



TJMC Bulletin

Unitarian Universalist October 2014

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let's come together to explore
FORGIVENESS & ATONEMENT



Religious Education & Worship
Sundays ~ 9:15 & 11:15 am

Worship Services

Words of Wikstrom

by RevWik

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October 5: A Day of Turning

October 12: Nol Kidre

October 19: Where is the U.S. in the global "Us" and What Does This Have to Do With Forgiveness?

October 26: Ancestor's Sunday

Click [HERE](#) for worship descriptions.

A Life in Faith

Pastoral Visitors Year-Round Program

The Pastoral Visitors Program has been designed to complement the roles of the minister and the CareNet program, in providing a comprehensive ministry of pastoral care. It is a lay ministry of support and hope, offered by trained volunteers who offer a sustained caring presence for those who are members of the TJMC community (and their primary caregivers) who are experiencing crisis or stressful transitions. Contact: pastoral@uucharlottesville.org

NatureSpirit - Second Sundays

Exploring Nature in spirituality. We are an open group, drop-ins are welcome. Check the Weekly Email and the This Sunday insert for updates. For more

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[Read more](#)

From The President

by Sally Taylor

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[Read more](#)

The Maitreya Loving Kindness Tour



information:

naturespirit@uucharlottesville.org.

Clear Spring Buddhist Fellowship Meditation

Wednesdays, 7 PM, Blue Room
meditation@uucharlottesville.org

CareNet

Year-Round Program

CareNet is our church's organized effort to help out with meals, rides, and other assistance for church members. Contact: carenet@uucharlottesville.org

Christian Fellowship

uucf@uucharlottesville.org

UUCF is a welcoming place to explore your spirituality within a liberal Christian context. Gatherings may include, music, sermons, discussion, readings from the Bible, meditation, movement, sharing of joys and sorrows, food and drink, and they always include compassionate fellowship. All are welcome!

Midweek Worship Service

Wednesdays at 11:45 AM to 12:30 PM led by Leia Durland-Jones. This is a simple, contemplative time incorporating our monthly ministry theme. Please join us and let your soul be nourished. We meet on the outdoor labyrinth (weather permitting) or in the sanctuary. All are welcome. For more information, contact Leia (redirector@uucharlottesville.org or 293-8179 Ext. 3#).

October Artist

City Space - 5th Street at the Downtown Mall

October 24-26th

Jamie McReynolds and other TJMCers are working on this event coming to Charlottesville in October. It is sponsored by Open Hands of Virginia.

Most of the relics in this collection resemble beautiful, pearl-like crystals that in Tibetan are called 'ringse', in Sanskrit they are known as 'Sarira.' Buddhists believe relics embody the master's spiritual qualities of compassion and wisdom and are deliberately produced by the master at his death. The crystal relics were found among the cremation ashes of these Buddhist masters.

[Read more](#)

lovingkindnessva@aol.com
or www.lovingkindnessva.com

Preserving Dignity, Keeping Accountability

By Alex McGee, Ministerial Associate

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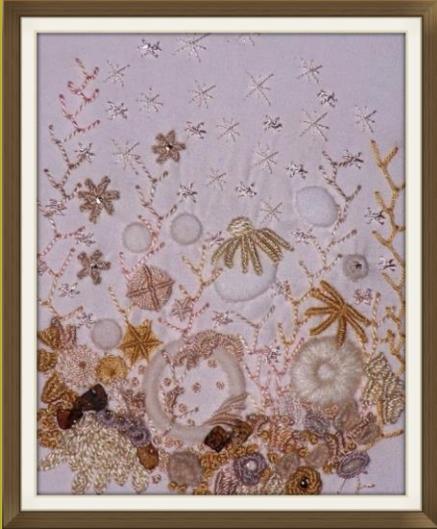
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These scenarios are fictitious, but I am guessing you can think of a similar situation in your life. This month at church our theme is forgiveness and atonement. And what I have been noticing recently in my life, in the life of the church, and in the stories I hear from you all is this question: how to preserve someone's dignity, while also holding them accountable?

[Read more](#)

From The Treasurer



Laurel Moore, fiber artist, first began working with needle and thread as a child when her mother taught her the basics of stitching and knitting. Interest in this creative art form remained with her into adulthood, expanding into surface stitching of simple embroidery and needlepoint pre-fabricated kits. Ms. Moore explored more traditional and contemporary fiber arts through membership in the Embroiderer's Guide of America and local classes. She participated in the EGA's Master Craftsman Program in Crewel Embroidery, studying the history of embroidery, the materials and stitches used in European and early American crewel embroidery, and classic Jacobean designs.

Ms. Moore trained with noted British fiber artists Jan Beaney and Jean Littlejohn, who inspired her to experiment with mixed fiber media and a combination of techniques, such as felting, embellishing, surface stitching and beading, to create a finished piece. Additional training with Australian artist, Sharon Boggon, helped Ms. Moore develop her own creative designing abilities. The majority of pieces on display are original designs.

**October Social Action:
IHMS Food Packets**



By Jamie McReynolds

October 2014

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- Fundraising income was \$5,831 for August and \$11,144 YTD, 48% of our full-year budget. We raised \$8,344 from the yard sale and received a \$2,500 rebate from our Wells Fargo credit card purchases.

[Read more](#)

Environmental Update

By Glenn Short

(I wrote this article a few days before the largest environmental rally in the world taking place in NYC on September 21.)

Some 500 buses are to arrive in NY City from all over the U.S.A., including two from Charlottesville. Other participants will come by train, private cars and by planes from abroad. Beginning on Monday the United Nations will hear and discuss the most recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Earlier the NYC Rally was to take place in front of the UN Headquarters until the NY Police denied permission, instead allowing the massive gathering only at 34th St. & 11th Ave.

Meanwhile at TJMC there will be three Sept. 21st meetings: 1) at 1:30 p.m. a Meditation for Peace; then 2) at

By Margaret Gorman

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The IHS assists people who have to travel to the University of Virginia Medical Center for treatment and who have no family or friends here to help and no funds to for a hotel room or food for the patient's caregiver or for the patients if they are here for outpatient treatment. Hospital social workers determine eligibility for this support and contact the IHS for services.

[Read more](#)

3 p.m. a presentation & discussion by Dr. James N. Galloway, UVA professor of Environmental Sciences and a certified member of the international IPCC study group. His presentation is entitled "Climate Change Assessments -- National & Global". Closing the day 3) at 5:30 p.m. is a planned Potluck with music featuring Pete Seeger's songs.

[Read more](#)

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Please send submissions for the monthly bulletin to office@uucharlottesville.org by the 3rd Friday of the prior month.



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Words of Wikstrom – October 2014

Of all the monthly themes we've been exploring I think that this month's – forgiveness & atonement – is easily one of the most important. Bondage and Freedom – the theme for March – is pretty important too, and it's possible that these are really one theme.

It has been said that “resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.” Holding on to anger and hurt is in many ways a holding on to the causes of that anger and that hurt. It is, then, a sort of bondage. Forgiveness is not so much about forgetting, as many people seem to think, or about condoning whoever or whatever caused the pain. Forgiveness is, instead, a process through which we declare to the world and to ourselves, “this no longer has a hold on me.”

Think about the grieving process as an analogy. When a person dies, say, we may well feel completely overwhelmed by our grief. The slightest thing can send us into paroxysms. We have absolutely no control over it and, in fact, no control ourselves either. We are tied to our grief; bound to our pain; held I thrall by our suffering. As times goes on, though, we gradually become ever more disentangled from this pain. We still miss the person who had died; and sometimes, even years later, the grief can be acute. Still, we have largely learned the lesson of that Mary Oliver poem I use as a benediction at every memorial service I officiate, “When the time comes to let it go ... let it go.” We “let go” of the grief. We don't say that it's okay, or good, that the person isn't here with us anymore. We don't betray our love of them. We simply say that we cannot anymore allow ourselves to be so bound by our grief that we, ourselves, cease to live.

And in more ways than not, that's what forgiveness is all about. We don't say that whatever happened is okay, nor do we betray our own sense of self-worth and dignity. We simply say that we cannot anymore allow ourselves to be so bound by our anger that we, ourselves, are no longer free.

And what of atonement? If you're anything like me, the issue of forgiveness is not just one of my needing to forgive (or not) other people for things they've done (or not) to me. I need to be forgiven, too. I've done things that have hurt other people, and whether or not they're still holding on to it I know that I am, and I desperately need to hear that they've been able to let go. I may *want* to hear that they now think it's okay. That's almost certainly what I *want* to hear. But what I *need* to hear is that whatever I did that hurt them isn't hurting them still. I need to hear that they're not drinking poison on my account.

I may never hear this, of course. The other person may not forgive me. I have no control over that. What I do have control over is whether or not I'm able to forgive myself and that, I think, is where atonement comes in. It's often said that “atonement” can also be written, “at-one-ment,” and, so, atonement is about making things whole again. Many of us think that what we're trying to make whole again is the relationship that we've broken, or that trust we've betrayed, and these may well be a part of it. What I think we're really doing, though, the only thing we actually *can* do, is trying to make ourselves whole again.

A lot to think about, no?

Pax tecum,

RevErik

October 2014 Worship

October 5th - A Day of Turning (A Unitarian Universalist Festival)

This will be a Story Sunday with the children in the sanctuary for the first part of the service. The TJMC Choir will also be singing.

October 12th – Nol Kidre

What might this Aramaic declaration, which is recited in the synagogue before the beginning of the evening service on every Yom Kippur, have to offer us Unitarian Universalists?

October 19th – Where is the U.S. in the Global “Us” and What Does This Have to Do With Forgiveness?

Our Social Action Collection will support the IHMS Food Packet program. Our “underground choir” will be singing.

October 26th – Ancestor’s Sunday

This multi-generational service will also include a New Member Recognition and, possibly, Child Dedications. The TJMC Choir will be singing. [Make sure to bring an image or a memento of loved ones who have died to put on our Ancestor’s Altar.]

From the President- October 2014

Our next Congregational Meeting has been called to approve the Goals and Objectives of the Strategic Plan (presented at our last congregational meeting), to vote on the proposed public witness effort to divest our Endowment Funds of holdings in fossil fuel companies and to consider some changes in our bylaws concerning the Endowment and Finance Committees. Please join me after the second service in the sanctuary on November 2.

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What part of expanding and deepening our spiritual life would help you deepen your own spiritual growth? Would you like to work on a monthly vespers service? Or volunteer to usher or greet visitors? Or would you prefer to work on creating a more diverse worship experience? Or put together a post-Sunday service discussion?

How could working on strengthening our connections help you to deepen your own connections with the church community? Would you like to serve on a Governance Task Force to look at the way that we do church business? Or would you prefer to work on a Communications Task Force to look at the ways that we communicate with one another through print, electronic and social media? Or can you offer your skills in designing our website or our monthly wayside pulpit signs or Facebook posts about our activities? Or would you like to work on increasing our youth participation in youth conferences or increasing our attendance at General Assembly and District Meetings? Or does organizing social events such as Circle Dinners, All Church Potlucks or Game Nights appeal to you? Or are you interested in organizing intergenerational activities?

How could becoming involved in our efforts to steward our resources increase your own commitment to our church community? Would you like to serve on a committee that oversees the endowment or the church budget or the pledge drive? Would you enjoy working with others on the yard sale or the auction? Do you have skills that we could use to maintain our buildings or landscaping skills that could improve our grounds?

Each one of us has something to offer this community. Every gift we give, either in service or money, connects us more strongly to the community itself. Now is the time to make the dream that we dreamed together come true. Come to the workshop on October 25, join a committee, volunteer to teach a Religious Education class, find some way to make a difference at TJMC. It is entirely up to us. We are the only ones who can make our strategic plan work. May it be so.

Yours in faith,

Sally Taylor

President, TJMC-UU Board of Trustees

Preserving Dignity, Keeping Accountability
By Alex McGee, Ministerial Associate

John had been living legally in the US for four years. His coworkers were finally showing him respect. But when a coworker discovered him embezzling, she was in a pinch. She didn't want everyone to call him "the immigrant who steals." But she wanted him to be held accountable.

Carmen had kept her temper under control for ten months. She and her baby were finally settled together in a shared house. But the night that the electricity went out and the baby was sick, she kind of lost it. The roommate was worried---how could she protect the baby and help Carmen keep her dignity?

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These scenarios are fictitious, but I am guessing you can think of a similar situation in your life. This month at church our theme is forgiveness and atonement. And what I have been noticing recently in my life, in the life of the church, and in the stories I hear from you all is this question: how to preserve someone's dignity, while also holding them accountable?

In this life, each us has the capacity to harm others. And, sometimes we do. Sometimes this harm is accidental, and sometimes it is intentional, and sometimes it is in a muddy area in between. When we do harm others, our spiritual and mental health will be benefitted if we can find a way to name what we have done, ask forgiveness, and make up for the harm done (to the extent possible).

Conversely, each of us has had harm done to us. Some days they are small harms, and in some cases, members of our community are victims of ongoing, horrible evil. If and when we have the energy, we may find healing from asking the perpetrator to take responsibility for what they have done. In other cases, this is not possible, because the perpetrator is not willing or not present.

Forgiveness has many meanings and nuances. As we mature spiritually, we can learn more and more about the energy of forgiveness. The nuance I am lifting up here is: how do we handle a situation where the offender is vulnerable?

The longer I serve in ministry, the more I realize how very, very different each situation is. I am constantly reexamining the ethics and theology that guide me. And recently, I have been hearing people anguish about how much they hate the person who has harmed them, or wishing they could harm them in return. This hatred appears on the surface to be the spiritual opposite of the spiritual convictions to be compassionate to others and to promote people's dignity.

But let us take a deep breath and look carefully. First, we need to give ourselves time to reel with the shock that harm and/or evil is present where we thought safety prevailed. This means practicing self-compassion first. Taking time. Hatred is a feeling which will usually wear itself out if you give it time, and if you don't feed it.

Second, while we need to uphold the dignity of all people involved, we need to tend to the most vulnerable first. We need to look from all angles at a situation---who really holds power in this society, and in this particular situation? We might need to consult others who can see the situation more objectively, or have stood in the shoes of one of the people involved. For example, in the situation above, the coworker might ask someone else who had recently gone through an immigration process what is at stake. Then we can discern which person is most at risk and least able to help themselves.

Third, we need to notice the temptation to keep secrets. Sometimes secrets protect, and sometimes secrets harm. In my experience, we need to vigilantly alert to who is being protected and whether they are already protected in

other ways---by their economic privilege, their friends, their skin color, etc. And yet, if we are to share information which will be shocking or difficult, we need to do it at the right time and way. This is why I continue to find spiritual practices so helpful in my life. A daily quiet time when wisdom can surface (most days, I hope), helps me navigate these dicey situations.

Whatever situation you are facing in your life, where you know harm has been done and are trying to figure out how to move forward constructively, I wish for you to find a good listener who can help you listen to your inner wisdom, and for you to find sanctuaries (maybe the great outdoors, maybe our church) where you also find your inner wisdom. Also, I wish for you to allow your inner well of courage and compassion to be filled.

As always in this life and in this church community, we are learning and growing together. As I write this for the bulletin deadline, I am aware that my insights next month might be evolving. I look forward to hearing your insights. Please, stay in dialogue!

In peace,
Alex
September 2014

Alexandra McGee, MDiv, serves 20 hours a week as Ministry Associate for TJMC UU. She is at the church most Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays, and is happy to set up a time to talk by phone or email. 434-293-8179 ext. 2 or ma@uucharlottesville.org.

TJMCCU Treasury Update
October 2014

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- Overall expenses were \$41,885 in August and \$73,314 YTD, 14% of the full-year budget and slightly lower than last year's YTD of \$73,728. Two months into the year, I expect our expenses to be around 17% of our full year budget, so we're right on track.
- Our bank account balances total \$690,162 including the net proceeds of \$486,329 from sale of U-House.
- Our general endowment fund has a balance of \$374,849, and our restricted endowment funds total \$69,318.
- Our capital fund balance is \$7,281 and our cumulative operating fund balance is \$47,666.

TJMC Social Action Collection
October, 2014

For the October Bulletin

The October Social Action collection will go to purchase supplies for the TJMC meal packet project for the Interfaith Humanitarian Sanctum (IHS, interfaithhumanitariansanctum.org).

The IHS assists people who have to travel to the University of Virginia Medical Center for treatment and who have no family or friends here to help and no funds to for a hotel room or food for the patient's caregiver or for the patients if they are here for outpatient treatment. Hospital social workers determine eligibility for this support and contact the IHS for services.

Our Religious Education program invented the "Meal Packet" in 2010 as a way to help family members who accompanied their babies and children to the UVA Medical Center intensive care unit. A meal packet is a one-gallon zip lock bag that holds enough food to feed one person for one day. We include plastic utensils and a hand-made note for the recipient, and give the meals to the IHS for delivery to the hospital social work office. Some people will subsist for considerable periods of time on meal packets while they are here in our community.

Since our RE program's initial packing of 24 meals, our church has donated over 1,200 packets. Word has gone around the hospital about food for people who could not eat otherwise, and demand has grown to almost 300 meals per month. Using our model, other churches, schools, civic groups and some departments at the medical center prepare and donate meal packets now.

The children and youth at TJMC are proud of their leadership in the IHS Meal Packet project. They teach newcomers to their classes about its purpose and how to assemble the meals. It is a lot of fun to do and, with careful shopping, our children can feed a person at the hospital for one day for about \$6.00. What better way is there to teach and live our UU Purposes and Principles of respecting the inherent dignity of each person and compassion for others?

PACEM: Hosting the Homeless

By Elizabeth Breeden

October 2014 Bulletin

As the weather turns cold, hosting our homeless guests in the houses of faith in our community begins, assuring that no one freezes on the streets of Charlottesville. Of course, all year, the homeless coalition (TJACH) works to fulfill a mission to rehouse folks before they become homeless. Nonetheless, PACEM's (People And Congregations Engaged in Ministry) work of emergency shelter continues.

PACEM is the organizational group who oversee the shelter. Each evening, at the HAVEN downtown, they interview and check-in the guests at 5:30. This is a low barrier shelter, so guests are only asked not to imbibe while at the shelter. We have found that the "atmosphere of church" encourages polite and respectful behavior. Our guests are nearly always thankful and helpful. The staff of PACEM is trained and consistent managing the shelter and assuring that guests are provided available services in the community and follow the boundaries of safety while in the shelters. PACEM also provides the cots, blankets and pillows.

Our church provides the hospitality and actual shelter. Each night we fix dinner for the guests and our own volunteers who serve the food, eat with the guests, and clean up. We provide 2 volunteers each night who sleep on the couches, while a PACEM staff person does remain awake and available to the guests. We are responsible for the building, PACEM is responsible for the guests. Guests come from Intake at the Haven at one time, via a bus (provided by Jaunt) at about 6:30PM and leave the next morning (usually on foot) at 6:30AM. We have dinner in the Social Hall, and our guests sleep in Summit House. Usually there are about 40 Men who are guests, who we will host this year from November 29 to December 6. The Women guests will be coming from January 31 to February 7 and there are usually about 10 of them.

Sign-up sheets for church members to provide food, offer to host dinner and offer to spend the night will be in the Social Hall on Sundays after each service from October 19th to November 23rd. Food requests are divided from the simple (ice cream) to the more culinary (vegetable beef stew for 12) so that we will need about 100 volunteers to host our guests. Ebenezer Baptist Church is our partner hosting the men and they provide the dinner on two evenings. In the same way, the Islamic Society is our partner when we host the women in February.

Look for us in the Social Hall in October and November and find a niche where you can participate. It's easy, amazingly fun and expands your horizons about who are your neighbors and companions in our community.

Mandy, Jen, Elizabeth, Lynn, Gloria, Linda, Mary Beth

The Maitreya Loving Kindness Tour
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His Holiness the Dalia Lama has graciously offered 8 relics of the historical Buddha to the collection that are over 2,600 years old each. Relics have also been offered from the Sakya Reliquary in Tibet and also from Meiktila Museum in Burma that has housed Buddha Relics for many hundreds of years. The tour also features relics from 40 other Buddhist masters from different parts of the world, in all there are over 3,000 relics in this collection.

Visitors often report experiences of inspiration and healing when in the presence of the relics. While some are inspired to pray for world peace and to develop their inner wisdom, others are overcome by emotion as the powerful effects of the relics open their hearts to compassion and loving-kindness.

lovingkindnessva@aol.com
or www.lovingkindnessva.com

Eyes Wide Open

By Mary Rose Curtis and Elizabeth Breeden

October 2014 Bulletin

TJMC's Peace Action-United Nations Group is sponsoring the exhibit, "Eyes Wide Open" to be displayed in front of our church on Sunday, November 9th from 9AM to 5PM.

"Eyes Wide Open," the American Friends Service Committee's widely-acclaimed exhibition on the human cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, features a pair of empty boots honoring each U.S. military casualty. The exhibit started in January 2004 when the US casualties in Iraq numbered 500 as a local project in Chicago. As the casualties grew so did the exhibit and it toured the country extensively until May 2007, when the casualties in Iraq numbered 3500 and it was determined to split the exhibit up into smaller state-based exhibits. "Eyes Wide Open" has been seen by millions of people across the country and has involved thousands of volunteers. "Eyes Wide Open" continues to tell the story of the human cost of war in 46 states with boots representing US deaths in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and shoes representing Iraqi and Afghan civilians.

The Virginia exhibit features about 200 pairs of soldiers' boots ---one pair for each Virginian death and 300 pairs for tens of thousands of deaths of civilians killed. Each pair of boots is identified with name, residence and age at death.

This exhibit will be displayed at several locations in the Charlottesville area by the "Charlottesville Center for Peace and Justice" (CCPJ) during November. Because it is a public witness statement for the front of our church, it has been through the "Short Term Public Witness" approval process within our congregation and has been requested through a petition of 20% of our members, approved by the Social Justice Council and the Church Board and voted on at a Congregational Conversation on August 31st. The Social Justice Council suggested that church volunteers remain with the exhibit at our church to answer questions or comments. They felt our congregation approved a belief statement that is not necessarily a statement about opposition to this war, but agrees with a statement about the cost of war.