

WUU *news*

Monthly Newsletter of Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists

January 2015



January's Spiritual Theme is "Revelation"

Rev. Jennifer Ryu

Mark Your Calendar

1.1

Office Closed-Happy New Year

1.8

The Odyssey

1.11

Memorial Service for Rebecca House

1.18

New Member Orientation Class

1.19

Office Closed-MLK Day

1.21

Pathfinders Book Group

1.23

New Member Appreciation Potluck

1.25

Rainbow Potluck

Happy New Year! I am spending this first week of 2015 with my family in Ohio. As I leave for this short vacation, I want to share with you a book that many members of WUU read together in the summer of 2009--Eckhart Tolle's "A New Earth."

Tolle says that he took the title from a biblical passage in Revelation that points the way to a new heaven and a new earth. Rather than taking a literal understanding of these words, he sees this image as "a metaphor for the state of conscious awareness of infinite being (heaven), which continually comes forth in a new way into new form (earth)."

The Spirit of Life constantly reveals itself to us in both subtle and startling ways. Revelation comes in the form of powerful experiences--dramatic beauty, death, illness, reconciliation, forgiveness. It also comes in one perfectly formed snowflake and a hug from a child. From these experiences our notions of truth shift and grow.

As adherents of a liberal faith tradition, we do not believe that the book of truth is closed. This is what makes us a non-dogmatic faith. We are open to new truths that reveal themselves in many ways and through many teachers.

Continued on page 2...

Minister's Article Continued ...

If you are looking for a fresh start to this new year, I recommend Tolle's work. He reveals a reality that is right here and available to anyone who will open themselves to a new truth. Here are some of his words (from www.eckharttolle.com):

"One thing we can do is to notice the little things all around us, paying attention to details such as the birds in the trees and the flowers in the garden or the park—just notice the beauty everywhere, even the smallest things. To notice seemingly insignificant things requires alertness. That alertness is the key. It is the unconditioned. It is consciousness itself.

In awakened doing there is complete internal alignment with the present moment and whatever you are doing right now. The doing is then not primarily a means to an end, but an opening for consciousness to come into this world. Aligning yourself with the Now is aligning yourself with universal purpose.

Awakened doing has three modalities, depending on circumstances and the nature of the activity. They are acceptance, enjoyment, and enthusiasm. If there is neither acceptance, enjoyment, or enthusiasm in what you do, you are out of alignment with universal purpose. You are creating unhappiness, that is to say suffering in one form or another."

May this year bring you closer to a new revelation--the revelation of your life's alignment with universal purpose. May all be well. May all be happy. May all be at peace.

Rev. Jennifer



January Worship Schedule

January 4, 2015

9:15am & 11:15am
"Biblical Revelation"
Rev. David Tetrault
Guest Minister & WUU Member

Religious Education

Lower Elementary: Our Words Matter
Upper Elementary: Kindness is Key
Middle School: Lean on Me
YRUU: Heart IQ

January 11, 2015

9:15am & 11:15am
"What Poetry Reveals"
Rev. Jennifer Ryu

Religious Education

Children's Chapel for all Children
YRUU: Fairness

January 18, 2015

9:15am & 11:15am
*"Black Lives Matter:
How to be a Good White Ally"*
Rev. Jennifer Ryu

Religious Education

Lower Elementary: A Peaceful & Fair World
Upper Elementary: A Matter of Perspective
Middle School: Service is the Rent We Pay
for Living
YRUU: TBA

January 18, 2015

9:15am & 11:15am
*"Black Lives Matter:
How to be a Good White Ally"*
Rev. Jennifer Ryu

Religious Education

Lower Elementary: A Peaceful & Fair World
Upper Elementary: A Matter of Perspective
Middle School: Service is the Rent We Pay
for Living
YRUU: TBA

January 25, 2015

9:15am & 11:15am
"What 21st Century Racism Reveals"
Rev. Jennifer Ryu

Religious Education

Lower Elementary: Peaceful Choices
Upper Elementary: Our Heritage's Calling
Middle School: Privilege
YRUU: Fairness (redux)

News from the Board

Welcome to the New Year! On December 21st, the solar calendar completed a time of advent, waiting and anticipating the rebirth of the earth. On December 24th, the Christian liturgical calendar completed four weeks called Advent, waiting and anticipating a rebirth of the Prince of Peace. On January 1st, halfway through our fiscal year, WUU begins a time of advent, waiting and anticipating a rebirth of all that makes WUU our special home and a light in the world around us.



- We anxiously await the final results of the Capital Campaign and the final design of our expanded sanctuary building.
- We anxiously await the time to approve the final building project.
- We anxiously await the time to break ground.
- We anxiously await the selection of new members to the Board and Congregational Committees.
- We anxiously await ways to address continuing and new social justice causes.
- We anxiously await finding new ways to move along our Mission's path.
- We anxiously await seeing our beloved WUU mature further into its second quarter century.

So much awaits us in 2015. Things we know and can predict; things we don't know and will be surprised by their challenges and joys. Working together we can achieve all we dream of this year and enthusiastically meet the accompanying challenges and joys.

The Board begins the year by inviting you to **two** Congregational Meetings, February 15th and March 15th.

- **February 15th, at 10:30, between the services:**
 - **Election of Board and congregational committee members**
 - **Updates from the Building Our Future Task Force and Rev. Jennifer**
- **March 15th, at 12:30, following the second service:**
 - **Presentation with discussion and vote for approval of the final expansion design and its costs.**
 - **Presentation with discussion and vote for approval of financial institution to carry loan for expansion.**

All members and friends are invited to attend these important meetings that affect the life of our congregation. If you have signed the membership book and made an official pledge of financial support for the 2014-15 fiscal year, you are eligible to vote on the above issues. Absentee ballots will be available for voting members unable to attend in person.

In my absence throughout the month of January and the beginning of February, please address your questions and concerns for the Board to the Board Vice President, Rachel Delbos, rgross77@aol.com.

Best wishes from all the Board for the New Year.

Lola Warren, Board President

Do you know every WUU? Neither do I.

That's why we want to include a brief member biography in every newsletter.

Maybe you'll discover someone who shares your background, interests, or hobby. Maybe you'll learn something new about someone you already know. Or maybe you'll be moved to reach out to someone who needs to hear from you.

Please help us strengthen the WUU community by sharing your story. Together, we can weave a growing web of friendship, support, compassion, and love. Melissa Ackley, ackleymw@gmail.com

Spotlight on Susan Dexter

I grew up in Pennsylvania where my dad worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad. My parents were Presbyterians and raised us in that faith. During the Vietnam War, my mother became an activist and discovered the Unitarian faith.

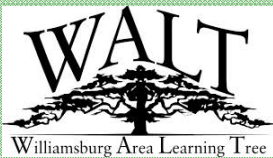
I met Lee, my husband of 47 years, at Miami University in Ohio. He was raised in Chicago as a Christian Scientist and still identifies with that faith, while frequently attending church with me.

We lived in Chicago and Dayton, before moving to Virginia. We were members of the Peninsula UU Fellowship for several years when we lived in Poquoson.

We have two children: Allison lives in Richmond, and Brian lives in Michigan with our granddaughter, Anna.

Lee's career has been in education, counseling, and athletics, and later in MWR in the Air Force and Army. Mine in social work and later real estate. My passion has been my family and our dogs, my interests are in art, reading, gardening, boating, animals, politics, and social justice issues.

We moved to Williamsburg in 1999 and I joined WUU in 2009 looking for some politically liberal people and ready to take the time to explore the UU faith. I have enjoyed getting to know so many wonderful people. I feel at home here.



WALT Class Proposals Welcomed

The Spring 2015 WALT Schedule of Courses is now accepting class proposals until January 10, 2015. We invite anyone interested in hosting a future class to visit the WALT website at www.wuu.org/walt or call Jill Whitten – Program Coordinator at 757-220-9975.

Twice a year the Williamsburg Area Learning Tree (WALT) offers assorted "Learning for Fun" classes that brings together individuals in our community to share their knowledge of a subject that they love so that the rest of us can learn from them. WALT, a community service project of the Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists, is a non-profit, educational program that encourages people to "Try Something New." For 15 years, hundreds of courses have been offered to everyone from teenagers to senior citizens. The upcoming Spring 2015 WALT Schedule of Courses will be available on Saturday, January 31 in the Virginia Gazette, online at www.wuu.org/walt, in print at the W/JCC Libraries.



Share the Plate Sunday, January 4

Greater Williamsburg Outreach Mission

The Share the Plate Program will donate the entire plate collection for Sunday, January 4, to GWOM (Greater Williamsburg Outreach Mission). This local non-profit – chartered in 2012 - has grown from 11 to 21 faith groups, focused on the spiritual practice of assisting the homeless population in our local communities. Our WUU representative is Helen Hansen, who also serves on the board and executive committee.

GWOM representatives collaborate with other stakeholders to learn about the needs of our homeless population and create action plans to assist.

Three years ago, GWOM helped initiate the Community of Faith Mission Emergency Homeless Shelter program. This winter, WUU will host the Winter Shelter February 15-22

Greater Williamsburg Outreach Mission is currently planning a pilot program to open a year round Day Shelter that will offer respite, hope, and access to services, with the hope of helping those in need develop successful independence and self sufficiency. This is a substantial commitment of resources for this long term initiative, so GWOM is seeking funding from its members as well as outside sources. Please consider a generous donation to GWOM on January 4.

For more information about GWOM, please visit gwoutreachmission.org. For information about the WUU Share the Plate program or to nominate a recipient, email stp@wuu.org.

Did you see?

Thanks:

- **Jim Hall** for installing LED lights on our Ironbound Road sign. Now we can see the entire sign!
- **Roger and Beverly Baldwin** for donating the three hand sanitizer units. If you get a cold, don't blame them!
- **David Benson** and **Jim Hall** for hanging the beautiful snowflakes in the sanctuary.
- **Caroline** and **Trotter Hardy** for the Japanese Maple in front of the nursery. **Roger Guernsey** ensured that this would be a safe place for the tree during construction.
- **Jacques van Montfrans** for installing drainage under the brick sideway on the way to the memorial garden.
- **Les Solomon** for installing the new LED lights on Fahs to enable folks to have safe passage to their cars.



Want to volunteer for a winter fall project? I may have one just for you!

Les Solomon

Chair, Campus Improvement Team (CIT)

TEACHERS needed for "Second Semester"

Would you like a chance to spend time with our wonderful children and youth?
Then please consider being a teacher for the second semester, beginning February 2015!
Please get in touch with Austen Petersen at austen@wuu.org.



Food For FISH

(our local community's food & clothing pantry)

January for Fish.. Lets give **soup and crackers**

- PLEASE check the dates on cans
- NO opened packages of crackers



Thank You for Socks and Underwear!

Thanks to our caring community we collected an amazing number of packages of new socks and underwear that we donated to FISH. Thank you for your donations!

Community of Faith Mission (COFM) Homeless Shelter

This year WUU will host the COFM homeless shelter February 15-22.



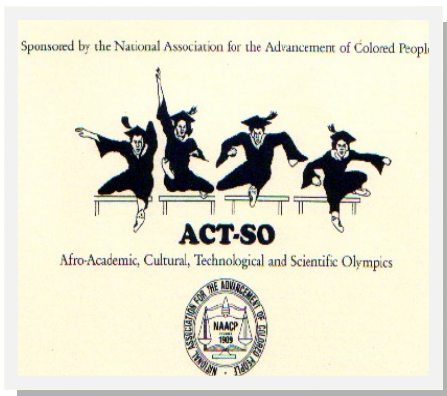
We will be inviting you to volunteer for:

- Making and serving dinner and breakfast.
- Checking our guests in and out.
- Overnight watch (2 shifts each night)

WUU is proud to be involved in the community homeless shelter. This is one opportunity to live our UU principles and share our bounty with our neediest neighbors. Volunteer sign-ups will begin soon. We hope you will plan to participate in this important social justice project.

Please contact Helen Hansen helenfoxfanen@gmail.com if you would like more information regarding these important volunteer opportunities.

Martin Luther King, Jr. NAACP ACT-SO Breakfast



This 26th annual event honors local high-achieving high school minority students and will be held on **Monday, January 19, 2015** at the CW Lodge and Conference Center. In support of this program, WUU has again reserved a table this year (10 places). Please contact Jessica O'Brien at 810-7859 or newjb2001@hotmail.com to purchase your seat. Tickets are \$40 per adult.



The Gayle Henion Creative Arts Group

This group has been meeting on Monday mornings since soon after our new co-ministers, Jennifer and Preston, arrived at WUU, about eight years ago. Rev. Jennifer and Gayle Henion formed the group by welcoming anyone involved in any of the creative arts to bring their projects and meet together on Mondays in the Fahs' kitchen. In the beginning the members' talents ranged from painting, collage, calligraphy & fabric arts--to creative writing and computer art.

Gayle became our leader and organizer. As a group, we worked together, sometimes went to lunch together, shared Christmas potlucks, helped with the Yule Sing and became friends. For five years, the group participated in and helped install the Green Sanctuary Art Exhibit in the Sanctuary each April. The exhibit, *Celebrating the Earth Through Art*, was open to all artists in the congregation and featured a variety of media.

We lost our dear friend and leader, Gayle, in 2013. But her spirit lives on in the Gayle Henion Creative Arts Group, where all who are interested in a place to work in the company of others are welcome. If you love art--bring your oils or watercolors, your drawing paper and pencils. If you create with paper, bring your scrapbook or card-making materials. If you quilt, knit or stitch, bring your fabrics, yarns and thread. All creative endeavors are welcome.

Please join us on Monday mornings in Fahs House from 10 am to Noon. Contact Grace McArdle or Donna Stanford for more information.

Donna Stanford

If you are a young adult @ WUU,
have you ever wanted to get together
with others in your own generation?

**The come join Austen Petersen
as she hosts the:**

Young Adults Gathering
Tuesday, January 20, 2014
6:00 PM
Sanctuary

Questions, contact her at austen@wuu.org

Memorial Service for Rebecca House



Please join us as we celebrate and remember the
life of WUU Member Rebecca House
Sunday, January 11, 2015 at 2:00 pm in the WUU
Sanctuary

Truth, Prayer & Miracles – What Could Be Next?

As I write this column on Christmas Eve, January's spiritual theme of revelation seems almost prophetic. We've heard the "truth" about a capital campaign, "prayed" over its outcome, and realized the "miracle" of its apparent outcome. The rest is to be "revealed" in the coming months as the budgeting and planning leads to a February vote on the final project.

Given all that has happened in the last few months, and all that each of us has committed to the future success of our congregation, it seems almost inconsiderate to ask you to give more time, talent and treasure to WUU. Yet, for our common vision to be revealed, we need to invest further in our dreams for this religious community.

Your Finance Committee and Board have adopted a three year budget, and your Stewardship Committee has been meeting for the last few months in preparation for the 2015-16 annual canvass. Our upcoming goal of \$331,000 to fund WUU programs from July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016 is possible with everyone's support. After all, we have received pledges of over \$327,000 from 190 households in our congregation for the current year operations.

As we approach the annual canvass in February, please share your thoughts, concerns, and dreams with the Stewardship Committee. We want the canvass to be a short and productive process, and we welcome your ideas on how to improve.

We also appreciate your timely responses. Please continue to support the annual operations of our congregation by your generous contributions to the annual canvass when it commences on February 22nd.

Thank you for making our vision a revelation to us all.

With your gifts, help WUU thrive and bless the world!

Peter Mellette, for the Stewardship Committee (Dave Banks, Nancy Carnegie, Martha Elim, Peter Mellette, Ben Puckett, Jennifer Ryu (*ex officio*), Trena Tankersley)



New UU Orientation Classes

In order to become a member of WUU, potential members new are required to attend before joining

WUU. Those transferring from other UU congregations are invited to participate so as to learn about us

and make new friends. The first class will be in Fahs House Sunday, January 18 from 12:30-3pm and the second session will be held in the WUU activities room on Sunday, January 25 from 12:30-3pm. You may register either at the Visitor Table or go to:



New WUU Photo Directory

The long awaited WUU photo directory will be printed and distributed by the end of January. Thank you to our photographer, Jim Henion. If you were not able to come to one of our photo sessions you can submit your photo directly to Ellyn in the office (office@wuu.org) or bring it in and it can be scanned. It will be uploaded and updated in our password protected online photo directory that will be updated each month.

We are also trying to update our database, so please contact Ellyn if you notice any errors, omissions, or items that you would not like included in the directory.



Meet WUU's Office "Helper"

If you have been to the office since July you might have met our office kitty, Peter Parker.

Our Program Assistant, Ellyn Stephens, has been fostering him for the Heritage Humane Society since he was a sickly 2-week old kitten. He is now a healthy 6-month old and has been adopted by the Stephens family (adding to their menagerie of pets).

Peter comes to work with Ellyn in Parker House most weekdays from 9am-2pm—stop by and give him a scratch.

Friday Potluck

This month we are dedicating our Fourth Friday Family Potluck to welcoming new members and friends to WUU!

Friday, January 23

6:00 pm

WUU Sanctuary

Bring a dish to share



A Winter Fundraiser for COFM

Join us for a special soup tasting evening at WARM UP WILLIAMSBURG. Local chefs are donating their tastiest soups for this event, which will be held Saturday, Jan. 24, 6 – 8 pm at Williamsburg Presbyterian Church. As well as soups, there'll be bread, dessert, and live music. Tickets are \$20.00. For reservations go to COFM.info or mail a check to COFM Box 6357, Williamsburg, VA 23188. Help support the Community of Faith Mission Winter Shelter! Call 220-0484 if you have any questions or wish to volunteer at the event.



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Jennifer Ryu, Minister
 Lola Warren, President
newsletter@wuu.org

TIME SENSITIVE

CELEBRATE! CELEBRATE!

Looking for a way to acknowledge a friend or relative's special day? Why not make a contribution to the WUU Endowment Fund in their name. We will then send out a letter acknowledging that the WUU Endowment Fund has received a gift from you in the name of that special person. What a unique way to recognize an occasion! For a Memorial Gift Form, contact Endowment@wuu.org.

(To add your name and month to the birthday and anniversary list, contact Ellyn Stephens in the office at office@wuu.org.)



January Birthdays

January Anniversaries

Rob and Nan Piland

Keely Beard
 Eve Brecker
 Calvin Caldwell
 Rebecca Delbos
 Jane Ferguson
 Jim Kent
 Michael Luchs
 Anne Luchsinger

Kevin Moore
 Jane Nichols
 Eileen O'Brien
 Jane Reilly
 Emma Savoie
 Joel Schiff
 Sandy Stephan
 Charles Tankersley