



NEWSLETTER

History: Be A Starr

Facebook Livestream at 10:00am, Sunday

There are exemplars from our past whose passionate religious grounding in our faith led them to bring their best selves to the issues of their day, leaving the world a better place. May we reflect on the mission and values in this community which might inspire us to do the same. This sermon launches the Unitarian Universalist history classes led by Rev. Bob.



Photo by Anna Tukhfatullina on UnSplash

Our Vision Is Realized By All of Us

RK Young

John F. Kennedy's historic words, "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country," challenged every American to contribute in some way to the public good.

I did not hear this quote live, but it has, in my adult life, been a barometer for me on what is mine and what was given to me by the work of others. It bred an awareness in me of the value of assets built by those before me (hello, roads from our tax dollars) to the hours and hours of labor invested in making justice manifest in this country. For me, gay marriage rights have provided not just a "blessing of official sanction" on my relationship, but all of the financial stability provided through tax code for married couples. And that's just the tip of the iceberg.

Nationally, besides paying my taxes, as an individual of modest means, there isn't much I can do to impact the course of policy. Not as an individual. *It's only when I partner with others that I have power.*

UUTC has been built by so many, in so many different ways. It is increasing in its power locally to effect the change we wish to see in the world. So many are doing things that help us be a beloved community — I think of Don Lander's DAILY images and quotes in our private Facebook Group; the work of those helping many of our members and friends get through the various troubles of this "away" time; those who show up for protests at the courthouse; our Social Action Team members leading the charge to help Bread of Life and our vulnerable youth at Davidson River School; those who have made music possible on Sundays — but many, at this time, have felt absolutely helpless to do much of anything because of Covid.

Due to everyone's efforts this year—which includes those who made certain to meet their pledge commitments despite financial hardship—we will end this year in a good financial position. *But it will be very easy for us to lose ground at this moment because of the loss of the sense of community that the pandemic has brought to all.* And I do not mean just financial ground. Right now we have had to rely on a few key people plus staff to keep programming going. Ironically, we are showing signs of a great deal of interest from others who wish to become more a part of the UUTC community— and in this coming year we may not have much to offer outside of Sunday unless we all get our shoulders back to the rear axle and give a shove.

We've had multiple ministers point out that the leap from "pastoral" to "program" sized ministry is the hardest hurdle a faith community can have. We have successfully built a community of people who hail from many, many ideas of faith. This issue of the newsletter is devoted to providing as clear a picture as possible of where we were, where we are, what structures we have put in place to move forward, and what the current hurdles are. I hope you will slog on through and become as informed as you can be. Staff has been working overtime (not just me!) to help you be as connected as possible. By the end of this newsletter, you may still have some questions, but I know that you will have even more in the way of answers as to what our future can hold. — RK

If you light a lamp for someone else, it will also brighten your path. — Buddha



Easter Activities for the Young at Heart



Kevin Lausch, Director of CRE

YOUTH BOOK CLUB

Our Youth Book Club is reading the graphic novel "The Witch Boy" by Molly Knox Ostertag. This is a magical story about a society where all the girls become witches and all the boys learn to be shape shifters. Read it to learn what will happen when a boy wants to learn witchcraft and challenges the gender rules of this community.

We meet monthly (outside and socially distanced) to eat snacks and have an interesting talk about the books and how they relate to UU principles. Next meeting is Saturday, March 27th at 2pm at the UUTC Fellowship Green. [Contact Kevin](#) at kevin@uutc.org or 864-395-1208 for more information.

INTERGENERATIONAL (ALL AGES!) MONTHLY GATHERINGS

Our UU families (and dogs) had a blast at the last hike on the Pink Beds loop in Pisgah Forest.

EVERYONE is welcome to the next gathering on April 24 at 12:30 at the Holmes Educational Forest for a picnic and hike. This forest offers multiple trails with interpretive exhibits and picnic areas, and leashed dogs are welcome. We will meet in the parking area near the public restrooms but PLEASE NOTE the public restrooms are closed (porta-potties are available) and the covered picnic shelter is closed (scattered tables are available). The Holmes Educational Forest is located at 1299 Crab Creek Rd, Hendersonville. Stay tuned for the next gathering, which will be **Saturday, May 22**.

CITY-WIDE EASTER EGG HUNT - APRIL 4 at 11AM

Mark your calendars for the Walk/Bike/Drive-by Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Day, April 4, 11AM-1PM. If you live in the City of Brevard you can take part and decorate your door or yard with your version of an Easter egg (2D/3D/any medium/etc). [Click here to register!](#) A map will be produced so members can go by and see the decorations.

CHILDREN'S EGG HUNT - APRIL 4 AT 1PM

Following the city-wide event there will be a Children's Egg Hunt in the Fellowship Green at the church. We will hunt eggs to support a local charity, and do a spring craft.

New Member Orientation

Have you been visiting UUTC? Would you like to learn more about this congregation, during our COVID-safe online Zoom sessions? [Let Rev. Bob Renjilian know about your interest](#), so he can set up the sessions at the dates and times with the most compatibility with those who want to sign up. **This is great for folks who are curious**, and/or for those who want to later take the official step to become a voting member.

Rev. Bob's UU History Classes

This is one of Rev. Bob's specialties - helping to bring to life the history of our Unitarian Universalist religion. Learn about the King of Transylvania (and his mother, the Queen), movers and shakers from American history, and name dropping (we'll even throw in a NASA astronaut)! This is expected to be a two-session Zoom course (including phone dial-in if you don't have a device with Zoom and want to listen and talk). UUTC folks who [CONTACT REV. BOB NOW](#) will get "first dibs" on the signup, but it will be open to other UU congregations in the region.

Commitment Leads to Spiritual Growth



Dave Roberts

I began my spiritual journey in earnest about 25 years ago, with absolutely no intent of including an organized religious component.

After retiring to Brevard in 2011, and in the normal course of meeting our Southern neighbors, my wife and I were embroiled in that distinctively southern question: "Where do you go to church?" Eventually we attended a service at UUTC, being just around the corner from our new home. I liked the service, the warmth of the people, the inviting atmosphere, and, of course, Rev Ernie Mills. I was invited to attend the Men's Group; I did so, and I was hooked. A big part of my spirituality involves service, and I became involved in UUTC, in no small part, due to Rev Ernie's influence. When Rev. Mills retired, I found myself elected to the Board as Treasurer.

A large part of what I did professionally was problem-solving for clients, first in finance and later in information technology. I had worked for firms both large and small, as an employee and as a self-employed consultant. Putting my career skills to work as UUTC's Board Treasurer, I found that the organization had outdated software, three disparate systems to manage the finances, the employees, and the congregation's information. It took an inordinate amount of time to manage all this, and it was difficult to determine our financial status at any given time.

The Board approved new software and we did the big switchover. We now had a system where we knew where we stood financially, and we could better forecast our needs. With prodding from our interim pastor, Rev. Paula Gable, we began changing our infrastructure, documenting everything and laying the foundations for moving from a pastoral to a program-sized church. When the opportunity literally fell into our collective laps to purchase the neighboring Varsity properties, we were ready to do so, under Board President Gary Kendrick's lead. Buying those properties was our first excursion into developing income that did not originate out of our collective pockets. We had rental income!

One big truth that needs to be explained and understood – a program-sized congregation must develop income streams separate from the congressional pledge drive and Sunday basket donations. Growth requires funding, and a fiscal diet of congregational donations just won't suffice.

A healthy church depends on congregational funding for no more than 80% of its budget, preferably 70%. The balance should be steady-sourced from other activities – rental income, educational fees, space usage fees and publicly open social events.

That's where we are with the budget for fiscal year 2021-2022. The Board has made a commitment towards fund-raising this coming year to supplement the annual pledge drive. It is a big commitment, but to finance the mission and program growth we all want to see, it is necessary. There will be a number of new opportunities for service, and I hope you find the time to commit to some, for the growth of UUTC, and, in my experience, for personal and spiritual growth.

(Dave is the current Chair of the Finance Committee)

The Bank of Readings Project

Alice Hardy

Thank you to everyone who has stepped forward with wonderful readings and lent their voices to this project. I continue to be impressed and enlightened by the wide variety of readings that have been added to our "bank".



This project could not have happened without RK and her videographer skills and talent. She made the experience easy and fun for everyone involved.

The project will be on hiatus throughout the month of April. RK and I look forward to more reader participation in May.



Bakery Treats for Bread of Life

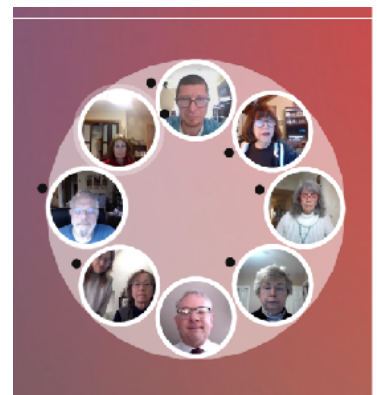
Social Action is working out the details of the monthly edible contributions to Bread of Life. April will be another cupcake month. Doesn't a cupcake make you smile? Spread the love! Every other month, we swap off between Blue Ridge Bakery and Bracken Mountain Bakery. Deliveries will be made at roughly the 15th of each month, depending on the day of the week.

If you'd like to help keep this effort going, you can [CLICK HERE](#) and make a contribution. **Share this link with your friends** — many people are eager for small ways they can help, and this is certainly one of those opportunities.

Virtual Coffee Hour on Wonder

[THIS LINK](#) will take you to a "room" called UUTC Coffee Hour. If you join a circle of 5 or more, you will be muted automatically by the program on entry, so just enable your microphone at the bottom of your screen to be heard! Wonder has been programmed to work best with Chrome or Edge browsers used on a desktop or laptop.

Get yourself in here! 11:00am Sunday!



Your Minister Loves to Hear Vaccine Talk!

Rev. Bob Renjilian

Something big happened in Transylvania County this month in regards to COVID-19. I could sense it when the health authorities opened up vaccines to more than 65+, whereas before they were concerned there still hadn't been enough to go around for that age group. I definitely saw a shift where there was a week of three different mass-vaccination clinics, with at least two differing brands. Next, NC moved ahead a week early in opening up the next stage, making many more people eligible to sign up for a shot. Plus, the President said everyone should be able to get vaccinated by the beginning of May, and given everything else I was seeing, *I believe it!*



I'm also hearing lots of vaccine talk. Or should I call it vaccination talk? After all, a vaccine on a shelf of a freezer isn't doing any good, but each vaccination is! People are sharing their vaccination stories. This is a public service: for each person saying they are getting vaccinated, friends around them say "that's great!" People on the fence might be more motivated to get theirs now, after hearing so many around them being positively commended.

I've also heard one or two who express concern, they know that they probably should not get the vaccine because they have conditions which make the potential side effects more serious, maybe even deadly. When these folks know that nearly everyone around them is getting their vaccinations, the chance of getting COVID becomes less of a worry. So when you share, you let such folks know you are part of a solution that secondarily works for them!

I love the talk about which vaccine is best. Of course the best one is the one you get offered soonest, and all the ones offered here share the same groundbreaking stats that they all prevent death and hospitalization! But the more people say why they are glad they got the shot of "their" brand, the better we're moving into the era of chatting about things that give us individuality while still promoting herd immunity. We weren't there at Christmastime, or back on Labor Day.

One final recommendation: read the pamphlet. You are invited to share your side effects with the FDA. Those of us who are getting the shots are part of the continuing study, if we so choose, to make the safety data even more clear. I have signed up for giving "v-safe" feedback and am glad to be of service to the wider cause!

"In Taliban-controlled portions of Pakistan, "Polio vaccinations have been declared haram by the ulema, and the government campaign has subsequently stalled." Like car insurance, vaccinations are a form of presumption. Only with the expulsion of the Taliban from the Swat Valley in the late summer of 2009 was the Pakistani government able to resume vaccinations."

[Ed.—polio vaccinations]

— Robert R. Reilly, [The Closing of the Muslim Mind: How Intellectual Suicide Created the Modern Islamist](#)



UUTC Enviro Stewards Assist in Litter Clean-Up

On March 14th, UUTC's Environmental Stewards participated in a community effort to clean-up the litter on Wilson and Old Hendersonville Highway. Michael Dexter-Smith from the Brevard Rotary Club organized this much needed event. Forty volunteers from UUTC, Deer Lake Homeowners Association, The Glen Cannon POA, The Rotary Club of Pisgah



Forest, Through the Trees and the Brevard Rotary Club picked up almost 80 bags of trash; a tire; one TV; a sleeper sofa and a black snake (very much alive). It was a great community effort and the "NE county quadrant" looks incredible as a result of these efforts. Even the weather cooperated.

The UUTC Environmental Stewards included Rev. Bob, Luanne Allgood, Ian Cowie, Vanessa Cowie, Jim Hardy, Peter Mockridge, Sarah Rogine, Quim Moya, and Sharon Moya.

The next effort will be in conjunction with NCDOT on April 24th on Rosman Highway. Please [contact Sharon](#) if you would like to participate.

To get notifications from the Environmental Stewards group, send an email to Eloise@uutc.org.

The Whys of Budget

Gail C. Meyers, Board Treasurer

Now that the Pledge Campaign is under way, some people are wondering about our increased budget and how we anticipate spending those funds. I am really excited to tell you about some plans, programs and expected growth.



No doubt about it, 2020 was a year of incredible loss. The inability to meet in person has taken a toll far greater than we could have ever imagined. A huge challenge during the shut-down has been finding ways to continue our mission, using technology and alternative ways of safely connecting. We have strived to nurture our precious connections, cultivate love and hope, and share compassion for those in need. I believe we have exceeded our expectations.

This unprecedented year required considerable expansion of technology, not only in physical equipment, but in staff assistance as well. The amazing efforts to digitize our meetings, programs and Sunday services has met with much success. However, it has absorbed the funds that normally would have gone toward the in-person gatherings.

Although we are very excited about the prospect of reopening in the future, we have discovered that there are some folks who want to continue with the virtual meetings and services. People who are seasonal, those who are searching for a church home, those who find transportation difficult, and shut-ins who would not normally have the opportunity to join in would like to see virtual services and programs continue. So, one of the things we will be doing soon is running both Virtual and In-person gatherings. Obviously, that will require additional equipment, staff support and funding.

Expansion of our Social Justice activity is planned. Although there are separate funds set up for social justice contributions, such as the Community Outreach Endowment Fund, The Dignity Project Fund, and the Monthly Charitable Giving Fund, the underlying expenses such as staff support, bookkeeping, supplies, etc. come out of the Operating Fund so that 100% of social justice contributions can go to the intended recipients.

Once protocols for re-opening are met, there will be a big push to gather again, through old and new programs. We plan to revive Circle Dinners when we can safely gather in small groups. Once the new HVAC system is up and running, we also hope to bring back Wonderful Wednesdays, concerts and other programs open to the public.

During the budgeting process, we asked ministry teams to open their minds to ways of furthering our mission and vision. They responded with fabulous ideas, each using their talents and passion. There will be a focus on expanding children's programs, thus nurturing our UU values for the future. The Social Action Team plans to support additional relief to the needs of the larger community.

There have been excellent ideas of ways to reintroduce UUTC to the community at large and attract new members to grow and support the church's mission.

The Pandemic has opened our eyes to the needs of our membership, as well. These, too, are social justice responses. The fact that folks are members of our church, does not disqualify them from

needing care. Loving Hearts & Helping Hands, Rev Bob, our staff, and many others are putting a lot of effort in this area of need.

In order to accomplish these mission and vision goals, the proposed budget increased in the following areas.

- A doubling of funds for A/V support
- A substantial increase in funds available for Administrative Assistants.
- A triple increase in programming for Social Justice and CRE
- An increase in funding for Member Services
- Fiscally responsible savings in case of emergency situations

Obviously, this is a huge chunk to bite off. In addition to our increased pledge goal, there will be several fund-raising efforts and possible requests for big Capital Items.

As you can see, we are planning a very exciting year, aimed at bringing people back together and expanding our support of Community. If this has inspired you, feel free to go ahead and increase that pledge or join in with other financial support.

Can't wait to see everyone in person!

Coming Soon to a Parking Lot Near You...

Kevin Lausch and CRE will be managing a yard/parking lot sale at UUTC in the not too distant future. Start thinking of what you can unburden yourself!

Consider contributions of things “not worth pricing.” Many may have jars of screws leftover from earlier projects, or bits of rope — really anything — and this is your opportunity to contribute not just things you think would generate a nice donation, but things that probably wouldn't — but your life would be lighter for having passed them on. **If**

each member and friend were to contribute enough to raise \$15 of revenue, we can completely cover the costs of Chalice Camp. Kevin is planning on renting a large tent to get us through this year's event.



Air Handler — Not Quite Ready!

While Mac Heating & Air installed hardware and ducts galore... they aren't plugged in, yet. The electrician must add another breaker to control the air exchange units, and then run some cable in a teeny-tiny space to make all that work. That pink circle is one of the lonely little cables waiting for a place to plug in. After hookup, staff will need a bit of training. So close, but not quite yet ready for primetime!



Pursuit of Meaning Wraps

RK Young

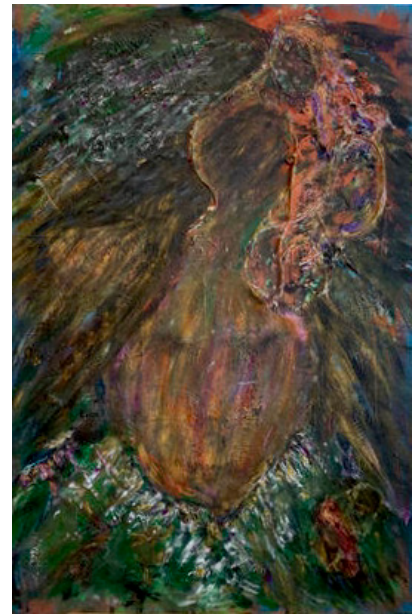
Victoria Kerr, Joyce Pearsall and Jenny & Royce Zia made it all the way through! The first two installments of the class were filled with films of two artists — Maya Lin and Andy Goldsworthy. This exploration then teed up a classroom project — one where the focus was to explore, take risks— and try to work out what inspires us.

What follows are some images of work where this was pondered. Joyce and I contribute things we had worked on previously (but struggled with), and Victoria, Jenny & Royce worked up specific pieces they could assemble and share on computer. A lovely discussion ensued —this class may need to be repeated! Can you guess who did what?

We agreed that having a bit more time to work on creations would be a good thing and that including another film or two would be fun.

Jenny observed that, though she’s been working in tapestry of late, she had not ever given much thought to what inspires her. In my own thinking as we moved through the topic, it occurred to me that identifying who or what inspires or influences us is a form of gratitude. If we value that inspiration or influence, we appreciate it—and are grateful for it.

Thanks to all who participated!



Mathematicians, philosophers, poets, lawyers, musicians ... so many inspirations!



Finance Is a Tool. How Do You Want to Use It?

When you use UUTC's online GIVE option, you have options. SO MANY OPTIONS. What do they all mean?

Charitable Giving — This account is the “holding bucket” each month to capture your gifts that go to the designated charitable organization for the month. At the end, your gifts are gathered up and sent to the correct charity. That way, they are kept separate from all other gifts. All of your donation goes to the charity of that month. Nothing is held back for administrative costs.

Ministerial Discretionary Fund — Gifts to this account are dispersed at the discretion of the minister.

Community Outreach Endowment Fund — This investment account is housed at the UUA. To capture gifts intended for this fund, we have a separate bank account called the “Endowment Holding Fund.” When gifts in that fund reach a significant level (\$1000 or more), they are wired to the UUA. The Endowment Committee, elected by Members of UUTC, disperses a percentage of these funds [starting this year!] to selected organizations in our community each year to further our Mission. These funds cannot be used for operating costs unless we are in danger of closing up shop.

Identifiable Contributions — Gifts donated to this descriptor do go to the Operating Fund. However, choosing this category means that either the givers don't have a Pledge to be fulfilled, or they choose to give a gift without pledging, or they want to give a gift over and above their pledge. Which does, occasionally, happen. Because some people are just awesome that way.

Pledge — Gifts made that are promised up front to the operating account. Pledging enables the organization that is UUTC to create a budget based on an expectation that these gifts will arrive to fund all the regular operating expenses included in the budget. Pledges are the backbone that allows us to, among other things, pay our Minister.

Dignity Project — This account was set up to fund our own work targeting those in greatest need of assistance— especially women with families for expenditures that are not covered under SNAP funds... and are taxed more heavily than other products. Frequent requests from our partner agencies filled by the Dignity Project are diapers and personal hygiene products — things that help to maintain dignity in the lives of those we assist. Gifts to this fund never go into the Operating account—100% of these gifts go to purchase the products needed.

Capital Expenditures — This account holds gifts to be used for expenditures outside the budget in amounts of \$5000 or more. The account has more than one line, one of which is “Building Expansion.” When giving to this fund, it's a good idea to let your Administrator know where you wish your gift to go — either for future building expansion or for more immediate, but costly work. (Think of our new air exchange installation. This was a capital expense.)

Bakery Treats! — Gifts using this code are used to help make the agony of financial hardship easier to swallow for our neighbors receiving meals from Bread of Life. Deliveries from our local bakeries are made once a month.

If you have difficulty locating any of these funds from the Give button, use the down arrow on your keyboard to expand the list.

Treasurer's Report for February 2021

Operating Fund			
	<u>This Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	
Receipts	\$ 30,043.78	\$255,638.55	
Expenditures	<u>25,825.54</u>	<u>199,097.03</u>	
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$ <u>4,218.24</u>	\$ <u>56,541.52</u>	
Unrestricted Cash in Fund:	\$ 59,312.47		
Restricted Reserve Fund:	<u>32,173.83</u>		
Total Available Cash on Hand:	\$ <u>91,486.30</u>		
Endowment Fund:	\$ <u>217,488.55</u>		
<u>Other Funds:</u>	<u>Bank Balance</u>	<u>Amount Restricted</u>	
Fund 3: Varsity Fund Checking	\$ 7,781.96	\$ 0.00	
Fund 7: Capital Expenditures	\$ 27,607.24	\$ 18,145.90	
Fund 8: Gifts and Memorials	\$ 1,475.00	\$ 0.00	
Fund 10: Charitable Giving	\$ 2,995.00	\$ 2,995.00	
This Month –Bread of Life			\$1,470.00
Fund 12: Dignity Project	\$ 8,503.36	\$ 8,503.36	
Fund 13: Sabbatical Fund:	\$ 5,368.25	\$ 0.00	
<u>Pledge Campaigns @ 2/17/21</u>	<u>Committed</u>	<u>Collected</u>	<u>Outstanding</u>
2020/2021	\$ 274,758.00	\$ 205,926.58	\$ 68,831.42

Respectfully Submitted,
 Gail Meyers, Treasurer 3/17/2021

Who Comes First?

Once the air exchange work is complete, we will reconnect with those groups that lost their meeting places when we closed down. Emails have already gone out to SMART Recovery and The Rainbow Alliance. We will be reaching out to the Living Wage Coalition, as well.

The system has limits. The safest space to start with is the social hall. The large classroom will not be “in play,” as CO2 would not be effectively measured from within that space. Thank you for your patience!

Board Agenda for March 25, 2021 @ 5:30PM

Welcome & Check-in

Opening Words

Board Minutes: The February 25, 2021 meeting minutes were approved via email vote on 03/02/21 and sent to the Administrator for filing and publishing.

Email Votes Since Last Meeting:

Approval of February 2021 minutes

Standing Updates:

Minister's Report	Rev. Bob Renjilian
Treasurer's Report	Gail Meyers
Operations Report	RK Young
Administration Committee	Kay Webb (liaison)
Finance Committee	Gail Meyers (liaison)
Personnel Committee	Betty Kendrick (liaison)
Property Committee	Quim Moya (liaison)
Advisory Council	Susan Zelle (liaison)

Old Business:

New Business:

Strategic Planning for Varsity Properties
Board Operating Guidelines Review
GA Delegates

Board Calendar: April - Final Budget, Annual Meeting Preparation

Next Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting: 04/22/21 at 5:30pm via Zoom

Adjourn

What Has UUTC Meant to You?

Betty Kendrick, Member at Large, Board of Trustees

What hole has UUTC filled for me? As a newcomer to UUTC in 2011, I learned about Unitarian Universalism for the first time. My husband Gary and I found a church home that offered new opportunities for spiritual growth, religious freedom, and community. We became members in 2012 and quickly found opportunities for meaningful involvement. After Gary's death in 2018, I was wrapped in love and support from UUTC. My family and I will never forget the love and support we received from Rev. Ilene and the church community. One of the primary reasons I chose to remain in Brevard was staying connected with UUTC.

Moving forward to 2020, who would have foreseen a global pandemic? I miss attending services, seeing fellow congregants, and growing as a UUTC community. We will have the opportunity for a new beginning soon. That new beginning may be different, and I hope that we will courageously embrace

change. I want to support that new beginning and I invite you to do so, too. I encourage you to support UUTC with your time, talents, and treasure. You can make a difference.

Gearing Up for ‘Normal?’

Susan Zelle, Board President

It’s beginning to seem repetitive, but “What a year!” Sometimes it seems as if this could be the UUTC mantra. It’s true that UUTC seems different, but we’ve survived and even thrived as we found a new “normal” that allows us to worship together and stay relevant. Our new normal has had several iterations, further challenging our ability to be flexible as we leaned more about the virus. We’ve all worked hard to stay connected and reach out to those who might have felt vulnerable or unsettled. If a virtual hug isn’t quite the same as those famous UU hugs before, during and after Coffee Hours, then certainly the avalanche of check in phone calls and written notes has helped sustain us this year.



Technology – and some mighty impressive technical gurus – brought us into this century and through the pandemic as we broadcast sermons and uplifting music along with some much needed inspiration. Throughout, our goals have been to support each other and our community in a safe and responsible manner. Fellowship on Tap became Fellowship on the Green, which was put on hold when the county’s infection rates shot up; with declining virus cases, the Fellowship is once again welcoming members and friends to catch up with each other in person. Realm has evolved into a successful and surprisingly easy platform for connecting with like minded individuals and staying in touch. Coffee Hours have made it into the virtual world and allow us to see familiar faces and “chat” with others in smaller groups. If you haven’t tried it yet, you’re missing a great opportunity to reconnect and, perhaps, help buoy someone’s spirits. As an added benefit, helping to lift someone else’s spirits often lifts my spirits, too!

Going forward, we are beginning to cautiously explore ways to restart some activities. What will worship look like this summer? We’re not yet sure, but we will be mindful of health concerns. I know many have been vaccinated but let’s not forget that many are still waiting to be called up, and some will decide not to get vaccinated. If you are in this last category, I urge you to carefully read the studies that follow the three treatments now available to see if one might be right for you.

Having UUTC in my life this year has given me a sense of purpose and strengthened my appreciation for the many gifts we give each other, and for UUTC’s commitment to our community. I thank each of you who has made a special effort to check on others, offer an encouraging word and participate in services. How lovely to see your faces and hear your voices!

*“Our goal is to create a **beloved community**. This will require a qualitative change in our souls. As well as a quantitative change in our lives.” – Martin Luther King Jr.*