

UUTC UPDATE

Inclusive. Intentional. *Involved.*

Office Hours

The office is open Mon-Fri from 9 to noon and by appointment. Time with the Minister can be scheduled on Tuesdays from 9:30am-2:00pm & Wednesday from 12-4:30pm.

Pastoral Care

Going through a rough spot? Have surgery coming up? Call (877) 510-5603 or email lhhh@uutc.org.

Nursery Care

Our Nursery is open Sunday mornings from 9:00am to noon for children ages 0-3. Take advantage of either service at your convenience—our childcare staff would love to welcome your child.

Coming Up at UUTC

Muffins w/the Minister! Mon @ 10

UU History — Mon @ 1:00pm

Spiritual Explorations — Mon @ 3:30

Men's Group — Tues @ 10:00am

Aging Wisely — Tues @ 3:00pm

SMART Recovery — Tues @ 6:00pm

Eclectics — Wed @ 9:30am

Common Read — Thurs @ 4:00pm



Sunday

Sunday, January 27

A SPOONFUL OF JUSTICE

Rev. Ilene Kaur Tompkins-Gillispie

One often-forgotten facet of our commitment to justice in its many forms is disability justice— making space for people of many different ability levels in every part of our life together in beloved community. Spoon theory is a recently-developed lens through which we can view illness and disability, both in our own health journeys and those of others. In this worship service, we will reflect together on the ways we each travel through the world of ability and disability. What do we each gain, separately and together, when we reflect on our spiritual lives through the lens of spoon theory? What does our grieving and our living look like as we journey through periods of ability and disability? Come worship with us on our last Sunday of this justice-focused month of worship. Remember that, at our 11am service, there will be special programming for our youngest worshippers!

Join us for coffee at 10:30am!

"Where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe."

— Frederick Douglass

Muffins with the Minister

Our February “Muffins” date is **Tuesday, February 19th**. Come have coffee, talk with Rev. Ilene and others who join the fun! This is a laid back, easy way to learn something new about others in the congregation, and Rev. Ilene. Runs from 10 to noon.

Social Justice Giving



The Haven is Transylvania County’s two-building shelter for homeless families and individuals of all ages. The Haven works with other community agencies to prevent long-term homelessness and to promote sustainable outcomes for its residents. Your donation will support our fellow citizens as they work toward reaching self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

Upcoming Concerts

3/8: Jack Williams!

If you are not familiar with Jack, check his website [here](#). A real showman!

3/31: Opal String Quartet: 1:30pm

The Opal String Quartet is going to perform some Mozart and a few other things yet to be determined!

Mark your calendar!



SUNDAY, A WEEK FROM NOW

Sacrificial Faith — Rev. Ilene

As we begin February’s worship theme of “faith,” we will reflect together in this service on the concept of a faith which calls us toward sacrificial giving. How can we serve the world and one another, living authentically into a covenantal community, without giving ANYTHING up? What might our liberal faith call us to sacrifice, and how might we answer that call— even in the face of consumerism and individualism that tell us we can, in fact, get everything we want?




YOUR HEART/HANDS NEEDED—REALLY



Our Loving Hearts, Helping Hands (LHHH) Team is being faced with increased demands, naturally, as our congregation grows. This means that the Team, a mere 10 members strong, may need to draw extra help from time to time.

Can you be a chef, on occasion? Please [email](#) or call David Parker (828-885-2093). New LHHH guidelines recommend a meal a week, when requested. **With, sometimes, multiple households needing this support, our Loving Hearts crew would love to have some Extra Helping Hands to call on when the needs are deep and wide.**

Thank you in advance for taking the time — **RIGHT NOW**—to email or call David and letting him know you will help support our congregation’s members in their time of need. 

SHARE THE GIFT OF LANGUAGE

Dear Friends,

We at El Centro have the need of tutors to teach English to kids that recently arrived from Honduras and Mexico. They are students from 1st to 5th grade and are attending the Homework Club. They need to learn vocabulary and basic English expressions. El Centro will provide support with materials and will be the liaison with the ESL teacher from Transylvania County Schools.

As you know, these children need to build up their English skills in order to progress well in school. The days and times are the same as Homework Club; Mondays and Wednesdays from 3-4:30pm. Please pass this information to anyone you know that would like to help our kids. We appreciate it!

Rodrigo Vargas

828-577-9434

gigovar@hotmail.com



GREEN PRODUCTS — CAN UUTC LIVE THE VALUES?

Once upon a time, in congregations across the land, great grumblings and discussions went forth as to which did more damage: running the dishwasher or using disposable products at coffee time. Many congregations, with fewer resources, opted for disposable products.

The battle about water use has long since passed, since manufacturing uses more water than modern dishwashers. UUTC has used china coffee cups for quite a long time. However, we also use plastic, single-use cups. We use (mostly) virgin-plastic trash bags. And frequently, when goods are purchased, we accept plastic bags to carry the purchases.

Your Social Action Team's work with the Better World Shopping Guide is enabling some changes. Joan Lemire, doing the shopping for the Coffee Team, is avoiding any of the companies who score lower than a "C" on their company practices, for instance. But to fully commit to the change, it takes congregational commitment. While "green" products have gotten consistently more competitive on price and quality, it still costs a bit more to choose high post-consumer waste products. As we move into pledge season, keep your vision of UUTC's values in mind. It is your commitment that powers our choices. Thanks!

THIS WEEK IN CRE: ACTIVITIES FOR AFTER SUNDAY MORNING

For the younger kids...

We did not weave the web of life; We are merely a strand in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. — attributed to Chief Seattle, chief of the Duwamish Nation

IN THIS WEEK'S SESSION... we heard the story, "The Grumpy Gecko," which showed that all living beings on the Earth are connected on a great invisible web of life. We talked about our seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, respect for the interdependent web of which we are all a part, and how our group is also an interdependent web. We created a covenant, or promises to each other for our time together, recognizing that what one person does affects the whole web. We added a picture of a gecko to our World of Wonder mural to remind us that we are all connected.

EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about the ways in which your family is part of the interdependent web of life. Discuss the ways members of a family are interdependent and the ways individuals in a family influence one another.

EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Create a family covenant. Most families have explicit rules, as well as many that go unspoken. Set some time aside to identify behaviors that help the family thrive. List the promises you are all willing to keep and have each member of the family sign the covenant. Try to state your expectations in positive terms rather than negative. For example, instead of saying "Don't be selfish," you can say, "Be generous." Empower all members of the family to be keepers of the covenant and point out when it has been broken. If you like, work together to create a list of apology actions, such as apologizing, giving a hug, fixing something, or giving someone some space.

A Family Adventure. Go on a "web walk" early in the morning to find as many spider webs glistening with dew as you can. Notice how intricate they are. How are they like the invisible web of all life that people are a part of?

Family Discovery. Watch nature shows such as "Planet Earth" on PBS, Netflix, or DVD. Subscribe to nature magazines like National Wildlife Federation's (at www.nwf.org/) Big Backyard or Ranger Rick; even small donations to Sierra Club (at www.sierraclub.org) and other organizations usually bring high quality nature magazines to your door. Talk about the interdependence that exists between different animals and plants you learn about. What links can you observe?

A Family Game. Create a web together with a ball of yarn, as the group did in today's session.

A Family Ritual. Practice a gratitude bedtime ritual in which you take turns naming different animals and plants. Say thank you to each living being for a way it is important in the web of life and in your life. Optional: Extend the ritual to include people.

***The Administrator regrets that this was not in last week's newsletter.**

For the older kids...

Spirit of Life, come unto me. — Carolyn McDade

IN THIS WEEK'S SESSION... we explored how water in a water bottle symbolizes the Spirit of Life. In this session, children reflected on how the Spirit of Life works in our lives. The group heard a creation story based on the Book of Genesis in Hebrew scripture. Reflections included how pain and hurt as well as joy and wonder can bring a sense of the Spirit of Life, when one may feel connected to everything. Participants discussed how the Spirit of Life is a part of everything, just as water is pervasive.

The children learned about the Spirit of Life to demonstrate that:

- Unitarian Universalism values acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations (third Principle)
- Unitarian Universalism affirms the direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life (Source)

EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Think about these questions, and share your reflections with your child:

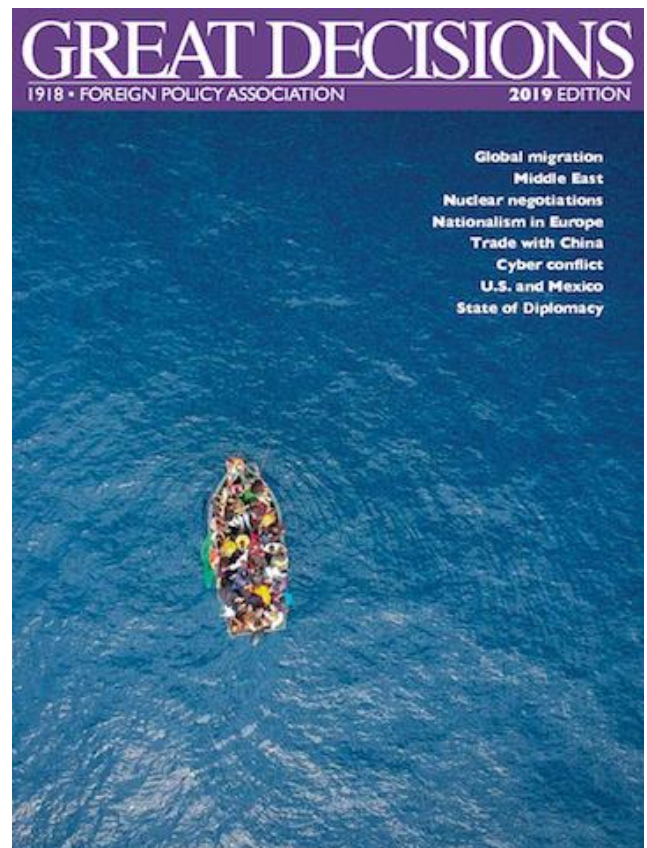
- What does the Spirit of Life mean to you?
- How do you recognize the Spirit of Life?
- What does the Spirit of Life feel like to you?
- Do you have another name you might like to call the Spirit of Life?

EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Today, we talked about the fact that a water molecule, once formed, never ceases to exist, and might travel far and wide across time. Make up a water story together. Invite each person imagine a form that the water took during its never-ending journey in the universe. Be imaginative. You might start by saying: This H₂O — two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom — started in the Big Bang. The hydrogen was formed by a burning star. This one bit of water was part of an icy asteroid that crashed together with others and formed planet earth. This very bit of water then became part of a brontosaurus's blood that spilled when it tripped. That bit of blood seeped into the soil. It eventually became part of a flower eaten by a woman gatherer. She passed the water in a stream of urine next to a tree. Later, this bit of water was carried in a piece of grass. The grass dried in the sun, and this water evaporated into the sky. Invite each person in the family to add to the story. To end the story, say "As water is a never-ending part of the universe, so is the Spirit of Life."

Interested in helping out? Reach out to Danny at danny@uutc.org for volunteer opportunities that support the wild and wondrous world of religious education at UUTC!

WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL & TC LIBRARY TEAM UP ON NATIONAL TOPICS OF INTEREST

Come join the national conversation hosted by The World Affairs Council of Western North Carolina and Transylvania County Library's Library Foundation. Each Wednesday from 3-5:00 the library will host a series of topics being discussed around the country. On February 5, Mark Gibney will discuss Refugees and Global Migration. Today, no countries have open borders. Every state in today's global system has its own laws and policies about who is permitted to cross its borders, and how they will do so. Who determines whether someone is a refugee or a migrant? How have different countries, including the United States, reacted to migration? How effective are the international laws, policies and organizations that have evolved to assist and protect refugees and migrants?



On February 12, Mike Duncan will discuss Cyber Conflict and Geopolitics. Cyber conflict is a new and continually developing threat, which can include foreign interference in elections, industrial sabotage and attacks on infrastructure. Russia has been accused of interfering in the 2016 presidential elections in the United States and China is highly committed to using cyberspace as a tool of national policy. Dealing with cyber conflict will require new ways of looking at 21st century warfare. Is the United States prepared to respond to such threats. On February 19, John Plant will discuss The Rise of Populism in Europe. Mass migration, and the problems associated with it, have directly abetted the rise of populist parties in Europe. Opposition to immigration was the prime driver of support for Brexit, it brought a far-right party to the German Bundestag for the first time since the 1950s, and propelled Marine Le Pen to win a third of the vote in the French presidential election. In addition to calling for stronger borders, however, these parties are invariably illiberal, anti-American, anti-NATO and pro-Kremlin, making their rise a matter of serious concern for the national security interests of the United States.

On February 26, Tom Sanders will discuss The Middle East: Regional Disorder. As the presidency of Donald J. Trump passes the halfway point, the Middle East remains a region in turmoil. The Trump administration has aligned itself with strongmen in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt, which along with Israel have a common goal of frustrating Iranian expansion. What will be the fallout from policy reversals such as withdrawing from the Iranian nuclear accord and moving the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem? Does the United States see a path forward in troubled states such as Syria, Yemen, Libya and Iraq? Is the United States headed toward war with Iran? On March 5, Dot Sulock will

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discuss Nuclear Negotiations: Back to the Future? Nuclear weapons have not gone away, and the Trump administration has brought a new urgency, if not a new approach, to dealing with them. The President has met with Vladimir Putin as the New Start Treaty with Russia comes up for renewal in 2021, the first presidential summit ever with Kim Jong-un occurred to discuss denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula, and President Trump has decertified the Obama nuclear deal with Iran. To what degree should past nuclear talks guide future U.S. nuclear arms control negotiations? Can the art of the deal apply to stabilizing our nuclear future?

Finally, on March 12, Julie Snyder will discuss Decoding U.S.-China Trade. Though arguably the most advanced economy in the world, the United States still uses centuries-old numbers to measure trade. These antique numbers mangle understanding of the U.S.-China trade relationship, shrinking America's true economic size and competitiveness, while swelling China's. Bad numbers give rise to bad policies that ultimately kill U.S. jobs and cede market share to China. What other tools can the United States employ to counter China's unfair trade practices? There are several available, yet they remain mostly unused. The series is open to the public and free, and more information is provided [HERE](#).

READY FOR THE UUTC COMMON READ?

We are what we read.

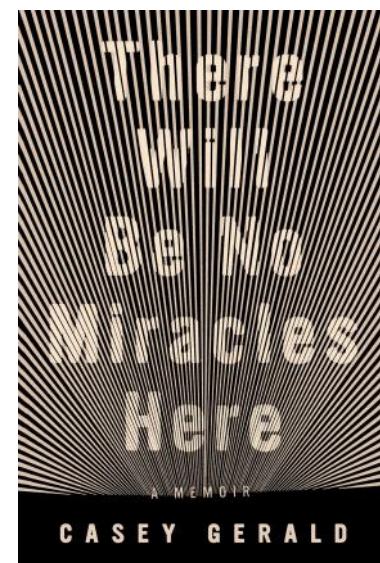
In discussions of this congregation on how to be a Welcoming Congregation—conversations that have sometimes been awkward, or anxious, or even angry—there have been honest questions about how we even talk to “those people,” what words are ok, etc. This is OK. This is how we sound when we don't know the answers. OpeAsking the questions is the first step. Understanding is the second.

To get understanding takes some study. We can't always find out what it's like living other people's lives through direct questioning. This is when a good book is invaluable: it allows us inside someone else's head, without us being the least bit offensive.

“There Will Be No Miracles Here” was chosen in support of the 10th Anniversary of UUTC's becoming a Welcoming Congregation and the necessary steps for renewal of that designation, which is no longer automatic. We must renew the process because the congregation is renewed constantly. How can those who have joined in the last 2 years know what we went through 10 years ago?

Thursday, January 31st at 4:00pm, is our first meeting to discuss this book. You will want to have finished at least half of the story in order to be ready to participate. It may be helpful to have selected some pieces of the text that had an emotional or visceral impact on you—those reactions indicate truth bombs.

If you have not already picked up this book at Highland Books, now would be the time!



FEBRUARY 9 MARCH IN RALEIGH: MAKE CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER UUs

Join UUs from across North Carolina and Washington, D.C. in the 13th annual HKonJ Moral March and Peoples Assembly in Raleigh on February 9. HKonJ – **The Historic Thousands on Jones Street** – is made up of more than 125 NC NAACP branches, youth councils, college chapters and other social justice organizations. The group will demand that state lawmakers in North Carolina to "life the shape of justice" by protecting voting rights, expanding health care, supporting public education, respecting women's rights, preventing gun violence, protecting the environment, and caring for immigrants, the poor, people with disabilities, and senior citizens.



Unitarian Universalists (along with UU friends and allies) will gather between 8:00 and 9:30 am near the corner of South Street and Salisbury Street (look for the North Carolina Association of Educators sign) wearing yellow "Side With Love" or blue "UU Forward Together" t-shirts. After the pre-march rally (9:00 - 10:00), the group will march down Fayetteville Street to the old State Capitol building. Following the march, all are invited for lunch at the Christ the King Presbyterian Church (117 S. West Street, just a 5 1/2 block walk away) between 12:30 pm and 2:30 p.m. It's a great way to meet UUs from Washington and learn about upcoming social justice workshops and activities by the Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry of North Carolina. Find information on preregistration (if you are staying for the lunch/gathering) and more at the links below. **Please [email your Social Action Team](#) if you intend to take part!**

<http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=70Ez5a5CySAu37rSQDwf4vwfB5pSS8nB>

<http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=Ek7SvlgoJTjiSvA4qCFICPwfB5pSS8nB>

Inclusive. Intentional. INVOLVED.

Our Mission, as a welcoming, inclusive community acting from love, compassion and respect is:

To support individual spiritual journeys and

KEEP UP WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING!!!

VIEW our "insider" [church calendar](#). For previous issues of the UUTC Update, click [HERE](#).

SEND news for this newsletter by 10:00am on Wednesdays.

CONTACT US

Our mailing address is UUTC, PO Box 918, Brevard, NC 28712. Our church is located at the corner of Varsity Street and South Broad Street in Brevard. Our email address is admin@uutc.org.