
UUTC UPDATE

Love One Another, Love the Earth

Rev. Sally Beth Shore, Facebook Livestream at 10:00am, Sunday

April 22, 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of the first Earth Day. Perhaps the most important accomplishment for us is the cultivation of an Earth consciousness, which Unitarian Universalism articulates in our 7th principle, as our being part of the “interconnected web of all existence.” The COVID Pandemic has done as much as anything to create this consciousness. We come together in this Earth Day week to celebrate connection in the time of distancing, universal love in the face of fear, and hope in the midst of uncertainty.

This will be a 45 minute family-friendly service, with story and songs and activities appropriate for children. We hope you will join us.



Social Action—Time to Vote

Lisa McHenry

And here (drumroll) is our BALLOT for the 2020-2021 Charitable Giving. The Social Action Team had hoped to incorporate a more complete introduction to each organization in one of this spring's worship services, but that is not to be.



There are two organizations this year that were not on last year's ballot, although we may have given to them in previous years. One is Meals On Wheels. They currently have drivers who deliver coolers to doorsteps of folks in need of meals, so they are able to continue this valuable service while maintaining social distancing. The second is Free Rein Center for Therapeutic Riding. A look at their facebook page will give a glimpse of some of the ways they are staying actively engaged with clients until riding lessons can resume.

We can vote for only 9 of these 12 agencies, and each one is deserving. Please read the descriptions of each, and vote for the 9 you would most like to see as beneficiaries of our Sharing of the Plate. Thank you for being a part of the process!

Social Action Team Charitable Giving Selections, Fiscal year 2020-2021

The congregation will vote for 9 of the following 12 organizations:

Meals on Wheels helps clients maintain their independence in their own homes by providing noontime home delivery of nutritious meals, the only provider of this service in the area. Sometimes this is the only social contact a client has all day.

Free Rein Center for Therapeutic Riding uses horses to provide benefits to children, teens, and adults with developmental, cognitive, emotional, and physical challenges.

The Augustine Literacy Project provides professionally trained tutors for those who cannot afford to pay. Improving reading skills develops children's curiosity and equips them to live in our modern world. Being literate can mean the difference between prison and productivity for an at-risk student.

Backpack Buddies provides food on Friday afternoons to children who are in extreme need situations and are likely to have inadequate food at home over the weekends. They also provide larger packs for holiday and spring breaks.

Bread of Life provides hot lunches every weekday both at their center in Brevard and via home delivery for those unable to come in.

The Children's Center provides emergency and educational assistance to families of young children plus new mother support and children's advocacy.

El Centro helps immigrant families with language tutoring, after-school assistance, and documentation guidance. They run the “Homework Club”, an after-school tutoring program for children in grades 1-5. They need help funding summer enrichment activities such as camp and field trips, and funding the training of additional volunteer tutors.

Forward Together: The UU Justice Ministry of North Carolina is a progressive, faith-based, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working to “give life the shape of justice” by coordinating and supporting the social justice work of individual UUs and UU congregations in North Carolina and building relationships with other groups who are working for social justice.

The Haven provides shelter, counseling, and help with rehousing for the homeless of Transylvania County. This includes safe and secure shelter, shower and laundry facilities, 2 light meals a day, case management, and a mail and telephone message service.

Pisgah Legal Services provides free civil legal aid to the most vulnerable people in WNC – disadvantaged children, senior citizens, families at risk of homelessness, and victims of violence. There is an office in Brevard.

SAFE helps victims of domestic violence or sexual assault through prevention and education.

Sharing House provides emergency assistance to the poor including food, clothing, household goods, and assistance in paying utility and rent bills.

Again, here is your **BALLOT** to select your preferences for giving beginning in July. **The deadline for voting is May 4th, so please vote early!**

Board Meeting on Tuesday

Hello, All!

I am hopeful that everyone is continuing to stay safe and healthy! I have heard over and over - and I am also very grateful for the ability to live in such a beautiful place during this time of “stay at home.”



I wanted to let you know that the Board will be holding their regular monthly meeting via Zoom this coming Tuesday at 5:00. If you have a topic you would like me to raise, or if you would like to present to the Board, please email me at joyce.henneberry@gmail.com and I will send you a link/password to join the Zoom session.

I am reminded daily of how many people are continuing to keep UUTC moving forward with their work. THANK YOU ALL! Through phone calls, Zoom meetings, email - we just keep going on! We are a healthy organization and we will get through this.

Joyce



Spanish Speaking Volunteers Needed

Alice Hardy

The Children's Center is seeking a volunteer fluent in Spanish to occasionally help with clients not fluent in English. Help would be needed only occasionally. If you are interested in volunteering when needed please contact Alice Hardy 828-862-6969 or [email](#).

UUTC Applies for PPP

RK Young

Rev. Richard Nugent, the Director of Church Staff Finances for the UUA, has been urging UU congregations to do whatever necessary to protect our organizations. He and his office, with other fine people like Jan Gartner, have provided guidance and backup support to help us be successful in this work.

Your financial staff and volunteers — myself, bookkeeper Sue Gervais and your Treasurer Gail Meyers have been working on this in fits and sputters for about a week and a half and Gail is in the final stages of the application with the assistance of our former Entegra Branch Manager, Nick Iosue, who is now further up the chain after the merger of First Citizens and Entegra Bank. UUA's assistance has been crucial for many UU congregations, particularly those who do not already have a "loan relationship" with a bank.



The basics of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) are this: Congregatinos can borrow 2.5 times their average monthly payroll (including employee benefit payments). If up to 75% of this loan is used to retain staff and used for payroll, including employee benefits, during the 8 weeks following receipt of the funds, then the loan will be **forgiven** by the Small Business Administration.

Since successful funding of our application would provide a great deal of security going into this next fiscal year, we would be foolish not to try. Our employees will benefit, which means our community will benefit. And that is good for all of us. Cross your fingers!



Happy Hour Zooming

Nancy Thompson

Today (Friday, April 24th) starting at 4:00pm, join Nancy and Jim Thompson for some face time with your UUTC friends! You can join the Zooming Happy Hour using your computer or smart phone — or even your "dumb" phone!

This week, Nancy is leading the activity, and you will have the opportunity to be in “breakout rooms” ... smaller groups that allow for more conversation. Topics from which to select: Taking Care of Ourselves, Taking Care of Each Other, Gratitude, Silver Linings, and Laughter Is the Best Medicine. Those in each breakout group will choose their topic. Come chat with your fellow UUers over your favorite beverage, donut, whatever. We are going to discuss the silver linings of Covid-19, with stories —your stories— from your heart. Join us at 4:00 PM on Friday 4/24 for some great conversation, when the 'pairing' will begin!

From a landline (or if you just prefer voice only), dial **312-626-6799**. From a smartphone or an internet browser on your computer, go to <https://zoom.us/j/679700288>. Follow the instructions on your screen, and go! Smartphone is the easiest route if you are new to this.

Worship Needs YOU

Roses are Red, Violets are Blue

For May 3rd send us your poetry

And we'll thank you!

NEXT Sunday, on May 3rd, Rev. Shore and the UUTC Worship Team are assembling a poetry-based service—and we'd love to include verses from our members and friends. Especially appreciated would be poetry written during the current time of COVID stay-at-homing, or poetry that strikes you as particularly relevant now. Please send your poems to worshipwords@uutc.org by Wednesday, April 29, for possible inclusion (we can't guarantee, as we don't know how many will be received) and indicate if you would be willing to record yourself reading it.

ALSO, we are looking for folks who would like to do chalice lighting words, offer readings, or give short reflections for upcoming online services. Again, email worshipwords@uutc.org if one or more of these interests you. Families and couples welcome!

Calling Our Creators & Readers!

We are entering the brave new world of content creation to help spread the message of our Principles far and wide... but especially here at home in Transylvania County. Those of you on social media know how important images can be, and during “the time of COVID” we also need readers.

One of the ways we can help families with small children has been demonstrated this week by Kevin Lausch, Virginia Watkins, Brigid Fox, Heather Williams and Lisa McHenry. Willing to put yourself on video to read a story? Pull out that smartphone and make it happen!



Many of you take great pictures of a range of subjects. While we can get copyright free images for use through services like *Unsplash*, why shouldn't we celebrate *your* vision in what we do?

Don Lander has become an enormous help the last few weeks by providing calm, beautiful images to accompany audio files during the Sunday live stream so that you aren't forced to endure a blank screen. There are many ways we use these images, so fire up those cameras/smartphones and see what you can create— then share your photos with RK or [Amy](#). If there are people in your photos, make sure you have permission to share the image with us for public use.

Note from Rev. Shore

Happy Friday!

This week, the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day—and what a very different celebration it was—virtual! 50 years ago, 20 years ago, even 5 years ago, this would not have been possible. While some decry our technology because of its failings, it is also human technology that is enabling me to communicate with you right now, which has allowed us to detect climate change, and is allowing us to be together even while we are apart in COVID. Our technology, just like religion, politics, corporations, etc., is only as good as the people in it. Our technology, just like the Covid-19 virus is also part of the Earth's evolution. The story continues.



This week marked another 50th anniversary, that of the rescue of the astronauts of Apollo 13 from their ill-fated moon mission. In my preaching about hope for the climate crisis, I reference Apollo 13's flight director Gene Kranz, who retorted to a despairing official at the depth of the crisis, with these words: "With all due respect, sir, I believe this is going to be our finest hour."

Today I'm thinking about this song by [Eric Bibb, "Just Keep Going On"](#). As our shut-in continues, I invite you to give it a listen. Amid noise of "reopening" most of us know we are in this for a long haul. This requires pacing and dedication and a continued commitment to the present and the future. Just keep going on, and whether it is our finest hour, day, week, or year—we'll make it.

In case you missed the UUTC Earth Day missive on Wednesday, I'm including the [link to the beautiful meditation and birdsong video](#) produced by our own Bart and Cadence Renner for the occasion. Parts of it, along with an array of contributions from UUTC Earthling families and one frog will comprise this coming Sunday's multi-generational service, "Love One Another, Love the Earth" I hope you will join us.

Love,

Rev. Shore



UUTC “Channels Up” with Vimeo

RK Young

It’s one thing to shoot a video on your phone, and quite something else to get that work out into the rest of the world. Facebook is not necessarily the best place for video that you want everyone in your community to be able to access. While we can share videos easily with family and friends, getting videos setup to be accessible to everyone means publishing them to a platform designed specifically for that purpose. Our website editing program, Squarespace, is a very flexible platform, as is our email handling program, Constant Contact. But in neither of these can you actually upload a video file. Instead, we have to LINK to a video that is housed somewhere else.

I had first become aware of the Vimeo platform when working with Betsy Burrows and her Brevard College students when I was employed at Rise & Shine after-school program. It’s simple to use, and allows for HD video when the product is worthy of such—or if it’s simply been shot on a really good camera. While YouTube is very popular, for me it is important to have a platform that is easy for other staff to learn, and the Vimeo interface appealed to me in that regard, as well.

COVID 19 is changing the way we “do church.” Not only do our members need support, so does a large portion of our community. Unique visits to our website and Facebook page have shot up over the last month—while not everyone “likes” us, we are seeing a lot of traffic. We have to assume that some of those people are looking for what we have to offer.

So we now have two “channels” on [Vimeo](#). One is ***UUTC Children’s Programming***, and the other is simply ***UUTC – UUs of Transylvania County***.

Channel titles can only have so many characters in them. This gives us a place to store creative content that any Adult Religious Exploration programming might want to make available to the larger community, as well as story time readings for kids. This way, parents in the community can come back to a video to “re-read” the story with their children. You can get to the Channel page [HERE](#).



As our execution of how we meet our Mission changes on this new, physically-distanced ground, I encourage all of our Teams to think about what that might look like. How would a video platform change the way we do Social Action? What would talks from our historians, our environmentalists, our “retired” ministers, our prison ministry folks look like? What could we teach or share through this visual medium?

We are only in the first week of having this opportunity. It’s already, to me, a delight. I’m hearing new stories, watching Cadence and Bart find birds—every one I watch makes me smile. Next week, a video will go up from Margaret Kimble—a very special one— I think you will all enjoy it.



Get to Know Our Settled Minister Candidate

Ian Cowie, Chair, Search Team

Last week the Ministerial Search Committee announced Rev. Bob Renjilian is our top candidate for UUTC. At the end of this article, you will find a link to his professional page.

Since August, the Search Committee has worked continuously to find the best person for our church. We are indebted to the previous search committee for the groundwork they laid. We are grateful for the collaboration from our board of directors and staff. We appreciated all the support from the entire congregation. Current committee members include

Debra Davis, Vicki Held, Rabbit Krueger, Dave Roberts, and Elizabeth Williams.

Rev. Bob has served several UU congregations throughout the country over the last 30 years. He has been praised by his colleagues for his work ethic, his ability to collaborate, being a self-starter, facilitating long-term growth in a congregation and representing a congregation's interest in the local community.

Presently, Rev. Bob is an interim minister in Rochester, NY. He and his wife, Christy, live in York, PA.

Considering our lives are changing daily because of Covid-19, it is difficult to meet in person. Rest assured, there will be ample opportunities for you to meet Rev. Bob virtually in the coming weeks. Candidating Week is tentatively set for mid-May or later. Weekly updates will be through this newsletter. Updates to Rev. Bob's website will happen regularly — check [HERE](#) to see!



Happy discovering!!