

Thermal Belt Unitarian

Universalist Fellowship

May 2017



Services: 1st & 3rd Sundays 10:30 A. M.
Minister: Reverend Michael J. Carter
Location: 835 N. Trade St., Tryon, NC
Coffee, Refreshments & Fellowship after service
Questions? Call 828-513-0570 Website: TBUUF.org
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 653, Tryon, NC 28782
Please follow us on Facebook @ TBUUF

Upcoming Services

May 7, 2017

Are We Rome?

Rev. Michael Carter

Is The United States of America the reincarnation of the Roman Empire? The comparisons are there for all to see. We have nearly 800 military bases in more than 70 countries across the globe, despite closing hundreds of bases in Iraq and Afghanistan. Regardless, some may answer yes, and some may say no. I say yes, but we don't have to be. What should a UU's response to empire be? As we look at the role our nation is playing in the lives of its citizens and the citizens of nations abroad, the question cannot be ignored. Is this what our nation is called to be at this critical juncture in world history? As you can see, we may have more questions than answers, but that's okay. Sometimes the questions can be just as (or even more) important!

Special Announcement for the May 7th Service: "Summer Feed a Kid Program"

For several years the Congregational Church has partnered with Thermal Belt Outreach to extend the Feed a Kid program, which operates during the school year, into the summer. This year Tryon United Methodist Church, the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, and TBUUF are joining this effort. Last year the program fed 129 children from 43 families. Enrollment for this year is still in progress.

We will accept money for "Feed a Kid" on Sunday, May 7. If you would like to donate by check, please make it out to Thermal Belt Outreach and write "Summer Feed a Kid" on the memo line. Cash donations are also fine. The 2017 program will run from June 12 through August 14. Volunteers are needed for packing the food (Mondays at 9:00 for about 1 hour) and delivering the food (Wednesdays from 10:00-12:00). Sign-up sheets will be available on the back table at May services.

May 21, 2017

The First UU Principle: Dignity

Rev. Michael Carter

We will explore the radical and revolutionary nature of our Unitarian Universalism's First Principle: "the inherent worth and dignity of every person". I will set this principle within the context of the dogma of Original Sin, which has dominated western thought since its inception in the theology of the Apostle Paul and its subsequent development throughout church history. The doctrine of Original Sin culminated in what I consider the most damaging and destructive view of human nature in the history of humankind. No other religious tenet has done so much damage to the human soul. Our First Principle counters this dogma and offers an entirely different and radical view of who we are and what lies at our core. It is no less radical than the Copernican revolution.

Our Minister's May Message



Dear Friends,

Of late I have been speaking to many people who are having problems “transitioning” either in their relationships with themselves, with others, or their careers. We’ve all been there at one time or another and it can be messy being a human being. Freud was correct (and I’m not a Freudian type of person) when he said that if people have at least one of these situations going well in life (love or work) they would be relatively happy. Freud said that love and work (*Liebe and Arbeit*) are the cornerstones of our humanness.

That being said—there sometimes comes a point of no return in a particular situation. When you have given all you can give, taken all you can take, learned all you can learn, and taught all you can teach, been all you can be—you realize there is no hope of things getting any better, and you have done all you know how to do to turn things around.

When you finally reach this point, please remember, this is not a bad thing. It is simply time to move on. You will know you have come to the point of no return when your joy is gone, your peace is at risk, you are groping or searching for some meaning or you are no longer angry because you can’t even get angry.

When you come face to face with the point of no return, remember the good times, appreciate the joyful times, be grateful for any support, encouragement or contentment you experienced. Don’t cry because its over; smile because it happened. Pack all of those things in a corner of your heart and take them with you as you move forward.

Acknowledge and accept that you may not be able to go back to what you had but that you have something to take with you on your new journey. Perhaps until today you have resisted the need to move beyond the point of no return. You may have been looking for reasons to stay in a situation that no longer suits you or fits you. Why not, just for today, acknowledge your needs and prepare to pack up and move on. You’ll be glad you did!

Michael J. Carter

A Note from Your President

A few days ago Sheila and I had the pleasure of meeting with a woman who has been a visitor (guest) at TBUUF on several occasions. We were surprised to hear that she did not feel that we were a very “welcoming” fellowship. As we take the opportunity to see old friends on Sundays, it is easy to forget that there are others who are not at ease in a group setting of mostly strangers. (Who is?) We all need to be aware of not only first-time visitors, but also returning and occasional visitors and to make an effort to engage and welcome those individuals. I know we can all do better. I asked this guest if she would write an anonymous article about her experience. See below.

— Phil Nungesser

A Visitor’s Impression of TBUUF

Someone has said, correctly I think, that the most important 20 minutes of any church service is not the sermon or the music but it is the 10 minutes before and the 10 minutes after the service. That is when the group interacts. It's a time for greeting warmly both old friends and newcomers. It's a time for fellowship, warmth, and getting to know each other better. It's the 20 minutes that can make or break a church fellowship.

I have experienced two kinds of fellowship times while attending many different kinds of churches. Some are so welcoming and warm you know you want to come back as soon as possible. Some make it very clear that they don't care whether or not you do come back. The second group usually also wants to grow their church. They just don't realize how important that 20 minutes is!

People who attend a UU service are individuals who care about others, and who care very deeply about the world in which we live. We believe in peace. We believe in love. We want to share our philosophy, and the world needs us.

So this note is just a reminder about the importance of those 20 minutes. Is there a new person in the room? Resolve to go speak with him or her after the service, before greeting those you already know. Wander around, before and after the service, to greet others, instead of just talking with your good friends. Make sure newcomers have a hymnal and are well seated to enjoy the service. Perhaps you might want to invite a newcomer to sit with you so he or she feels comfortable with our routine.

We have so much to share with the world, and now we have the added excitement of other new speakers coming our way. Let's remember that important 20 minutes each time we meet, and our church will grow. The world does need us.

Announcements



Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?

**Thursday evening, May 25th, 6-8pm
&
Thursday evening, June 1, 6-8pm**

Does the title sound familiar? It's the title of a book written by Dr. King in 1968. In light of the current social/political climate in our nation, as well as the current news from our UUA regarding the resignation of President Morales, obviously the question is just as important for our denomination as it is for the nation. In this spirit, The Rev. Jim McKinley and I (Rev. Michael Carter) are offering another two-part (at least for now anyway, perhaps more will be needed) conversation about race with a slightly different slant.

We would like to talk about how race and racism plays out in our UUA worship services as well as in our everyday lives. The discussion will include — for those who did not attend our previous work-shops — a working definition of racism, as well as a showing of retired UUA minister, Rev. Mark Morrison Reed's film, "How To Open The Door: African Americans in the Unitarian Universalist Denomination." Of course, there will be plenty of time for discussion.

If you are interested in attending, please notify the UUFH office at 693-3157 or office@uufhnc.org, so we can anticipate the number of handouts to pre-prepare. (Let us know if you already have a Race Matters notebook of handouts.) All are welcome. Bring a pad and pencil, along with an open mind and heart.

Justice and Blessings.

— Rev. Michael Carter



Meet your Muslim Neighbor

This free program is Sponsored by the Congregational Church of Tryon on Monday May 15th, 6:30-8:00 P.M. Representatives of the Islamic Center of Greenville will share information to dispel myths about Muslim neighbors. Please register by contacting Donna Tatnall at 828-859-7099 or dtatnall@yahoo.com. — Robin Edgar

Ed. Note—If you were unable to attend the April 16 TBUU Fellowship, you can view Robin Edgar's TED talk about forgiveness on You Tube.

UU Book Club

The UU Book Club will meet on May 10th at 3:00 P.M. in the back room of Black Coffee in Tryon. We've chosen to read The Kabul Beauty School by Debbie Rodriguez. Soon after the fall of the Taliban in 2001, Deborah Rodriguez went to Afghanistan as part of a group offering humanitarian aid to this war-torn nation. Surrounded by men and women whose skills as doctors, nurses, and therapists seemed eminently more practical than her own (a hairdresser), Rodriguez despaired of being of any real use. Yet she soon found she was eagerly sought out by Westerners desperate for a good haircut and by Afghan women, who have a long and proud tradition of running their own beauty salons. Thus an idea was born. If you need more information contact Robbie ter Kuile at 828- 513-0570.

Kudos to Those Who Make TBUUF Happen!

Order of Service

Linda List has diligently prepared our TBUUF Order of Service for several years. For each meeting of TBUUF she has found just the right picture or design for the front page and carefully typed in all the information that must be changed every time we meet. She has been patient in accepting last minute announcements. She has taken to the OoS to the printer, picked it up and brought it early for each fellowship meeting. Even though we appreciate this work as we go through our service each Sunday, we want to express a big **"Thank You" to Linda List.**

Music! Music! Music!

At every fellowship meeting and special event we hear music. We enjoy the sounds of musical instruments, piano, guitar. We enjoy the sounds of special singing and the many voices blending during hymns. A **Special Thank You** to Christine and Annie who are the music committee and have given us much joy during many, many years of service.

How Can You Help?

YOU can volunteer some time to be a Sunday Greeter, bring flowers, help on a committee project, make phone calls, bring goodies, make coffee, help with the service, help take up the offering, light the chalice, do the announcements. You can sign up for a standing committee such as Pastoral Care or Membership, do an article for the newsletter, play a musical instrument, or sing, say "hello" to newcomers, and to others attending service. You can help clean up after service and other activities, become a TBUUF board member or officer or committee chairperson, help plan special activities, such as picnics, holiday programs or events, help parents entertain children during service.

Give some of your time and talents to keep TBUUF strong and vibrant. Your efforts could create synergy with other UU members and UU friends. Just think of how many hands, minds and smiles make all tasks easier; you will get to know more folks; make new friends and have more fun too!

Thanks for the Memories and Thanks to Phil, Sheila and others for the great help with the newsletter!

It's time for me to try something new for TBUUF, so this is the last newsletter I will edit. It's been a great three plus years. I've finally aced the learning curve, and have enjoyed the challenge! I've made friends, made a few mistakes and even stepped on toes a few times and been forgiven. It's what editors do. It will be fun to just read the newsletter each month.

Best wishes to our new editor, Laura Converse. If you have news contact her at 828-859-9760 for questions. Send your articles by email LBC617@hotmail.com. Thanks for the opportunity to serve you as newsletter editor— Nan Covert