



The CommUUnicator

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Waynesboro

Our Passion for Democracy and the Blues

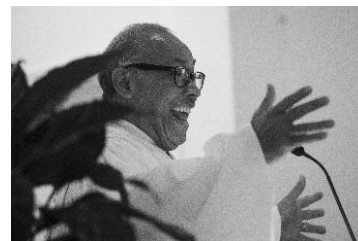
By Annie Garrison, Social Justice Team Leader

In this sobering time of whether “we the people” can hold onto our democracy, it’s good to reflect on our democratic roots and how we have always used music to express our feelings and concerns. The blues has been intertwined with democracy, serving as both mirror slices of African American life and a tool our diverse citizens have used for political expression and resistance throughout the years. It is fitting now to incorporate blues music in our desire for social change and justice as we witness the steady erosion of our democratic principles.

Blues music was prominent in the late 19th century, from the Civil War days (the Delta Blues), to the great black migration out of the South (the Chicago Blues), and then moving on to the 20th century with the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War. Rock ‘n’ roll was influenced by the blues, and groups, including the Rolling Stones and the Yardbirds, drew heavily from it. The blues is still the sound we associate with protest, and we hear it in our soulful realization of unnecessary sorrow and injustice. Although cultivated by descendants of enslaved people, it was the music of freed African Americans. Today, we recognize that the blues is a combination of family traditions, cultures and social injustices. It is a true expression of feelings, as well as storytelling using vocals and instruments, most commonly the guitar.

We are familiar with some of the great songs, “Celebrate Me,” “Got Dem Blues,” “Muddy Waters,” “Johnny B. Goode,” “Soul Man,” “Let ‘Em Talk,” “The Slow Way Home,” and “Why I Sing the Blues” – to name a few legends. The songs were not just entertainment but political statements that challenged oppression. And here we are now being challenged to keep our rights to free speech, religion, education, healthcare, citizenship, and VOTING! Blues and democracy belong together, sustaining and protecting our equality and basic freedoms. We use our voices and voting power to keep democracy flourishing.

What better way to elevate our despair and fear than to attend an exceptional lecture, wrapped in the sound of the blues. **On Sunday, Oct. 11, from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m., the UUFW Social Justice Team will host the Reverend Dr. Ed Scott, Pastor Emeritus of Allen AME Church, Staunton, with renowned blues musicians Dave Sherman and Andy Burdetsky from The Don’t Look Up Blues Band.**



Rev. Scott’s lecture is titled “A Blues for Democracy.” He will captivate you with his passionate message about

democracy’s history and sources for our founders, culminating with recommendations to help us. Born in Pennsylvania, Rev. Scott received his BA in philosophy from Slippery

Rock State University and his MA and PhD in philosophy from Duquesne University. During this time, he received the call to preach the Gospel and was ordained in 1979. He took his first post in Calabar, Nigeria. Eventually, Rev. Scott settled in Staunton, where he taught philosophy at Mary Baldwin. He also served as interim dean and vice president for academic affairs for three years at the college until 2023, when he retired after 33 years of dedicated service. Rev. Scott also served as pastor of Allen Chapel AME Church in Staunton for 28 years, retiring in 2024. His wife, Rev. Andrea Cornett-Scott is the present pastor at Allen Chapel AME Church. He is the proud father of three children and grandfather of five prodigious grandchildren and one great-granddaughter

Dave Sherman has been playing the blues for 51 years. He was instrumental in starting The Rhythm Masters, The Smokin' Presstones, Little Jr & the Hitmen, Dave Sherman & the Nightcrawlers, East West, and The Smokin' Polecats. He also held down the lead guitar slot in the Uptown Rhythm Kings and Fast Eddie & The Slowpokes. Dave learned his craft from the masters, backing up blues greats such as Earl King, Hubert Sumlin, Jimmy Rogers, Otis Rush, Nappy Brown, and James Cotton. *The*



Washingtonian magazine called him "a virtuoso of electric blues."

His partner, Andy Burdetsky, has been playing

blues for more than 45 years. He formed his love of rhythm and blues in the Washington, DC area, where he has roots. From 1982 to 1984, he was a member of the popular DC blues band, All Points Bulletin. He was fortunate to play with

many blues greats, including Karl Stoll. Andy moved to central Virginia in 2004 and helped establish the Central Virginia Blues Society. In 2012, Andy helped form the John Spear Band, which released four albums and performed at many high-profile venues. He has also performed with Fatty Lumpkin & The Love Hogs while serving as President of the CVBS for almost ten years. In 2021, Andy, Rob Martin, Dave Sherman and Lance Foster formed the Don't Look Up Band. The band focuses on many blues styles and vintage Rock 'n' Roll, including some original recordings. Dave and Andy will be performing Chicago Blues at the UUFW Fellowship Hall.

Join us Sunday, Oct. 11th at 3:00 p.m. for an inspirational afternoon. The event is free, but donations are encouraged. It is a watershed moment for all of us, and we need to uplift and refresh our souls! We, too, have the passion to save our democracy.



Six enthusiastic hikers met at Sunset Park in Waynesboro for the inaugural hike of the UUFW Hiking Group. They saw beautiful views, unusual birds, mushrooms, plants and more. The next hike will be in October.

