



NEWSLETTER

Solstice

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

The astronomical event, the earth-based holy day, in the midst of preparations for Christmas.



Photo by [Wil Stewart](#) on Unsplash

“The night of December 25, to which date the Nativity of Christ was ultimately assigned, was exactly that of the birth of the Persian savior Mithra, who, as an incarnation of eternal light, was born the night of the winter solstice (then dated December 25) at midnight, the instant of the turn of the year from increasing darkness to light.”

— Joseph Campbell

A Winter Solstice Celebration 2020

December 21, 5:00 pm



Join us for this year's Solstice Celebration as we reflect on darkness and light. This year's event will include music by some of our most talented singers, readings to help us contemplate the dark, and a passing of the light. The event will last about half an hour. The outdoor Celebration will begin at 5:15 pm, so please plan on arriving at 5.

We will be gathering in the parking lot behind the church building, so plan to park across Varsity Street in the county lots. Please bring a chair and wear a mask. Seating will be around a fire pit, and chairs must be placed six feet apart from anyone who is not a member of your household.

We look forward to seeing you as we gather to welcome the return of the light!

UUTC Vision/Budget Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2020 @ 3:00pm via Zoom

These minutes are provided for transparency in the Budget process for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. (Ed.)

Present:

Board members - Betty Kendrick, Gail Meyers, Quim Moya, Kay Webb, and Susan Zelle

Staff members – Kevin Lausch (CRE), Rev. Bob Renjilian, and RK Young

Team representatives – Bob Bennett (Facilities), Susan Bir (LHHH), Alice Hardy (Worship), Krista Moore (Stewardship), Kathy Reiff (Social Action), and Heather Williams (ARE)

Purpose: The purpose of the meeting was to provide guidance to Ministry Teams in developing their budget requests for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Welcome, Check-In, and Opening Words: The meeting opened with a check-in with those attending and a reading by Susan Zelle.

UUTC Vision/Pandemic Impact: Susan reminded participants of UUTC's "Vision 2025" that was presented to and endorsed by the congregation in October of 2019. She stated that, despite the impact of the COVID pandemic (i.e., closing the building to in-person gatherings, moving to virtual services, impact on revenues and expenses), UUTC leadership needs to consider creative ways to continue its mission and maintain a sense of community through purpose and contact. Rev. Bob shared the metaphor of a burning candle, asking... how can we be a light to our members and friends? what do we want to give away? how can UUTC be a light to the larger community?

Survey Results: RK shared a brief presentation showing the results of a recent survey of members and friends concerning what they would like UUTC to offer during the next several months; the presentation was sent to each participant for their use with Team members. She suggested that Teams use the results of the survey to guide them in developing future programming, in determining Team needs, and in proposing related budget requests. She emphasized that all Teams need to consider what space(s) and resources they will need to carry out their mission/function and to articulate those space and resource needs.

Budget Process: Prior to the meeting, Gail sent each Team its budget for the '20-'21 fiscal year for reference. She explained that, generally, the Finance Committee begins the budgeting process for the next fiscal year in January, so Teams need to be considering their budget needs ASAP. She emphasized that, despite the current impact of the pandemic, Teams should think beyond COVID and dream big...set aspirational goals...to meet the Vision 2025 mission of growth and expansion.

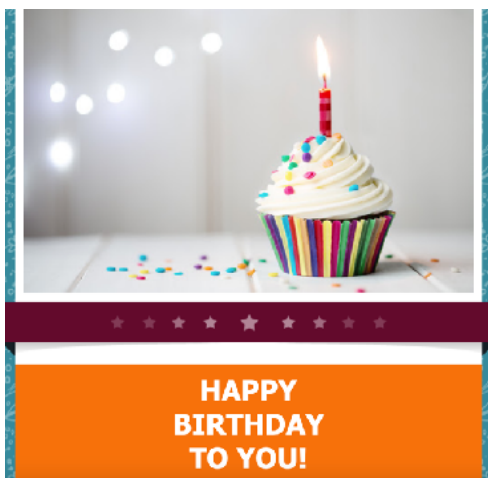
Discussion: Following a Q&A session among the participants, the group agreed to set a deadline of January 18th to provide initial budget requests to the Finance Committee. RK will send each Team a budget worksheet to record budget line-item requests.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 4:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kay Webb, Secretary

Did You Receive a Birthday Email from UUTC?



RK Young

It's been a full year that our Birthday emails have been going out. We hope you received one! If you did not, it's probably because we don't know when your birthday is.

There's an easy fix! [Amy](#), Eloise or I will be delighted to receive an email or call from you with the necessary digits. Eloise runs a report each month that lets our Care Team know who has a birthday in that month, which is especially essential if you do not have an email address. If you DO have an email address, and you have given us your birthdate, then you should be receiving a birthday email.

I realize that this may seem frivolous, but for the frugal among us — aren't you glad we're saving a stamp? And isn't nice to know you are thought of on your special day? Please share your birthday with us, if you haven't already! **Call Eloise at (828) 435-2781** or email Amy by clicking her name, above.

Don't let another year go by without letting us make your birthday just a tad sweeter!

Get Ready to Schedule 2021!



Your Stewardship Team

Later in this issue you will find out about a couple of programming options, and UUTC will have lots more before it's all said and done. In addition, you may have Team or Committee meetings to schedule. Wouldn't it be nice to have a nice large square to scribble your appointments into right by the phone? We've got a great selection of photographs in UUTC's 2021 Wall Calendar, so order one today!

Photographers whose work was selected are: Luanne Allgood, Mark Allison, Hilly Bernard, Dan Carter, Ian Cowie, Carter Heyward, Betty Kendrick, Don Lander, Peter Magistri, Kate Renner, Tom Stanwood, Susan Zelle and Royce Zia.

Calendars are priced at \$15.00, and the profits from these sales will go into UUTC's Operating Fund. The Stewardship Team will arrange a pickup schedule in late November in time for holiday shipping. You can drive by and pick up your calendars from a Stewardship Team member without even getting out of your car! If you are interested in purchasing, but unable to pick up the calendars, let [Phil Stewart](#) from the Stewardship Team know and the Team can arrange a delivery for special circumstances.

Celebrate the creativity and vision of your fellow UUTCers and get a beautiful calendar to keep track of 2021. [Click HERE TO ORDER!](#)

BUILDING YOUR OWN THEOLOGY

Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County, NC – via Zoom

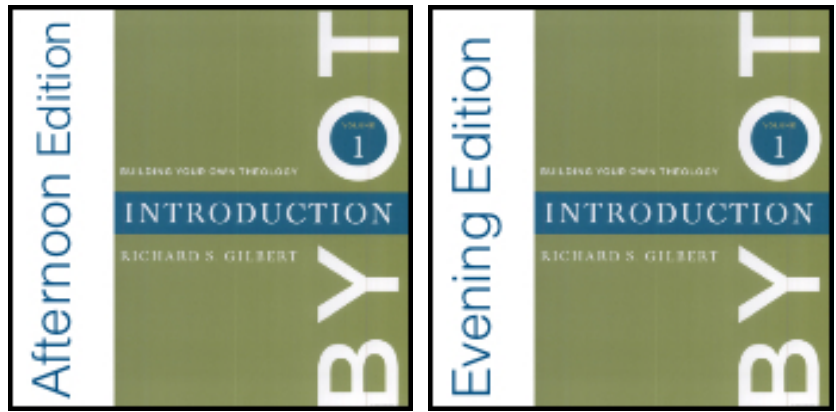
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM or 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM Wednesdays, starting January 6, 2021 through Feb. 24, 2021

Leaders: **Rev. Bob Renjilian**

“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

To Register, go to onrealm.org, login with your email, go to Community and click on Events. Make sure you click “show all events.” Find the course you wish to register for and get registered! If you are using the Realm Connect App, just find Events... but do specify “all events” to be sure you see all the options.

— Rev. Bob Renjilian

Preparing for a Little Magic at New Year's

RK Young

Rev. Bob has got some tricks up his sleeve for the New Year that I am personally very much looking forward to!

Many of you are familiar with the ritual where you write down what you are leaving behind from the previous year and then throwing the offending whatever-it-was into a fire and watching it burn up. Well. Bob Bennett will be acting as service coordinator for Sunday, January 3rd, and will be using all of your "leavings" to ignite a blaze during the service!

Trick: we are using special paper. Flash paper.

Some of you, who attended the caroling, have already received this paper. Once you have written that which you wish to discard on the paper, please return it to the church— just in the vestibule — and place it in the metal box on the shelf there. The doors will be unlocked Thursday, Friday and Saturday — December 31st, January 1st and 2nd — to receive your offerings of 2020's residue. Please put the lid back on the box... this is above average flammability!

If you were not at the event and NEED some paper, the vestibule will be unlocked on Monday from 10 - 7:00pm, and you can email eloise@uutc.org to make alternate arrangements. In this case, you will find the paper in strips inside plastic bags to avoid any static electricity sparking. Did I mention this stuff was highly flammable? When Bob lights them... well, let's just say you are not going to want to miss that service!! So don't miss your chance to be part of the living flame... make a plan to pick up some paper!

Caroling Event a Great Success

Sunday, December 13, we hosted the Carols and S'mores event on the Fellowship Green. Wonderful folks like Cantey and Bill Carpenter provided fire wood, cider and snacks, and Alice Wellborn and Nancy Potter of the CRE Team provided hot chocolate and s'mores makings. Kevin was unfortunately quarantined so Rev Bob and RK, aided by tech assistants Frank Parsons and Mae Peterson and youth Leigh and Willow Austin, made it a success. Special thanks to John Austin and Mark Wingate for the music.



SECURE & Other Programming

RK Young

Reverend Bob and I attended the second meeting of the South East Collaborative Unitarian Universalist Religious Education group last night, and progress has been made! For the first quarter of 2021, in addition to Rev. Bob's Building Your Own Theology course, the Greenville, SC Fellowship will offer a short seminar on Sex Trafficking (3 sessions) and an eight-week session on Goddess Mythology. Another congregation is offering a "Parenting UU Style" of eight sessions. Yet another congregation will be offering something from the Tapestry of Faith curriculum.

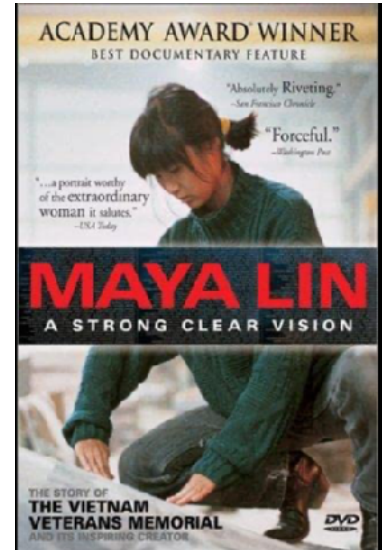
Religious Education Director Shalimar, from the Franklin, NC Fellowship, is compiling all of the course offerings in an education Hub. This will provide a central location for all UUs to be able to join and select from the available courses. For curriculum developed by UUTC, you will be able to just use your Realm app to register and access course information, including Zoom links. But for programming offered by other congregations, you will have to sign up for a pass key to allow you into this site.

All offerings in the first quarter of 2021 will be free— but sometimes, if a presenter must be compensated, there may be a fee. Regardless, partnering with other congregations in the region will ensure that we are all able to choose from far more options than any single congregation could offer on its own. And we can make new friends! This will make it much easier for our own CRE and ARE Teams in deciding where to direct their energies to meet the needs of UUTC.

A final offering, "Artists in Pursuit of Meaning," I will lead in the first quarter. This has been conceived as a three-session course, with the first two featuring movies on a couple of artists: Andy Goldsworthy and Maya Lin. "Art for me is a form of nourishment," Goldsworthy says. And many of you have probably experienced at least one of Maya Lin's great works: the Vietnam Memorial. Both of these artists create deeply spiritual experiences for observers of their work. While Goldsworthy's work is very personal expression, Maya Lin was focused on a redeeming work for the families of survivors. Both of these journeys are good films. Like Rev. Bob's course, this will happen virtually.

Many thanks to two volunteers — Don Lander and Heather Williams — who have stepped up to help reboot the Adult Religious Exploration Team. I hope I will hear from a few more folks who would like to shepherd programming for UUTC, making sure that we have options for our "radically welcoming and diverse" congregation.

I look forward to what we will create together!



Fellowship on the Green Continues!



Fellowship on the Green happens on Tuesdays of each week 11:30 to 1:30pm. Consider bringing a lap blanket, or a towel to sit on, to keep warm as the temperatures drop. **IN THE EVENT OF RAIN**, the following Thursdays will be automatic. If no one is at the tables at 11:30... don't worry — someone always shows up! Usually, RK and Kay are there at 11:30. Rev. Bob arrives for the "second shift," at 12:30. So put on some warm clothes and come on over!

At dusk, our "Green" lights up for 4 hours. Want to meet a friend under the lights? Double check with RK or Eloise to make sure no one else is signed up for a given evening, and come enjoy!



In addition, the fire ring is now ready for some action. Schedule your own "Flame & Friendship" with the office! UUTC pays for the water at the little yellow house, so when you finish your time there, you can put the fire out with ease. Please make sure to place any unused wood back into the wood rack so it will be dry for the next group.

*To know yourself as the Being underneath the thinker,
the stillness underneath the mental noise, the love and joy
underneath the pain, is freedom, salvation, enlightenment.*

—Eckhart Tolle