where that God exists -- in some outside reality, or deep within the human neuro-pathways. I acknowledge that human perception can experience God in a valid way either through prayer, ecstatic mind-states, scientific inquiry, or a simple walk through the woods. It is human fear and arrogance that drives people to say "we have the answers, and you do not" when speaking of spiritual or religious truths. We are limited creatures, and all we can do is attempt to learn and love all that we can in this world, and share what we have learned.

**By birth:** Born into a family of Presbyterian ministers.

### **Norma Wise**

**What:** Mostly deist I suppose. I believe God exists but does not interfere with humanity or happenings in the world.

**Philosophy:** Believe each person responsible for

actions and consequences thereof. Freedom of choice and belief for each. Can accept many teachings of Christianity but not the most basic.

**By birth:** Baptist. Have been active member during lifetime of Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian as well as New Age movement.

## **NOTES**

To celebrate the Martin Luther King National Day of Community Service, and in response to the Inauguration Committee's call for communities to organize service events to celebrate the inauguration, a group of local volunteers will host "**The Friendly City Takes the Chill Off**" **on Sunday, Jan.18** from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. on the south side of Court Square. All are invited to bring donations of canned soup and socks, for distribution to our local food pantries and clothes closets. Volunteers will serve chili and hot chocolate. For questions, or to volunteer for this or other community service, contact Eileen Magruder, [granemagruder@yahoo.com](mailto:granemagruder@yahoo.com).

Support HUU with **grocery scrip** and **Equal Exchange Coffee!** Both are available after Sunday services. Look for Sarah Cheverton if you want to buy fair-trade coffee, tea or chocolate. . .and Elizabeth Scott if you want more information about using scrip to get a percentage of grocery purchases donated to our fellowship. Thank Elizabeth for volunteering to handle the scrip!

HUU's **Social Justice Committee** appreciates all who have contributed much-needed help to the **Gemeinschaft Home**, as this successful transitional therapeutic community struggles to stay open in the face of a state funding cutoff. In addition to supporting the home's Jan. 10 auction, and writing to officials (keep those letters coming!), HUU members donated \$1,400 (including one \$1,000 "angel's" check) in our "Dana" offerings for Gemeinschaft. (These monthly offerings for nonprofits take their name from a Buddhist expression for compassion. Stay posted for the next one.)

You've also supported our monthly Potluck Sunday "**Feeding the Community**" **food drives** well. Like most service organizations, Patchwork Pantry, a food pantry in Harrisonburg, has recently been seeing more people in need of assistance. Everything you place in that grocery cart is much-appreciated.

In this history-making year, 2009, **our building turns 100 years old!** The little red, hilltop schoolhouse opened in 1909 as the Dale Enterprise School, a public school of Rockingham County. We've already heard from school alumni, planning a celebration. Shall HUU plan one, too? (It will follow close on our 2008 mortgage-burning.) For the history of this site, which our congregation purchased in 1994, see <http://huuweb.org/history.html>.

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**HUU MEETS:**

**Board:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays, 12:15 pm

**Building & Grounds:** Meets as needed, 432-1383; chair, Merle Wenger

**Campus Ministry (JMU):** Contact Kevin Caran, 434-6314, [kevinca-ran@yahoo.com](mailto:kevinca-ran@yahoo.com)

**Communications:** 434-0457, chair, Robin McNallie

**Children's religious education (CYCORE):** Carol Quintero, DRE (director of RE), 438-5940, [Carol@HUUweb.org](mailto:Carol@HUUweb.org)

**Finance:** Chair, Grayson Sless, 433-8201

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

**Red Tent:** Women's book group meets first Saturdays; contact Mary Hahn, 833-5156

**Social Justice:** Co-chairs, Linda Royster and Eric Milnes. Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays. Contact Linda, [lroyster@earthlink.net](mailto:lroyster@earthlink.net), 828-3750.

**Sunday Services:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, 12:15 pm, chair, Bernie Mathes, 433-3424; [mathes@rice.edu](mailto:mathes@rice.edu)

**THE "HUU REVIEW" TEAM:**

Chris Edwards (editor), Pat Geary, Deb Stevens-Fitzgerald, Norm Lawson, Bernie Mathes, Robin McNallie

**SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 a.m. weekly**  
**CHILDREN'S PROGRAM Sept.-May, 10:30 a.m. Sundays**  
**POTLUCK first Sundays following service**

**INFO CHANNELS—**

- HUU website, [huuweb.org](http://huuweb.org).
- Unitarian Universalist Association: [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)
- **HUU Review:** Tentative deadline for Spring issue: March 29. Submit items to Chris Edwards, [edwards.chris@comcast.net](mailto:edwards.chris@comcast.net); (540)434-0457.
- **Weekly e-news:** Submit items by Wednesday morning to Meredith Moore, office administrator, [office@HUUweb.org](mailto:office@HUUweb.org).
- **Sunday Orders of Service:** Submit information to Pat Geary, webmaster, 433-1040; [pat@HUUweb.org](mailto:pat@HUUweb.org), by Thursday noon.
- **Online Community Café:** <http://HUUweb.org/community-cafe/>
- To send brief church-related announcements to HUU members and friends: [hUU-announcements@hUUweb.org](mailto:hUU-announcements@hUUweb.org)
- **For any HUU online-related questions:** contact Pat Geary, webmaster, 433-1040; [Pat@HUUweb.org](mailto:Pat@HUUweb.org). Internet users: **Want to save paper??** Ask Pat how to download this newsletter and forego a paper copy.

*"IT SEEMS WELL KEPT BUT WORN, a big old house that one imagines might be a bit drafty on cold winter nights. Still, as I stood in the foyer and let my eyes wander down the corridors, it was impossible to forget the history that had been made there. . ."*

*--President-Elect Barack Obama  
(in 2005, following his first visit to the White House when sworn in for the Senate)*

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