

APRIL 2016

SOUNDINGS



Unitarian Universalist
Church of Charlotte

DISCOVER DEEPER SPIRITUAL MEANING

Depth through reflection

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painting by Laura Smail (photo by Elsa Lafferty)

Where you set your feet is holy land . . .
You don't live off it like a parasite.
You live in it, and it in you . . .

— WILFRED PELLETIER AND TED POOLE



The Mission of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte is to inspire children, youth and adults to discover and articulate deeper spiritual meaning evidenced in lives of integrity, compassion and stewardship of the earth.

La mision de la iglesia Unitaria Universalista de Charlotte es inspirar a los niños, jóvenes y adultos para que descubran y articulan un significado espiritual profundo, evidente en una vida de integridad, compasión y en el manejo de los recursos de la tierra

“YES”

by Michael Amy Cira



Michael Amy Cira

It’s 1993 and I am sitting in a pew in the grand, glorious Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, rapt, listening to a compelling conversation between authors Jean Shinoda Bolen, Isabelle Allende, and Alice Walker. A woman during the Q & A asks of Alice (quoting Shug to Celie in *The Color Purple*), “Tell me what

your God looks like?”

“My God is the earth,” Alice replied simply.

“Yes, yes, mine too,” I thought.

I am not exactly sure when I came to know this about myself. There wasn’t necessarily a moment of conscious decision. It was more like that science experiment you do as a kid with celery and food coloring. You carefully count out the drops of color into a glass and slip the stalk in the water and the molecules suck up the liquid inside the tiny tubes, and move up and out to the leaves. And little by little the stalk turns from pale to baby blue to sky to azure to cerulean to sapphire to cornflower to cobalt! Yes, I am a “tree hugger”, now fully saturated in my commitment to stewardship of the earth.

I imagine this consciousness first began to seep into my blood as a child, witnessing the murder of Bambi’s mother at the hands of Walt Disney; or perhaps with that sensational salutation of E.B. White’s “Charlotte”, or participating in a public gathering with my second-grade class at the very first Earth Day. Later, my awakening’s aided by devouring writings from Jane Goodall, Susan Fenimore Cooper, Mary Oliver, Carl

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BIKING BUILDS CONNECTIONS

by Jon Harding



Jon Harding

“Would you like a warm burrito?” The man’s worn face barely changed its expression, but his outstretched hand let me know the answer was “yes”. I placed the warm foil wrap in his hand. He looked away as I said, “Hope you have a good day.” This interaction replayed itself in similar form dozens more times on a cold winter Sunday morning on North Tryon Street in Charlotte where I ride with a home-grown group of volunteers called the Burrito Bikers, feeding homeless neighbors.

Transportation inequality in this city can be a huge impediment to finding a steady job or affordable housing, and more generally to fitting in as a full-fledged member of society. Bikes offer much utility to the poor and homeless in Charlotte, and often the exchange of bikes acts as a type of currency because of their utility. Arriving by bike to engage with homeless

neighbors can lead to a connection—or at least offer a warm meal that was otherwise not available.

There is something about bicycles that’s an instantaneous equalizer. I’ve experienced this so many times in my life traveling on two wheels. Often I’m asked, “How far did you ride, today?” Whether it was on an extended bicycle tour across several states, as I arrive at work, or even rolling into the ice-cream shop with my sons in tow, the response always seems to amaze whether I say it’s been 100, 10, or just one mile. The simplicity, yet capability of a bicycle sparks joy and amazement that’s unparalleled. By riding away from your home to reach a destination by bike,



UUA General Assembly Witness Event, photo by Nancy Pierce

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Jay Leach

The Enduring Questions. That was the name of the text in my "Introduction to Philosophy" course in college. I still recall the day when a classmate expressed frustration at a long list of rejected solutions to a particular philosophical query. The professor, smiling, replied, "You have noticed the title of our primary text for this class, right?"

Among the seemingly insolvable questions that have long engaged philosophers is a curious one that wonders "Why is there something rather than nothing?" All the way back to the pre-Socratic thinkers, five centuries before the Common Era, we have writings from thinkers considering this question. Can a cogent case be made, not just for why *certain* things exist, but why there is *anything at all*?

As much as I enjoyed (and still enjoy) the philosophical pondering of some of those questions, I have, over the years, gravitated more to creative responses—those offered by writers and poets and musicians. I find myself more attracted to claims that seem to address my mind *and* my body *and* my spirit as the interdependent, interwoven aspects that make up who I am.

For example, several years ago I binge read the prodigious body of poems from twentieth-century California poet Robinson Jeffers. There, buried in one of Jeffers poems, I discovered his response to the question of why there is something rather than nothing:

I believe that the beauty and nothing else is what things are formed for.

What a strange, yet strangely compelling assertion. Jeffers looked out over a rocky coastline, sauntered across the verdant hills, gazed in rapt attention at birds of prey, considered the spectacle of a twinkling

night sky and affirmed a very particular faith. Things were formed for one reason and one only: for beauty.

The French philosopher and mystic Simone Weil concurred with his statement of belief. Her way of professing the same faith was this: "Only beauty is not the means to anything else. It alone is good in itself, it is the only finality."

Jeffers and Weil offer a very similar creative claim. Why is there anything? It is all, ultimately, for beauty. What motivated the formation of everything? Beauty. What is the only true end in life? Beauty. What is life's sole ultimate good? Beauty.

These early spring days it is easy to echo such claims.



painting by Laura Smail (photo by Elsa Lafferty)

As our whirling planet tilts us toward the sun, we revel in the reawakening of our earth. Our region is arrayed in kaleidoscopic profusion. For a while it is as if the sunny blooms of the forsythia are vying with alabaster pear blossoms; the red buds' delicate pink petals compete for our attention with the purple profusion of the wisteria. And then . . . dogwoods and azaleas and crepe myrtles! Oh my!

For what is it all here? the poet's and the mystic's affirmations seem, for now, as good as any—it is here for beauty.

Considered imaginatively, we might ask: What if that were true? What if these two were right? What is at stake in the continuance of what is? Why does caring for what is here, immediately before us, have significance?

What if we are the stewards of beauty? What if we both exemplify the beauty that is at the heart of everything and are also being called upon to participate in sustaining its existence?

We might join the poet and the mystic in a kind of creative supposition. We humans are beauty stewarding beauty. All of what is is summoning us to a majestic role—to observe, appreciate, be grateful for, and sustain beauty.

Our spiritual journey begins at birth and continues throughout our lives. We invite parents to use the material presented in LET'S DIVE IN! to engage their children in this journey.



Chalice Lighting

*We light this chalice to remind ourselves
To take good care of the earth.
Because it is our home.
We are blessed by its bounty and must in turn, bless
it with our care.*



Kathleen Carpenter

**MUTANT DINOSAUR
FISH AND OTHER SCARY
THINGS**

by Kathleen Carpenter

“Mom! Mom! You have got to see what we caught! It’s a mutant dinosaur fish.”

My sons were young teens in the late 1990s when they brought me a small, narrow fish with blue-grey “horns” on its head. I was intrigued at first, then horrified when I considered the pollution that might have created such a creature.

Growing up, my sons both enjoyed fishing. One of the reasons we chose to buy our house was because it had a creek in back that flowed into a larger creek full of fish and other aquatic wildlife. It was – and still is – surrounded by acres of woods. My husband and I wanted our children to be able to play in the woods and creeks like we had when we were children. We were all pleasantly surprised to discover how good the fishing was in the larger creek. The kids regularly pulled out small bass, brim, and catfish with their cane poles. Then they caught the mutant fish. I remember calling the biology department at UNCC and asking if they knew of such a fish. They did not, and we never learned any more about it.

The creek behind our house is really a large drainage ditch. That means it flows very low most of the year, but when it rains, it’s like a small river surging

through the woods. The rainwater carries runoff from the streets and yards, stuff like oil from cars that drips onto the road and fertilizer from people’s lawns. The water doesn’t look terribly dirty, but it certainly isn’t clean.

Recently I asked my (now grown) children about the fish. They remembered it and other signs of pollution they had experienced. My daughter said, “There was a time when I was walking near the creek and I came across a broken pipe spilling out toilet paper and other sewage.” My son added, “I remember stuff we called ‘snake barf’ which was unnatural orange foam that backed up in corners of the creek. You could see the toxic color on the creek bed and rocks in the water.” They also told me THEY never went IN the water.



Trash Island photo by Nancy Pierce

Mecklenburg County has over 3000 miles of creeks. For every creek you can see, many more have been covered by streets, parking lots, and buildings. The creek that runs behind our property is probably no more polluted than any other, and possibly less than most. In fact, as my other son reminded me, “Despite all the pollution that flows into our creek, there is plenty of wildlife. Aside from catching fish (including several mutants), we saw deer, hawks, owls, muskrats, snakes, opossums, raccoons...” I still see these animals all the time in the woods behind my house – and in my yard. I am very pleased to say, I also see a cleaner creek thanks to the city cleaning up broken pipes and more of my neighbors using organic yard fertilizers. But it’s still not clean enough.

Being a good steward means taking care of something important. Our Charlotte creeks support a lush and diverse ecosystem for fish, plants, and animals. How can your family be good stewards and help to keep our creeks clean and safe for the wildlife that depends on them AND for the kids who enjoy exploring these “wild places”?

STEWARDSHIP OF THE EARTH

by Tommy George



Tommy George

I wake up most mornings this time of year with a sense of purpose that overshadows almost everything I do. Every early spring for the past seven years, I spend time, a lot of time, too much time in the woods. It offers a chance to see native dogwood, red bud and may apples in full bloom.

I spend a lot of energy, (obsession) in the woods,

foraging morel mushrooms. It has become an obsession, (there, I said it twice). If you're not familiar with morel mushrooms, I would suggest that they are the epitome of fungi, the culinary Holy Grail, mysterious, fickle and magical in not only how they taste, but also how they are elusive and short lived.

There are some hints from nature as to when and where to find morels. Ash trees, ash trees are the markers, that's where I focus my attention. Morels seem to thrive under ash trees and ash is one of the last trees to leaf out, so they are easier to spot.

It's like an adult Easter egg hunt. I compare it to the Easter egg hunt, because I've participated in enough to see the hunter instinct take control, you younger kids will definitely need a head start. Even hunting with my wife or my brother, that greedy, frenzied feeling of wanting more rears its ugly head.

I've gone back to the same spots every year, I have this fantasy that one year, I'm going to follow the morel bloom north, spending my days foraging for mushrooms into Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania.



painting by Laura Smail (photo by Elsa Lafferty)

What I find in the woods is much more than edible fungus. Just last week, I came across an old bleached out deer skeleton, the vertebrae pure white like a lab specimen. I saved one for my neighbors' kids; I've collected a lot of artifacts for them over the years, turtle shells, opossum skulls and snakeskins. The beauty of early spring in the woods is truly amazing grace.

As a member of your board of trustees, I would encourage all of us to embrace this time of year as an opportunity to pause, take in the beauty of not only our own backyards, but the beauty of our community together and what it might mean to be good stewards of that community.

We have made a tremendous effort formulating a visioning plan, looking forward to what, who and where we might be as a congregation in the future. To all those who have participated in the process to date, we are grateful. Stewardship is the careful and responsible

management of something entrusted to one's care.

Where do you see yourself in a year, five years, even ten? Does the UUCC offer you an opportunity to become what you might envision for yourself? For me, I have found a kind, caring, thoughtful community where I am encouraged to be my best. I am grateful for this community and the opportunity to serve on your board of trustees.

Late season morels are sometimes full of ants, slug eaten, or partially moldy. When the poison ivy gets thigh high, it's over. It doesn't matter to me; I'm out there until the underbrush becomes impassable. Another year will pass and I'll have eaten morel pizza, morel mushroom sauce on pasta, morel mushroom soup, grilled morels, morels in eggs and even fried morels. I have a stash of dried mushrooms to carry me through until the next spring.

My hope is that we can all find that same sense of excitement about our shared community, being good stewards of our liberal religion.

Orion's Belt

*Listen to the honking of the geese in the bay
Watch Orion's belt fade away
Feel the light of a brand new day
Stick around a little while longer; stay here a little bit more*

*Hear the splash of a scared river otter
Take another chance to stand by the water
Have another dance with the old man's daughter
Stick around a little while longer; stay here a little bit more*

*Stay here a little bit longer; stick around a little bit more
Dock your boat down there in the harbor
Plant your feet right here on the shore*

*Chirping of the crickets and the birds in the trees
Campfire smoke in the cool spring breeze
Don't want to beg you, but I'll ask you, please
Stick around a little while longer; stay here a little bit more*

*There's a snapping turtle paddling in the starlight
We're singing the old sweet songs after midnight
By a crackling fire; everybody's going to
Stick around a little while longer; stay here a little bit more*

*Stay here a little bit longer; stick around a little bit more
Make your rights a little less wrong
Make your home right here on the shore*

*Smoldering embers dying all around
Spread your pallet out on the ground
Cradle your head as the songs wind down
Stick around a little while longer; stay here a little bit more*

*Listen! The honking of the geese in the bay
Watch Orion's belt fade away
Feel the light; another brand new day
Stick around a little while longer; stay here a little bit more
Stay here a little bit longer; stick around a little bit more*

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photo by Rocky Hendrick

UUCC

ENDS Statements

AS A CONGREGATION, WE COURAGEOUSLY NAME THESE ENDS TO WHICH WE ASPIRE:

- We are a joyful, dynamic community of people who care about and are connected to each other. Here people are welcomed, heard, included and respected.
- We are a sanctuary for those on a liberal religious path and a beacon of progressive thought and action in the larger Charlotte community.
- We cultivate lives of generosity and responsibility, sharing our personal abundance.
- We are intentionally growing in our diversity as a congregation, each of us working with others to overcome the barriers that divide the human family.
- We strive for peace, justice and equity in our hearts, our interpersonal relationships, our community and our world.

Sagan, Sylvia Earle, Rachel Carson and bold actions from Wangari Maathai’s “30 million trees” to Julia Butterfly Hill’s one tree, Luna.

Hope has been given, while my breath has been taken, and my soul always saved, by the beauty of this earth; from coastal Carolina to Cape Cod to Kauai and where I most certainly left a piece of myself one numinous night in Joshua Tree, lying on the bare desert floor, smelling the piñon, gazing at Sister Moon encircled by stars.

I carry with me Terry Tempest Williams, “The world is holy. We are holy. All life is holy. Daily prayers are delivered on the lips of breaking waves, the whisperings of grasses, the shimmering of leaves.”

My spiritual influences, of which there are many, all align (or my interpretations of them do). As a *pagan*, honoring all things in the natural universe as divine, a *yogini*, practicing *ahimsa*, non-harming, the reverence for all life of the first *Buddhist* precept, practicing *Native American* traditions and ceremony, to treat the earth and all that dwell thereon with respect (unlike many who believe animals sacrifice themselves for humans, I believe some humans sacrifice the life of animals for personal pleasure; I choose otherwise). Now with the newly formed Green Sanctuary Group here at the UUCU, I bring the voice of a vegan, raising up not only the seventh principle, respect for the interdependent web of all existence, but representing a movement in the national Unitarian Universalist community to change the first principle to “the inherent worth and dignity of every *being*”.

My activism in stewardship feels fully fluid. I will go out of my way to relocate a spider, a cigarette butt, or a billowing plastic bag. I refuse to buy bottled water. I have stood, marched (and fought) for HIV/AIDS and human rights, and those of animals, LGBTQ, women, children, and farm workers; for climate justice, to end homelessness, racial injustice, factory-farming, deforestation and global depletion of natural resources.

Lakota Holy Medicine Man, Black Elk said, “All things are our relatives. What we do to everything, we do to ourselves. All is really one.”

“Yes. Yes.”

you are taking a risk and making yourself vulnerable in a way that people appreciate and respect. The interaction that takes place at human speed between people walking, biking, or just hanging out on our public byways builds human connection and spirit, and strengthens our community.

A similar effect takes place as I ride and take in the four seasons from the seat of a bike. I commune with the natural world, with which we are blessed in our unique urban environment. It might be easy to forget the beautiful variety of trees, plants, and animals we have in our midst, but these creatures are my brethren on the cold, wet mornings, or the warm moonlit nights. The sight of two birds huddled and shaking off the cold wet rain is something that stays with me throughout my sometimes mundane, over-

important work days. The sight of a bulbous yellow full moon taken in through the branches of a giant magnolia tree on a warm summer night makes my heart grow for this city. As these experiences repeat themselves in unique ways, my sense of this city as home grows.

I incorporate biking, walking, and public transit into my daily life for so many reasons. It is empowering to travel somewhere by your own physical and brain power. As I ride, walk, and use transit I feel I am making a connection with my community, and making neighbors. Active transportation is a health-giving experience that can be one of the simplest ways to get adequate happiness-

inducing exercise. Many people say, “Oh you must be a tree hugger if you ride your bike instead of a car.” I am a tree hugger, but active transportation also feeds my spirit, community, mind, and body.



Riverbend Coal Ash photo by Nancy Pierce

Jan McNeely

When Jan McNeely and her family joined our congregation almost 30 years ago, her youngest son was in the nursery. It felt natural to her to help out. Not long after, she became a nursery supervisor, along with Don and Marilyn Crawford and Cindy Fox. As Jan's children got older, she started teaching religious education classes



Jan McNeely

for our children. To fill her love of music and singing, she joined the adult choir, where she has shared her voice for many years. When asked, Jan served on the Religious Education Committee. When the RE Director moved away, she pitched in to get things done. To help find a new director, Jan served on the team that hired Kathleen Carpenter. And when a Director of Music was needed, Jan chaired the team that recommended John Herrick as well.

She has served on the Open Door School Managing Team, on our Board of Trustees twice, is a Discover Group leader and has been a member of the Vision Steering Team for the last two years. Remarkably, Jan does not see herself as a "super volunteer". "There are always opportunities to do things," she says, "and every time you have a chance to help, you get to know more people. The personal connection is the best part." Jan explained that when you are on a team or in a group, you get to know people outside of your usual circle of people. Jan shared: "By working with different people, it broadens my range. For instance, in my Discover Group I met a bunch of great people I might not have known otherwise. It fills me to be involved with people."

With skills honed in her professional life, Jan has served our congregation in what she sees as "supporting roles". She says her Unitarian Universalist values have also informed her work life. When asked why she served in the roles she's had, Jan said, "I was asked, so I said yes." From her perspective, you don't know what opportunities or relationships you are shutting out if you say no.

In Apology

On the California beaches of my childhood, I dug sand castles around broken glass and piles of cigarette butts, their tips extinguished in dirty clusters. As empty cans crested with the waves I'd feel them bounce off my shoulders in the spray, and knew them as part of the ocean.

In the 70's at an amusement park on Lake Erie, a view during the roller-coaster's ascent shocked: beyond the park fence, gasping, dead and rotting fish lay piled on the shoreline, popcorn and salt water taffy mingling with their stench. "Nasty!" we screamed.

I grew up thoughtless, neglectful, not even realizing it. Now we try to heal our damage by adjusting our habits, changing our attitudes.

It's small, but I want to believe that close attention is worth something. Breathing deeply the morning scent of pine and magnolia, dirt after rain. Stopping long enough to turn our faces to the sun.

Just as quiet kindness can produce invisible ripples of good, an apology to our planet might look like a commitment to gratitude and deep appreciation.

-by Lisa Marcoff Lackey

Above & Beyond

Thank you to Rocky Hendrick for again coordinating Room in the Inn this year. With his leadership, over 100 volunteers helped provide more than 150 homeless neighbors with safety, warmth, quiet, hot meals and kindness. From December through March, Rocky made sure volunteers were ready, necessary tasks were done and the program ran smoothly. Rocky's hard work and heart helped us make a difference for our community.



Rocky Hendrick

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS



Al & Diana Lovelace

Al & Diana Lovelace

“We moved from California about eight years ago. Diana is a retired attorney and Al is a retired facilities engineer. We have two adult children, three granddaughters and one great-granddaughter.”

CREATIVE SUBMISSIONS FOR SOUNDINGS

The editors of *Soundings* invite members of the congregation to submit creative written and visual material for publication. Submissions should reflect one of the congregation's upcoming Second Sunday themes:

May - Beacon/Witness; June - Religion. Written pieces (poems or prose) should be no more than 150 words. Visual works can include photographs or high-quality photographs of paintings, sketches, fiber art, sculpture, etc. All submissions must be original. The editors – the UUC professional staff – will review all submissions and contact the authors regarding suitability for publication.

Please send submissions to
uucc@uuccharlotte.org

FOR FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

Below you will find a list of books, reflections, movies, lectures and much more for further engagement on the subject of Stewardship of the Earth.

BOOKS:

Adult

A Sand County Almanac, by Aldo Leopold, 1949

Desert Solitaire, by Edward Abbey, 1968

Developing Ecological Consciousness: Path to a Sustainable World, by Christopher Uhl, 2013

Defending Mother Earth: Native American Perspectives on Environmental Justice
edited by Jace Weaver, 1996

Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future, by Bill McKibben, 2007

Living More with Less, by Doris Janzen Longacre, 1980/2012

Our Sustainable Table, edited by Robert Clark, 1989

Radical Simplicity, by Jim Merkel, 2003

The Better World Handbook, by Ellis Jones, Ross Haenfler and Brett Johnson, 2007

The Dream of the Earth, by Thomas Berry, 1988

The End of Nature, by Bill McKibben, 1986/2006

The Great Work: Our Way into the Future
by Thomas Berry, 1999/2000

The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics, by Roderick Nash, 1989

Women Healing Earth; Third World Women on Ecology, Feminism, and Religion, edited by Rosemary Radford Ruether, 1996

4 Years-Grade 4

Miss Rumphus, by Barbara Cooney, 1983

Planting the Trees of Kenya, by Claire A Nivada, 2008

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FOR FURTHER ENGAGEMENT CONTINUED

Below you will find a list of books, reflections, movies, lectures and much more for further engagement on the subject of Stewardship of the Earth.

4 Years-Grade 4 (continued)

- One Plastic Bag*, by Miranda Paul, 2015
The Good Garden: How One Family Went from Hunger to Having Enough, by Katie Smith Milway, 2010
The Great Kapot Tree, by Lynne Cherry, 2000
The Sea, The Storm, and the Mangrove Tangle by Lynne Cherry, 2004
The Promise, by Nicola Davies, 2014

Grades 4-7

- Miss Rumphus*, by Barbara Cooney, 1983
Planting the Trees of Kenya, by Claire A Nivada, 2008
One Plastic Bag, by Miranda Paul, 2015
The Good Garden: How One Family Went from Hunger to Having Enough, by Katie Smith Milway, 2010
The Great Kapot Tree, by Lynne Cherry, 2000
The Sea, The Storm, and the Mangrove Tangle by Lynne Cherry, 2004
The Promise, by Nicola Davies, 2014

MOVIES:

- Silent Running*, 1972 (G)
Soylent Green, 1973 (PG)
Dersu Uzala, 1975 (G)
Never Cry Wolf, 1983 (PG)
Gorillas in the Mist, 1988 (PG-13)
Erin Brockovich, 2000 (R)
Wall-E, 2008 (G)
Avatar, 2009 (PG-13)
The Lorax, 2012 (PG)
Promised Land, 2012 (R)

REFLECTIONS AND POETRY:

- black nature: Four Centuries of African-American Nature Poetry*, edited by Camille T. Dungy, 2009
New and Selected Poems, Vol. 1, by Mary Oliver, 1992/2005
Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, by Annie Dillard, 1974
Sabbaths, by Wendell Berry (poetry), 1987
Sands of the Well, by Denise Levertov (poetry), 1998
The Island Within, by Richard Nelson, 1989
The Primal Place, by Robert Finch, 1983
Wild Song: Poems of the Natural World, edited by John Daniel (poetry), 1998

SHORT VIDEOS:

Ages 4-Adult

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5PefTdky_E

Adult

<http://ecohearth.com/eco-zine/arts-and-culture/253-top-environmental-documentaries-.html>

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS OF ART AND READINGS:

Rocky Hendrick

"I first started taking photos of race cars in the early 70's. After my first spectator race at Road Atlanta, I was hooked. I purchased a Minolta X-700 35mm camera and never stopped. Now, that I am retired I enjoy capturing moments. The photo in this issue was taken around 6:20 a.m. outside of Blowing Rock, North Carolina. I found it to be very peaceful just being out and being able to witness one of nature's miracles. Sometimes life gets in the way and don't see the beauty. It helps to heal the spirit, to be able to take in Mother Nature's entire splendor."



Rocky Hendrick



Lisa Marcoff Lackey

Lisa Marcoff Lackey

Lisa Marcoff Lackey has loved writing all of her life, from short stories and essays to poetry. She's currently dreaming about the children's book she should be writing. Lisa is happy to work in an elementary school library, surrounded by words and children eager to hear them

read aloud. She can be found outside with her hands in the dirt or practicing yoga, and she's the last to leave anywhere there is a song to be sung.

Nancy Pierce

UUC member Nancy Pierce has worked as a documentary photographer all her adult life. Her client list reflects her interests in land and water protection, sustainable communities, active transportation, social justice and the common



Nancy Pierce

good. In addition to her corporate, nonprofit and editorial work, Nancy was commissioned for the recent exhibits Families of Abraham (Levine Museum), River Docs (Light Factory) and City of Creeks (Projective Eye Gallery). She has photographed General Assembly for the Unitarian Universalist Association every year since 1993. Nancy and her husband Mickey Shaver raised two sons in the UUC.

Laura Smail

"I started to take painting seriously during a year in Australia in 1973. The main inspiration for my painting has been the land we



Laura Smail

own in Vernon County – 120 acres – fields, woods, fence lines, a pond, views of farms in the distance. I'm not a professional painter. I have trouble deciding whether what I do is any good. A lot of it isn't, of course, and that's discouraging. But the wonder of painting is precisely that there is so much to learn. A constant exploration. At 80, when other things are closing in, painting will always, endlessly open out." (written in Nov. 2002 at age 80. Laura is now 94—and still painting.)

Ed & Rosanna Stokes

Soulfully weaving notes into song is the theme for Ed and Rosanna Stokes' path through their lives together. They are pleased to provide you with Orion's Belt, a song written about living on Lake Blalock in upstate South



Rosanna & Ed Stokes

Carolina, where Rosanna currently resides and Ed visits as much as he can. With long breaks to pursue jobs in other states, they have been members of UUC on and off for the last 30+ years. As native Charlotteans, they love this city of large shade trees, breweries, hot summer days and ice tea. They have two grown children (Ian and Anna) who are creating their own songs and families.

SOUNDINGS

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