



NEWSLETTER

New Year's Burning Ceremony

Rev. Bob Renjilian – Facebook Livestream at 10:00am, Sunday

This is the time of year when we look ahead to new or revived goals in our lives and hopes for the new year. But first, let us ceremoniously burn notes of what we leave behind with 2020.



Photo by [Dominic Sansotta](#) on [Unsplash](#)

*"Sometimes letting things go is an act of far greater power than defending or hanging on."
Eckhart Tolle (A New Earth)*

BUILDING YOUR OWN THEOLOGY

Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County, NC – via Zoom

7:00 PM to 8:30 PM or 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM Wednesdays, starting January 6, 2021 through Feb. 24, 2021

Leaders: Rev. Bob Renjilian

[Register for the AFTERNOON class](#)

[Register for the EVENING class](#)

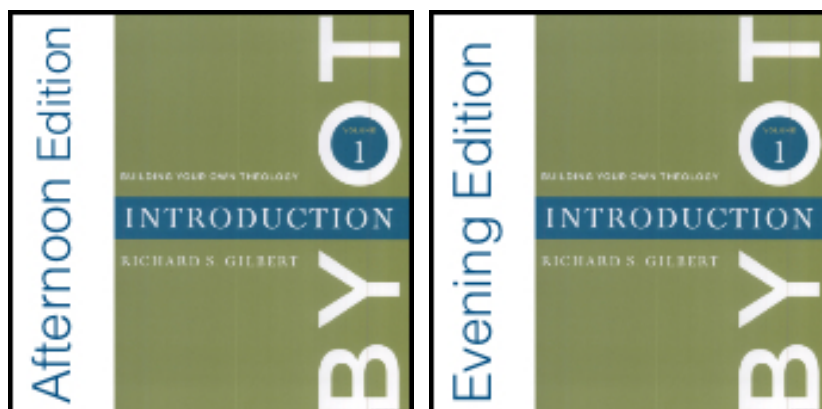
“Building Your Own Theology, part 1” is an 8-week course **starting Wednesday, January 6, 2021**.

The classes, facilitated by Reverend Bob Renjilian, will be a combination of presentation, group discussion, and personal reflection. Due to COVID-19 these will be held on Zoom. Topics include:

- * Liberal Religious Theological Models
- * A Spiritual Odyssey: Your Own
- * Varieties of Liberal Religious Experience
- * Human Nature: Some Self Understanding
- * Ultimate Reality: Creating an Honest God
- * Ethics: The Importance of Being Good for Nothing
- * We Are the Meaning Makers
- * Imperatives of Our Theology / A Credo

This course is for anyone who is not satisfied with the definitions of religion that have been handed to them, and wants to learn to articulate their own personal faith.

There is no charge for the course, but class size is limited to 12 for each session and pre-registration is required.



Class Schedule & Weekly Focus

Session 1:	Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021	“Liberal Religious Theological Models”
Session 2:	Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2021	“A Spiritual Odyssey: Your Own”
Session 3:	Wednesday, Jan. 20, 2021	“Varieties of Liberal Religious Experience”
Session 4:	Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2021	“Human Nature: Some Self Understanding”
Session 5:	Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021	“Ultimate Reality: Creating an Honest God”
Session 6:	Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2021	“Ethics: The Importance of Being Good for Nothing”

Session 7: Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2021 “We Are The Meaning Makers”

Session 8: Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2021 “Imperatives of Our Theology/A Credo/Goodbye”

Each session is composed of the following elements, though they vary in order from session to session:

- a. Purpose
- b. Warm-Up Activity
- c. Presentation of subject and/or background material
- d. Activities
- e. Sharing in small groups and in total group
- f. Time for journal writing
- g. Plans for next session
- h. Worship

Register at the link at the top of the article! Time is short!

— Rev. Bob Renjilian

Facebook Premiere — Improving Reliability

RK Young

This Sunday, we will be trying another new thing! I bet you are as excited as I am! In all seriousness, this will probably not look much different once you click in on Sunday. The reason for making the change is that we are trying to reduce every opportunity for glitches or internet shenanigans. Last week, in the middle of a gorgeous piece of music, we experienced a bit of buffering. It was less than optimal. I realize that all technology is less than optimal, but this one we think we can improve.

So on Sunday, we will use Facebook Premiere. All that really means is that we will pre-load the service to Facebook at least an hour before broadcast (and probably on Friday afternoons), and it will broadcast at 10:00 sharp on Sunday morning as usual. You might see the image as our Facebook Page Header (at right), but it will show the play icon (right-pointing triangle) and you just click and go as before. Since we will only need to worry about the internet delivering Down to us on our devices, and not Up from UUTC and then down, we cut the chances of shenanigans in half.

Hope you will join us for a brief but spectacular flame as we let fire consume what we wish to let go of!



Fellowship on the Green— On Hold

Due to the increase of Covid numbers in Transylvania County, it is time to pause our weekly gathering. With over 200 new cases in the last two weeks, we are definitely seeing a surge and need to adjust our level of cautiousness. We will reassess at the end of January. Stay well!

Treasurer's Report from November 30th

(Ed. Note: this delayed publication is not the fault of your Treasurer. My Bad.)

Treasurer's Report as of November 30, 2020

Operating Fund

	<u>This Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Receipts	\$ 20,849.56	\$177,171.99
Expenditures	<u>24,777.87</u>	<u>116,241.36</u>
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$ <u>(3,928.31)</u>	\$ <u>60,930.63</u>

Unrestricted Cash in Fund:	\$ 63,701.61
Restricted Reserve Fund:	<u>32,151.15</u>
Total Available Cash on Hand:	\$ <u>95,852.76</u>

Endowment Fund:	\$ <u>193,055.23</u>
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<u>Other Funds:</u>	<u>Unencumbered Bank Balance</u>	<u>Amount Restricted</u>	
Fund 3: Varsity Fund Checking	\$ 7,318.58	\$ 0.00	
Fund 7: Capital Expenditures	\$ 15,323.59	\$ 5,695.90	
Fund 8: Gifts and Memorials	\$ 1,275.00	\$ 0.00	
Fund 10: Charitable Giving	\$ 3,355.00	\$ 3,355.00	
This Month –The Haven			\$1,305.00
Fund 12: Dignity Project	\$ 7,531.14	\$ 7,531.14	
Fund 13: Sabbatical Fund:	\$ 4,367.80	\$ 0.00	

<u>Pledge Campaigns @ 10/19/20</u>	<u>Committed</u>	<u>Collected</u>	<u>Outstanding</u>
2020/2021	\$ 274,758.00	\$ 156,780.00	\$ 117,978.00

Respectfully Submitted,
Gail Meyers, Treasurer

12/17/2020

Virtual Coffee Hour!

The operational handling of coffee hour in a Zoom environment seemed very onerous, indeed. So onerous that it might not have happened at all. And then Peggy Bogardus sent a link to a new tool called Wonder, and well, it seems a perfect vehicle for Virtual Coffee Hour!

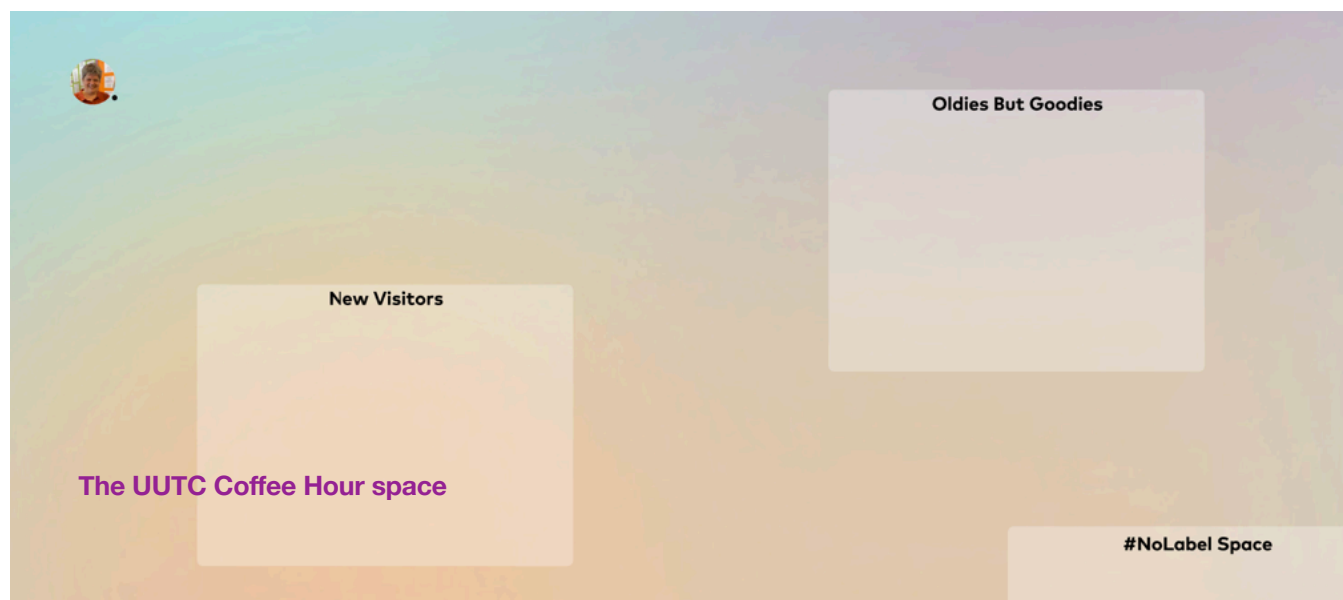
[THIS LINK](#) will take you to a “room” called UUTC Coffee Hour. A password is required, and that password will be sent to all Members & Friends through Realm. If you are a visitor who would like to drop in (Please do!), [Email RK](#) and the password will be shared with you. There will also be one short question to answer as part of the entry process.

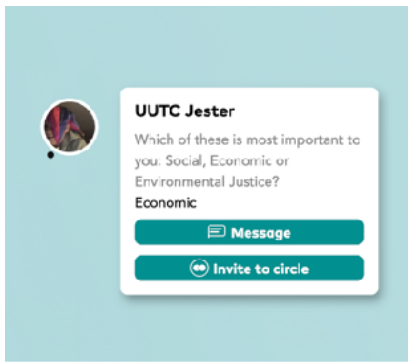
Wonder can be used on a smartphone, but you will wish you hadn't. Your best experience is going to be on a laptop or computer and you will need to be using the Chrome browser. Also, you will probably wish to have a nice picture of yourself to use, like this lovely one of Carol Moore. Please feel free to request your photo from the office or visit [THIS SITE](#) and find your image to use. Downloads are free.



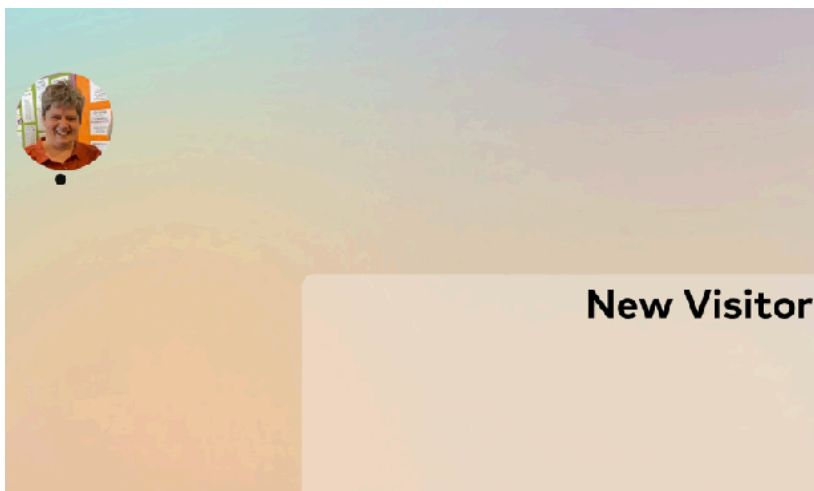
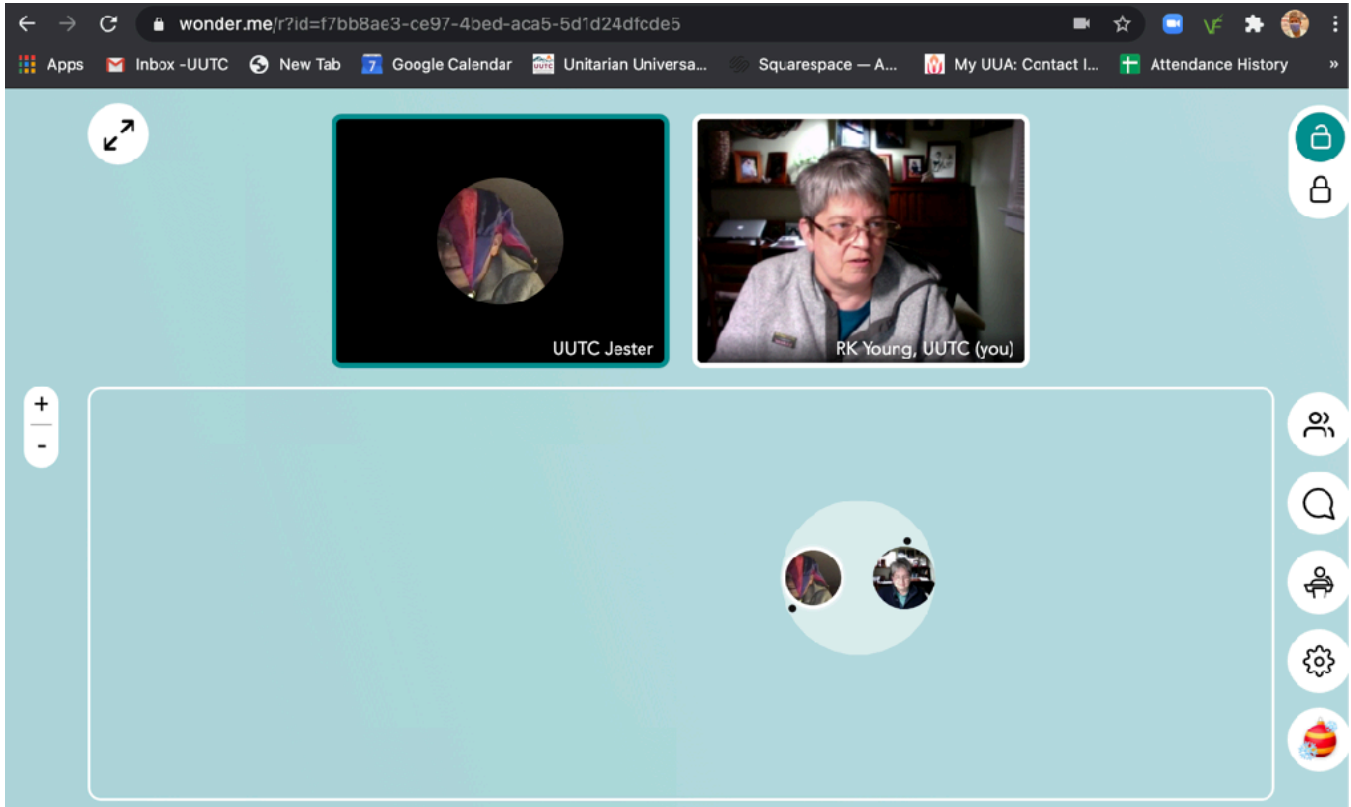
No application is without hurdles.

What makes Wonder wonderful is that once you are logged in, you can drag yourself around... when you get close to someone you want to talk to, or to a group you want to talk to, Wonder automatically pops you into a private space with them. When you visit the UUTC Coffee Hour space, there are 3 separate pre-defined rooms that you can drag yourself over to— “New Visitors,” “Oldies But Goodies,” and “#NoLabel Space.” You can leave any room at any time by dragging yourself back out. “Dragging” is accomplished by clicking on your image and holding the mouse button while you move the mouse. If you have a dial on your mouse, you can zoom in and out of the space to see faces more easily before you move into a space.





At Left, you see an artificial being, created for demonstration purposes, as they are represented in Wonder. If you click, you will see that person’s response to the current question being presented on entry to the Coffee Hour. You can invite that person to a “mini-Zoom,” as it were, or message them. This way, you can say hi to folks before you settle into a room or create a circle of other folks. Below, you see what happens if you approach another person’s icon – which will form a circle of your own, unless you have entered a “room.”



Essentially, once you are into the Wonder space, you can move around just like you might at an actual coffee hour. Here you see RK ready to welcome whoever comes in, and you see the corner of the “New Visitors” room. Anyone who takes themselves into one of the rooms will be part of that separate conversation space. If you want to just talk with one person, form a circle! Otherwise, join a room. Let’s see how it works!

Who We Said Goodbye to in 2020

Jeanne Smith, January 8th

Robert Wiley, August 28th

David Parker, October 23rd

John Lampert, November 9th

Alison Marlett, December 7th



Memorial Service: January 16th, 2:00pm

We will be broadcasting the memorial for Alison C. Marlett at 2:00pm on Saturday, January 16th. Mark your calendars for this date and time.

We lost Alison on Monday, December 7th. Alison was born in Milwaukee, WI. She retired from Clemson University, where she taught accounting for 30 years. She was an avid reader and loved singing in the choir.

Please contact [Rev. Bob](#) or Alison's daughter [Rachel Drews](#) to share your stories so that Rev. Bob can weave these into the service.

Gaining Access: Saying Goodbye to Keys



If you approach the front doors from the Broad Street side of the building, you may have noticed the doorbell. It now has company.

The extra little appendage is a reader that can scan a "key fob" about the size of a quarter and let you access the building. It will open the right-hand door. There's a second one of these on the inner door. The old keypad is now disabled.

These fobs have been assigned to Team Leaders and certain other essential people like Victoria Kerr who likes to arrive at 7am when fixing up deliciousness for new member classes. The fobs are coded to the specific individual, so if one is lost we can simply disable it on the software that makes it all work.

2020: A Year of Resilience

RK Young

When discussing this article with Kay, the first title that emerged was “a year of OMG.” Fortunately, I was convinced to go with a more positive interpretation of the year. I have a feeling all of you can relate to the original conception, however!

Early in the year, when March rolled around and the whole world knew it was in trouble, we had two priorities: reduce risks to our church family and adapt worship services to meet that initial goal. So. Many. Helped. Dave Roberts

donated the conference cam we originally relied upon to stream services. Teri & Daniel Sandoval stepped up to provide some music. Rev. Shore took on anything she could to reduce the risks but maintain engagement... things like our “Member to Member” email and “The AfterWord” were both her creations, and both have helped bridge gaps as we continue to work out ways of staying connected. We had a Virtual Easter egg hunt. A socially-distanced hands on pottery project that got us featured in UU World magazine.



By the end of April we were using Mark Allison’s photo background as the background for our services.



Wrapping up the fiscal year, our Board, unlike many others, committed to making governance as accessible as possible with mailed ballots for the annual business (MAJOR update of the ByLaws! Budget approval! Establishment of an Endowment Committee!) AND the welcoming of a new settled minister to UUTC. Reverend Bob Renjilian, even during a virtual candidating week, stayed flexible and responsive. After a “virtual” vote, the Board committed to staying calm and on track— installing our new sign and the new entry doors that meet fire code. The Board further committed to purchases





to help groups to meet outdoors (chairs!) and staff to do their work off campus — enabled, in part, by private donors who generously understood these needs. And, the Board moved forward on the equipment purchases we needed to produce the services you see today — expenses too large to fit under any category of the original budget.



We wrapped up the fiscal year with a 21st anniversary Birthday Cupcake Celebration that added a few dollars to our coffers and provided some income for local business and a sweet treat for our neighbors at Bread of life. The work continues to get done.



Fellowship on Tap became Fellowship on the Green. Rev. Bob arrived and started delivering stellar sermons and doing endless porch visits. Janice Canon & Elaine Shaver started recording Carlene Ragan and creating open-to-close music for the third Sunday of each month. Teri Sandoval created an October Vespers and, with Joanna Bliss, Joey Dukes, Sharon Gublo, Vanessa Cowie (and of course Daniel) a Solstice service, as well.



Frank Parsons innovated, and re-innovated, and troubleshooted some more. CRE held Chalice Camp outdoors, in the rain, under a tarp. Kevin showed movies, led hikes, introduced us to an apple farm, and celebrated pumpkins. A meditation space was set up on the grounds.



The Social Action Team worked out Where UUTC is Essential, and targeted members of the congregation to help with those tasks — supporting, primarily, Bread of Life and Davidson River School students. The Dignity Project pivoted to shipping directly to the agencies we support.



We Zoomed. Endlessly.

We set up a Vimeo Channel. And a YouTube Channel. And leveraged Facebook. And became videographers. We reached out through Facebook and Instagram and made changes to our website. We learned (and are still learning) how to leverage Realm to connect us all within our smaller groups.



We assessed our desires for social action, programming, and space use. Those plans are now actively being

realized as Rev. Bob begins “Building Your Own Theology” in addition to “Soul Matters.”



And now we have begun partnering with other congregations in the SE Region to deliver programming. Now we begin the process of

figuring out how to deliver a hybrid worship service for the moment when we CAN be together, but some choose to tune in from home. Because the changes we needed to make, that were being put off... well, Covid made us do them now, and quickly. More punches will come. But by golly, we have certainly proven we can roll with them.

