



*Thermal Belt Universal
Unitarian Fellowship News
May 2016*

Services: 1st & 3rd Sundays, 10:30 A.M.
835 N. Trade St. Tryon, NC
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**Upcoming Services
May 1, 2016
“A Church Without Walls”
Reverend Michael Carter**

Cultures, organizations, countries, and, indeed, religions build walls to keep the “right” people in, or the “wrong” people out. Unitarians Universalists like to think about breaking down all walls that separate people based upon race, class, ethnicities, sexual orientation or belief systems.

As a denomination, Unitarian Universalism thinks of itself as a faith without walls. The Tryon Fellowship is a Fellowship without walls. It is a living Fellowship, if you will, for it has a living tradition which continues to this day. Its UU ancestors believed that revelation is not sealed and that human evolution is a continuous process.

UU Churches, Fellowships, Societies, and Congregations are all places where people of all faiths (or no faith) can gather to love, to support, and to honor one another. Are we perfect? Of course not! But we are striving to be more welcoming and more authentic human beings.

This is all we ask of any new member—to join us in this quest to be fully human and to use our principles on this journey. Join us on Sunday, May 1st, 2016, to celebrate and affirm our New Members who have said “Yes” to this quest.

Reverend Michael Carter



Professor Marc Mullinax
“ The Rain Drop”
May 15, 2016



In this span of time on Earth, that we call *Life*, I believe each of us has gifts. Whether these gifts are given or achieved, they still must be developed, lest they remain only pure potential. Each gift—community organizing, encouragement of others, passion for social justice, a quiet courage in the face of ignorance is a strength we bring life into this world. What still-undiscovered gifts and strengths might we harbor? What stories and passions might die with us, unless we bring them to life now? How might we discover, and then use these strengths for the greater good?

One way to approach this is to consider ourselves not just as individuals, but individuals “netted” or “tethered” together in groups, such as the TBUUF, a reading club, or a social justice committee. The group with a common purpose is most-often the one that makes progress, and it is good to be a part of one. However, at what point does the group’s energy and power reach the tipping point and become a more obvious and welcome force for change? Maybe it is when you join it; and maybe, not until you do.

No snowflake may understand that it is the cause of a mighty avalanche of justice. No raindrop may understand that it is the tipping-point drop that ends the drought.

When does the bundle of sticks grow stronger than one’s ability to break it? When you grip a tool with your hand, which finger is the one that most securely grips the handle? In a choir, whose voice is it that gives one the goosebumps? We often don’t know, but a group knitted and bundled together transmits strength when needed, flexibility when called for, and purpose that an individual alone might neither muster nor sustain.

It is tempting to lay low, wait for others, and expect the next Martin Luther King, Junior. Parker Palmer wrote, “No punishment anyone might inflict on us could possibly be worse than the punishment we inflict on ourselves by conspiring in our own diminishment.” However, what if I am the hero that, both I, and my world have been waiting for? Ah! A hero-in-waiting!

Marc Mullinax, professor of religion at Mars Hill University, will be with us to advance the thoughts that while our individualities are important enough, they are nothing compared to the force for good we are when we voluntarily unite in common cause and purpose.

Everything that passes unattempted remains impossible, and our ignorance of the impossible will, if there is a Judgment Day— mock us.

New Member Sunday is May First at TBUUF

Our Fellowship will welcome three new members: Cynthia Guilfooy , Ben Ledbetter and Heather Taylor during our service the first Sunday in May.

Cynthia Guilfooy is originally from New Jersey and lived in the Florida Keys for eighteen years before moving to this area in 2006. She writes, "Prior to retirement, I worked in social services as a caseworker, investigator, and social worker.



"My spiritual journey began in Roman Catholicism, the religion of my mother's family. I began to question church teachings as a child and studied many other religious traditions as an adolescent. In my twenties, I became very interested in Buddhism and have continued practicing in that tradition while remaining open to and interested in other forms of spirituality."



Ben Ledbetter is a native of Shelby and has lived in several other places in both Carolinas, the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, and New Orleans, Louisiana.

He graduated from UNC Greensboro in 2000 and is finishing a Masters of Public Administration degree from the University of New Orleans.

A journalist with 11 years of experience on staff of several publications across the east coast, he is switching to a career in public service.

Some of his interests include running, walking, hiking, biking, music, and meditation.

Welcome to TBUUF !

Child Dedication Slated for First Sunday in June



Reverend Michael Carter will conduct a Child Dedication ceremony during our service, Sunday, June 5th for little Justine Taylor, daughter of Heather Taylor.

We are pleased to have one so young coming to our Fellowship each Sunday. She has already captured our hearts.

Please do not miss this special part of the service. (Heather's new member bio information is scheduled to appear in the June newsletter.)

TBUUF News and Notes:

Music, Music, Music! We all enjoy the musical presentations every Sunday. Here is an opportunity to help with some Sunday services. Do You like to play an instrument or like to sing?

Ellen and Annie are always looking for additional instrumental players to fill out our UU Band (flute & guitar). Even if one is not experienced playing with a group, just give it a try! A practice session is yet to be established. It is not an every Sunday obligation, as we are not expected to play for every Fellowship meeting (first and third Sundays). Call Annie at 864-457-7278 if you would like to play with the instrumental group.

Community Service: Chairperson, Robbie ter Kuile delivered 22.2 pounds of food to the Thermal Belt Outreach Food Pantry after our last service.

Please remember to bring canned or boxed foods with you to our Sunday TBUUF services, as this is an ongoing community service project.

If you wish to donate money instead, please make you check payable to the Thermal Belt Outreach Food Pantry. There is usually a brown envelope with the food box for cash or checks. Or you may give your donation to Robbie or Gretchen.