



DISCOVER DEEPER SPIRITUAL MEANING

Depth through reflection

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IN THIS ISSUE ON:

BEACON / WITNESS

“We are a beacon of progressive thought and action in the larger Charlotte community.”

— FROM THE UCC ENDS STATEMENTS

2 | Member Reflections

Luis Rodriguez
Ann Wood

3 | Fathoming

Jay Leach

4 | Families: Let's Dive In!

5 | From Your Board of Trustees

Megan Van Fleet

8 | Celebrating Our Volunteers

Greg Schropp

9 | Welcoming New Members

Barbara Devinney
Brenda DiModugno & Rich Exley
Curtis & Roberta Griner
Michael Masterson
Terry Taylor
Bruce Wiley

10| For Further Engagement

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UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS GATHER IN CHARLOTTE



Chip Sharpe, right, holds up a sign of support for gays and lesbians during a Friday rally at Marshall Park by Unitarian Universalists. Members of the denomination are in town for their General Assembly. The rally was led by local ministers Jay Leach and Robin Tanner.



Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf spoke Friday to Unitarian Universalists in Charlotte. He also gave an earlier interview to the Observer. For a sampling, see Page 4A.

MORE PHOTOS: www.charlotteobserver.com/local

Liberal denomination stands up for its causes

By TIM FUNK
First, they honored the imam who's in the middle of plans to build an Islamic center near ground zero. Then they rallied in uptown Charlotte to support gays, lesbians and same-sex marriage.

And that was just in the first 48 hours or so after they got to town. Today, the 50th annual General Assembly of Unitarian Universalists will, among other things, spotlight a human rights activist who rescues immigrants illegally crossing the border by giving them water and getting them to hospitals.

The country's most liberal collection of congregations - with no creed, but a long his-

tory of social activism - is meeting this weekend in the Bible Belt, better known for a Christian church on nearly every corner.

The 4,000-plus UUs, as they often call themselves, are in Charlotte from around the country to attend workshops, mingle with fellow delegates, listen to nationally renowned speakers.

And stand up for their causes - especially the controversial ones. It's something members of their church have always done. Susan B. Anthony pushed women's suffrage in the 19th century, when it was unpopular. In the 1960s, when some wished the civil rights movement would just go away, two UUs - Viola Liuzzo and the Rev. James Bech -

Dem-led agencies' cuts were deepest

Republicans in the General Assembly deny that politics played a role in deciding allocations as they cut \$2.5 billion from the state budget.

By ROB CHRISTENSEN
RALEIGH — In an era of downsized state government, N.C. Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler has managed to largely protect his department from the budget ax.

Troxler, a Republican, also has vastly increased its staff and powers, positioning him to be the most influential agriculture commissioner since the legendary Jim Graham, who served nine terms before his death in 2003.

While other departments were laying off workers, the agriculture department payroll grew from 1,300 employees to more than 2,000 workers. In fact, it will emerge from the recession with an operating budget that has grown from \$60 million to \$106 million.

Troxler says the numbers are not what they seem. He notes that his department, too, has taken its budget lumps, too. And that its growth reflects greater

MORE COVERAGE
■ Gov. Bev Perdue on Friday vetoed a bill restricting medical malpractice lawsuits. 1B
■ Perdue has signed a bill requiring employers to verify new hires' immigration status. 10A

Bank holding firm files papers for IPO

Led by former Bank of America executives, company specializes in buying up troubled banks in Southeast.

By RICK ROTHACKER

Since last summer, former Bank of America executives Gene Taylor and Chris Marshall have been buying up troubled banks around the Southeast. Now they're looking to turn their venture into a publicly traded company and raise money for even more deals.

On Friday, their bank holding company - North American Financial Holdings - filed paperwork that could lead to an initial public offering that raises up to \$200 million or possibly more. The move puts the pair at the forefront of a pack of bankers looking to capitalize on the financial industry's woes.

Firms such as NAHF "are looking to pick up the gems from the ashes of the financial industry's collapse," said John Fitzgibbon,

House spurns Obama on Libya

But after the largely symbolic vote against involvement, members then back a bill funding U.S. effort.

By JENNIFER STEINHAUER

WASHINGTON — The House dealt a symbolic blow to President Barack Obama on Friday by roundly rejecting a bill to authorize United States military operations in Libya. But the chamber also defeated a measure that would have limited financing to support those efforts.

The result, coming after weeks of tension

between Congress and the White House over authorization of American military aid for the NATO mission in Libya, was a mixed message to the Obama administration, with Republicans and Democrats forming alliances that splintered customary party lines. The resolution to support the mission failed 299-123, with 70 Democrats joining Republicans in a rebuff to Obama.

The resolution was based on a Senate bill written by Sens. John Kerry, D-Mass., and

John McCain, R-Ariz., to blunt criticism that the president has failed to seek congressional approval for his actions in Libya.

"We are disappointed by that vote," said Jay Carney, a White House spokesman. "We think now is not the time to send the kind of mixed message that it sends when we are working with our allies to achieve the goals that we believe that are widely shared in Congress."

He said that these goals included "protecting civilians in Libya, enforcing a no-fly zone, enforcing an arms embargo and further putting pressure" on Moammar Gadhafi, the Lib-

92° 65°

Ask Army 5E
Business 30A
Classified 9B, 3H
Comics 4-9E

PETER FALK, TV'S 'COLUMBO,' DIES

TODAY'S MUST-READ
Radio: Meet the opinionated Vince Crankle. 1E



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

SLAYING DRAGONS

by Luis Rodriguez



Luis Rodriguez

I became an activist because of a deep discontentment with the world around me. I'd grown up with stories of how the world should be. That people should love one another, take care of one another. I learned about heroes slaying dragons, bringing down tyrants and returning the land to the people. Some outgrow those stories. They tuck them away as “nice” and “quaint” but not realistic.

And then there are people like me.

You can call me “crazy.” A person has to be a little crazy to think they can slay the real dragons, depose the real tyrants, and return the land to the people. When I decided to start on this quixotic path, most of the friends, family and acquaintances I thought I knew began to look at me like some exotic beetle... one that may bite if prodded. It wasn't such a big leap I suppose; in school I was voted “Most Likely to Start a Cult.”

I felt very alone, however. A cult of one. It wasn't long before I noticed familiar faces popping up at protests and press conferences, though. Everywhere I went, members of my church were there, fired up over the same issues, fighting the same villains. It was a revelation.

Church, to me, had always been for people to pray for change. It was a very separate place from the rest of my life. What I discovered, much to my surprise, was that the Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte (UUC) was a place for people to not only pray for change, but to plan and coordinate how to bring about

continued on pg 7

“WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD”

by Ann Wood

How do we choose who and how we will be in the world? It is probably not a particular moment in time that defines us but a collection of such moments. Not the influence of one person, but the wonderful variety of wisdom gained from the friction engendered by engaging with others.

An early association with the Unitarian Church of Charlotte offered me and my family like-minded folk who helped me find – and who are still helping me find – ways in which I can justify taking up space on a crowded planet. The formal part



Ann Wood

of my search began as a member of a Unitarian Fellowship in Greenville, South Carolina. A motley crew. I still hear from the survivors.

The informal part began much earlier when as a child I was encouraged to act based on the hubris that seemed to be inborn (hubris: “to rush impetuously”). I think it must be true that you become what you practice,

and equally true that you seldom know how you got to be the person you have become.

Some things I know for sure. I know that Sydney Freeman, Sue Riley, Sybil Bernstein, Judge James McMillan, a collection of Quaker friends, Pop Miller from West Charlotte High School, my employees from whom I learned a new language and culture, and certainly my wonderful husband and children all helped to bring passion, inspiration, and hope to my disorderly journey.

I do believe that I am my sisters' and brothers' keeper, that if the world is ever to be made a better place for all its inhabitants it will take the concentrated effort

continued on pg 7



Moral Monday gathering on voting rights, photo by Nancy Pierce



Jay Leach

It has become a regular part of our summers in South Carolina – an excursion to Hunting Island State Park on the coast about 20 miles from Beaufort. We take a picnic, swim in the surf, walk a secluded trail alongside the lagoon, and conclude our day watching the sun go down over the marsh.

Each year we enjoy a climb to the top of the handsome black and white lighthouse. We venture up 167 spiraling steps to a platform 132 feet above the ground offering cool breezes, a sweeping view of the coastline, and, an eye-level encounter with massive pelicans gliding past.

The Hunting Island Lighthouse was originally built in 1859. The bright beacon from its lens could shine 18 miles warning passing ships of sandbars and shallow water. Destroyed during the Civil War, it was rebuilt in 1875 only to be taken apart and relocated a-mile-and-a-quarter from its original location due to erosion and an encroaching shoreline.

For more than seven decades this lighthouse served to warn and protect. But, in 1933, it was deactivated, no longer needed or useful. Now this grand brick and steel structure serves only as a historic site. While it shines a beacon, that beam is decorative, not bright enough to aid in navigation. The lighthouse is still a pleasant relic we enjoy each summer. But, it has long outlived its important function.

Some say the same of organized religion. Once serving as an important, even primary aspect of society, it too has become obsolete. Venturing into many European towns we find grand cathedrals, sites around which whole towns developed, now relegated to tourist destinations. They're still grand, awe-inspiring even. They just represent an institution – religion – that some claim has outlived its value in the larger society.

What happens when lighthouses and cathedrals no longer offer something essential? They are reduced to tourist stops, quaint places to visit but of little real value to their larger communities. They may be preserved, appreciated for their histories, but no one's now looking to them for guidance and direction in these challenging times.

Is obsolescence the truth, not just about cathedrals, but about organized religion in general? Should we concede that religion's scant beam may offer a quaint decorative element, its temples, synagogues, mosques and sanctuaries may still have historic significance, but it is all now just a vestige of a once essential place in life?

Have we, as a liberating religion – we, as a congregation – come to the end of our real value? Have we become a place to visit occasionally, but not a place to which our community would look for guidance or inspiration?

"We are a beacon of progressive thought and action" we say in our defining claims. Is that really true? Can people still see our welcoming light? Do we serve to enlighten the community? Are we really guiding our city away from dangerous shoals? Do we collectively offer something essential not just for our members but to our region?

Or, have we become a quaint place to drop in on occasion, to show our kids every once in a while, but without any real role in a city and region so dramatically different from the one we entered decades ago?

A familiar hymn we sing asserts: "Stand we now upon the threshold facing futures yet unknown . . ." Looking back to our forebears and forward with a still essential vision, it declares: "Guard we e'er their sacred embers written in each heart and mind."

E'er: ever.

"We were a beacon." Or, "We are a beacon." That choice is ever before us.



Hunting Island Lighthouse
photo by Jay Leach

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 that it can be scary sometimes and even dangerous to stand up for our beliefs. May this flame remind us that we must be willing to speak out and act on injustice or unkindness in the world.

UU SUPERHERO: CHARLOTTE WATKINS

Written collaboratively by Rita Heath-Singer, Belinda Parry, and Kathleen Carpenter

This is a story about a real Unitarian Universalist superhero – from our own congregation! Her name was Charlotte Watkins.

In the 1950s, when Charlotte was a young woman, she and her husband, Carlton, moved to Charlotte from Kansas. (Charlotte moved to Charlotte!) Charlotte, a nurse, and Carlton, a doctor, both believed that everyone was important and should be treated fairly, no matter what they looked like or if they were male or female. That sounds a lot like our 1st and 2nd principles, doesn't it? "Everyone is important" and "Treat all people fairly."

Part of the year, Charlotte worked for an organization committed to empowering women called the YWCA. But in the summer, she worked as a nurse at a summer camp for girls in the mountains, called Camp Allahe. It was one of the few places black and white children could play together. Charlotte thought it was important that all children be allowed to play together and learn from each other. Doesn't that sound a lot like our 3rd principle? "We help each other learn."

During this time, it could be dangerous and scary to stand up for fairness because some people didn't think black people and white people should have the same advantages. Charlotte fought for fairness, though, because all people deserve a voice, like our 5th principle says, "All people should be free to speak out." And like our 6th principle says, "We should build a fair and peaceful world."

When Charlotte came to the South, black children and white children went to separate schools. Charlotte believed that the children would learn more if they could learn together so she tried to get elected to the Charlotte Mecklenburg School Board,

the group that makes decisions about the schools. She wanted to help people see that all of the children should go to school together. While she was trying to get elected, though, someone shared that Charlotte was a Unitarian. A lot of people didn't know anything about Unitarians and what they believe, and they were frightened. Charlotte didn't get elected.

Charlotte stayed involved in the community, though, and remained a strong advocate for equality and integration in the schools, which means allowing all children to go to school together. Some of her friends and family didn't agree that everyone deserved equal treatment, and they stopped talking to her and her husband, Carlton. She could have easily become



Charlotte Watkins

discouraged, but Charlotte continued to work and fight for all people to have the same rights.

The President of the United States at that time, Richard Nixon, asked Charlotte to be part of a group of people who helped him make decisions about integrating the schools. She arranged workshops to help parents, teachers, and communities get ready for integration which finally happened here in Charlotte in 1970.

Charlotte passed away in 2015, and she is missed by many people, including people in our church. While she was living and working, Charlotte showed courage, wisdom, and strength and never lost sight of her beliefs and the dream that all children would have the same rights and be able to attend the same schools.

Wondering Questions:

I wonder if you have ever had to stand up for what you believe . . .

I wonder if you have ever felt discouraged or thought about giving up on something . . .

I wonder how you would feel if you lost friends because of something you believed in. . . .

BEARING WITNESS

by Megan Van Fleet



Megan Van Fleet

On March 31 a group one hundred strong gathered to celebrate the Transgender Day of Visibility in the plaza of the Government Center in uptown Charlotte. A national celebration, Transgender Day of Visibility was started in 2009 as an opportunity to celebrate the lives and contributions of transgender people in our community. This year's theme

of "More Than Visibility" focused specifically on equal rights and dignity in society and in law. In the wake of the passage of HB2, it felt more important than ever to stand in solidarity with our trans brothers and sisters.

The circle was opened on that rainy day with love and energy. Several trans women spoke about their personal experiences and struggles, as well as their hopes, and then a speaker asked that the group hold the space specifically for trans people of color to be seen and heard, since they are by far our most likely citizens to be victims of assault, job discrimination, poverty, and poor healthcare. A few moments of silence passed, and no one entered. A few white allies spoke, and then this same speaker re-entered the circle, calling out the group for usurping the space from the most vulnerable among us. I must admit, I was at first uncomfortable.

As a former event planner, silence in a speaker lineup makes me nervous. Especially when the press is watching and recording, it can be misinterpreted as a lack of support for the cause and slow the momentum. But in this particular case, it was an important lesson for me on being a witness and holding safe space for

deep listening. This was no ordinary rally; no overly organized speaker lineup; no long march through the streets. This day was about listening actively to stories of heartache and struggle from those denied a voice in the conversation. This day was about holding up a mirror and amplifying the beauty of trans lives, and the value they bring as members of our Charlotte community. This was a day to bear witness. Shortly after, trans women and men of color came forward to share their stories and fill the space with their presence.

As a predominantly white affluent congregation involved in social justice issues throughout the city and state, there is certainly a time and a place to use our collective resources to fight for change. But it is equally important to hold the space for marginalized and victimized citizens of our community, rather than forcing our narrative on them. We need to bear witness to struggle and triumph. By listening, we learn; by learning, we grow; by growing, we shine; by shining, we change the world.

Through the visioning process, the Board and Vision Steering Team have been engaged in deep listening within the congregation. We heard about your hopes for the future of this church, of where you saw opportunities for growth and change, and how we could better serve our community. We heard a deep-seated desire to have the work of the UCC inspire transformation—for you personally, for the congregation, and for the larger community.

The Vision will soon be released in its final form, ready for a congregational vote at Congregational Conversation on June 5. This is a momentous occasion and

a turning point for the church. By accepting this work, we have a clear path forward together. We have a guide to drive our work as deep listeners in the community and beacons promoting change spiritually, societally, and environmentally. I urge you to read the Vision and engage deeply with what our future could be.



UCC Members in Raleigh on April 25 for HB2 Protest

What Patsy Remembers about Her Father
at Myrtle Beach, 1955

It wasn't so much the way
he took the other girl's hand that summer day
and led her into the ocean,
lifted her over waves and later that night

from his shoulders onto the merry-
go-round. It wasn't so much
the shock on people's faces
to see a *colored* girl
(their family maid's eight-year old daughter)

on a whites-only
beach and gilded horse.

What it was
was her father's face as he stood there
hard as a piling in sand, and then
on the boardwalk. Cold stone
that face, dull and hollow
as the sound of fog on a February sea.

As if he knew his bold gestures
would not make the world right.

Not for the staring strangers.
Not for his own children, busy
in their own bliss, or their mother
staring at stars. Not for the little girl
yelling *Hey Mister Jack*,
on every turn. *Again, again!*

--Barbara Conrad



Muslim American Association vigil
photo by Nancy Pierce



Julian Bond, drawing by Beth Mussay

What is Seen

And the great actor lists, fidgets,
At a blocked-off intersection,
In the middle of Manhattan, waiting to enact an on-screen monster.

And you see him,
Yes,
In the gray distance.

So tight the crowds at the anti-nuclear rally,
The speeches bounce and shimmer,
And you wade there with the glimmer of belief.

You are then at the births, at product launches,
At your father's escapes from realities,
At the reading of school acceptances, and later offer letters.

And it all dances on the water, skimming over the soul.
Experience, witness, how deep,
How deep, only you know.

--Paul Turner

that change in the world outside our sanctuary. I was never so proud of my church as when dozens of my fellow congregants volunteered to get arrested in protest.

Sitting in the basement of the NC State Capitol, handcuffed, I looked around and saw so many UU’s there, chatting, laughing and unafraid of the tyrants plotting against us.

I discovered, in the UUC, a “community of crazies,” people determined to change the world and not content to sit in a pew and hope for better days. Get enough of us together, and “crazy” starts to feel very normal. Standing up, fighting for what’s right, caring for one another... those things started to feel wonderfully sane.



Pride Charlotte Parade 2015 with members Michael Kelley and Rob Marcy, photo by Denise Weldon

of each of us over the entire span of life to make any progress toward that goal.

I believe we can change things for the better if we keep rushing impetuously in “where angels fear to tread.”

These influences, these beliefs, led me to develop a deep concern for the survival of the species. I think the survival of humankind will depend on taking a global view and acting at the local level. I chose to work within groups that advance the cause of total integration of all ethnicities and cultures. Wherever there is an opportunity to advance the legal and social status of women and girls I want to be involved. When there is an opportunity to be part of a civil liberties action, I want to find an effective way to participate. When fewer and fewer eligible voters go to the polls on election day, I am moved to act.

Because of these influences, because of these beliefs, I have invested my time, my energy, and my financial resources in the educational work done by the League of Women Voters. I have been part of the Moral Monday marches led by Dr. William Barber. The work I do with International House allows me to engage with folk from cultures that are very different from my own. For many years public education has been part of my volunteer efforts, and I do not envision a time when I will not work with, and advocate for, our schools.

The Advocacy Group of the Social Justice Team from our congregation has afforded me an opportunity to push for initiatives that will provide housing for every person in our city. We meet monthly at my home and often have a public official as our guest. We are making progress.

The American Civil Liberties Union had no chapter here for an extended period of time, so three of us started one and we meet at the UUC six times a year. The public is invited to attend. I have also been active with the Friends Committee on National Legislation, which lobbies our Congress for peace through compassionate action in all parts of the world.

And, finally, much of my time and energy goes into making the Democratic Party a better vehicle for advancing the common good. I was born a Democrat in 1928 and never wished I had been someone else.

Greg Schropp

The next time you see Greg Schropp, he will probably be in motion. A member since 2000, he'll likely be in the midst of, on his way to, or coming from helping with something. That something could be our children and youth, Room in the Inn, security or any number of things.



Greg Schropp

His first volunteer role here was with coffee service, which he saw as an easy way to start getting connected. After the first year, he served as the coordinator for another two years. With our children and youth, Greg has been a parent assistant, religious education teacher, middle school advisor, and chaperone for weekend retreats and Habitat build trips. He regularly assists with special events and projects. For a few years, he led the parent support group. At the request of one of our youth, Greg became a Coming of Age mentor.

Greg's leadership roles have included serving on the Facility Envisioning Committee, the Board Nominating Committee and on our Board of Trustees. He is currently chair of our Security Team. Over the years, Greg has delivered MAP (Metrolina AIDS Project) meals, helped with the newsletter mailing, done Habitat builds and performed in our musical comedy show Follies. He's been a stewardship canvasser and a small group leader. At the suggestion of another member, Greg joined the SLUUGs, our softball team, which he now coordinates with Lee Martinec. Greg also helps with communication for our hiking group. With Room in the Inn, he's volunteered in several roles, finding set-up "a good thing to do with the family" and being overnight host "the easiest thing". Often when Greg and his family are here for events, they help with set-up or clean-up.

Greg feels he's been a recipient of other people's volunteer efforts and that it's important for him to give back. He watched his father volunteering when he was growing up and wants to set a good example for his kids too. Volunteering is part of how he lives his values. "It takes a village," Greg said. He enjoys the things he does here and wants to do what he can to contribute now.

That Which We Call a Beacon

That which we call a beacon by any other name would illuminate as brightly.

Like a peacock among penguins, a beacon stands as a pinnacle in the midst of horrid circumstances or among otherwise cleverly-concealed camouflage – warning, informing, transforming and dutifully non-conforming.

By its very nature, a beacon serves as a guidepost – setting direction by transmitting critical pulse waves or messages outward upon request, or confirming the relative position of signals or messages as a benevolent recipient. It stands in service to wayward beings seeking a compass to pinpoint their bearings before charting a new course.

Ever patient, incredibly steady, and readily accessible, a beacon adds value in direct proportion to its fulfillment of stated purpose.

As such, a beacon bears witness to all that is encountered as it provides necessary navigation. . . purposefully. . . willingly. . . and consistently. . . to all who are in need.

Oh, so grateful am I for the beacons that continue to appear exactly at the right moment – illuminating the way during times of deafening darkness and deepest obscurity.

I am never lost for long.

–Bernice Mar

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS



Barbara Devinney

Barbara Devinney

"I retired from a long career in social services management. I strive to be an activist for social justice. As a longtime Unitarian Universalist (UU) worship associate and as a newcomer to Charlotte, I can't imagine not being involved with the

UU church. Everyone is so welcoming!"

Brenda DiModugno & Rich Exley

"We have been attending for about a year and a half and are excited to become members. We are thankful to have found such a welcoming



Brenda DiModugno & Rich Exley

place. We have been in the Charlotte area for two years. Originally from New York and New Jersey. We moved directly from York, Pennsylvania."



Curtis & Roberta Griner

Curtis & Roberta Griner

What do you get when you cross a Hoosier with a Brazilian? You get the Griners! In their free time, Curtis and Roberta are very involved

with animal rescue work. They foster rescue dogs to help them find forever homes. Roberta is a volunteer photographer for animal shelters across North and South Carolina.



Michael Masterson

Michael Masterson

"I am a retired Child and Family Psychologist, and still licensed in North Carolina. I earned a Ph. D. at the University of Nevada, Reno and completed North Carolina Outward Bound wilderness school. Vocation is kindness. My

hobbies are afternoon naps. Looking forward to finding support for my vocation at the UUC." "

Terry Taylor

"I'm very involved in global warming, environmental issues and many other social justice issues. I was born and raised in Charlotte, and was a trauma nurse as a profession. I have been a widow for seven years. I have three sons who live in the area."



Terry Taylor



Bruce Wiley

Bruce Wiley

"I was born in upstate New York and raised in Greensboro, North Carolina. I pursued a career in Public Health & Social Services mostly in New Orleans, Louisiana where my two children were born and raised. After moving to Augusta, Georgia seven years ago, I retired from

social work, but served on the board of a non-profit foster care support program and performed music from time to time. I moved to Charlotte five months ago in order to be closer to family including two grandchildren"

FOR FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

Below you will find a list of books, reflections, movies, lectures and much more for further engagement on the subject of Beacon/Witness

BOOKS:

Adult

In the Footsteps of Gandhi: Conversations with Spiritual Social Activists, by Catherine Ingram, 1990

Widening Circles, by Joanna Macy, 2000

Abby Hopper Gibbons: Prison Reformer and Social Activist, by Margaret Hope Bacon, 2000

Finding Fish, by Antwone Quenton Fisher, Mim Eichler Rivas, 2001

Adele Marion Felde: Feminist, Social Activist, Scientist, by Leonard Warren, 2004

The Therapist as Humanist, Social Activist, and Systemic Thinker: And Other Selected Papers, by Cloe Madanes, 2006

Infidel, by Ayaan Hirsi Ali, 2007

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban, by Malala Yousafzai, 2013

Open Wide the Freedom Gates: A Memoir, by Dorothy Height, 2014

The Shed that Fed a Million Children: The Extraordinary Story of Mary's Meals, by Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, 2015

3 Years-Grade 3

Rosa, by Nikki Giovanni, 2005

When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson, by Pam Munoz Ryan, 2002

Amelia and Eleanor Go For A Ride, by Pam Munoz Ryan, 1999

Freedom's School, by Lesa Cline-Ransome, 2015

We March, by Shane W. Evans, 2012

Grandfather Gandhi, by Arun Gandhi, 2014

Malala Yousafzai: Warrior with Words, by Karen Leggett Abouraya, 2014

Grades 4-7

A is for Activist Board book, by Innosanto Nagara, 2013

Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down, by Andrea Davis Pinkney, 2010

Witness, by Karen Hesse, 2003

Kids with Courage: True Stories About Young People Making a Difference, by Barbara Lewis, 1992

MOVIES:

To Kill a Mockingbird, 1962

Gandhi, 1982 (PG)

Philadelphia, 1993 (PG-13)

Life Is Beautiful, 1997 (PG-13)

Patch Adams, 1998 (PG-13)

Billy Elliot, 2000 (R)

Erin Brockovitch, 2000 (R)

Whale Rider, 2002 (PG-13)

Ray, 2004 (PG-13)

Pride, 2007 (PG)

Milk, 2008 (R)

Temple Grandin, 2010 (PG)

The Help, 2011 (PG-13)

Spotlight, 2015 (R)

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS OF ART, POETRY, AND READINGS:

Barbara Conrad

Barbara Conrad is author of *Wild Plums*, published by FutureCycle Press in 2013 and editor of *Waiting for Soup* (2004), a collection of art and poetry from her weekly workshops with homeless neighbors here in Charlotte. Her poems have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies. Her writing focuses on personal exploration, nature and social justice issues.



Barbara Conrad

happening at this unique time in history. Beth currently lives and works in Waxhaw, North Carolina where she takes care of her kids, works on her green thumb, and does portrait commissions.

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 good. In addition to her corporate, nonprofit and editorial work, Nancy was commissioned for several recent exhibits in the Charlotte area. She has photographed General Assembly for the Unitarian Universalist Association every year since 1993.



Nancy Pierce

Bernice Mar

Professionally, Bernice is an enterprising Information Technology Business expert and an engaging agent of change. Personally, she is a life-long seeker and workshop facilitator who "followed the breadcrumbs" to UUC in 2011. "As Theodore Roethke says, 'I learn by going where



Bernice Mar

I must go.' I AM where I find connection... where there is freedom of choice (and voice). . . where authenticity lives. Curiosity drives me. Beauty and art inspire me. Creativity energizes me. Writing is one of many beacons that guide me home."

Paul Turner

Paul is a longtime Unitarian Universalist who came to Charlotte from Framingham, MA, in 2014 with his partner, Althea Clark. He studied acting and sings opera. His favorite role is Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*. He says singing solos at the UUC has given him "great pleasure." Paul has poetry and essay credits, most recently on the TheBillFold.com site.



Paul Turner

Beth Mussay

Beth Mussay is a painter and illustrator originally from Indianapolis. She feels proud and lucky to come from a family of compassionate, politically conscious musicians. Beth is inspired by the beauty and complexity of people and the natural world. She aspires to contribute to the global political and artistic conversation



Beth Mussay

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