



Unitarian Universalists *of Transylvania County*

Vision Statement 2023 - 2027

Envisioning Our Future

UUTC is a covenantal, thriving, welcoming, richly diverse UU congregation in the heart of Brevard, NC. The church offers programs and services that affirm and serve across ages, races, ethnicities, religious backgrounds, abilities, sexual orientations and gender identities. Its Members and Friends are deeply connected through love for one another and for the larger community.

UUTC congregants joyfully share their passions, talents, time and money in the service of the church and its mission.

While UUTC's mission describes who we are, this vision shows where we are going over the next three to five years.

Worship

UUTC offers creative, inspiring, authentic, multigenerational worship services with challenging sermons. The outstanding music program always lifts our spirits. Members, Friends and visitors are able to attend in-person or online to accommodate their preference or needs.

Our goal is to support spiritual learning and growth for all. In any sermon you are apt to hear references to God, and readings from the world's great religions or diverse secular sources.

We come together in acceptance and love for one another, making our worship a safe place to hear a radical message. Services lift us out of our everyday preoccupations, remind us of what our lives are truly about, and help us discern the light cutting through the darkness.

Education and Learning

Our Children's Religious Exploration (CRE) program offers vibrant, engaging and innovative education that nurtures, provokes independent thinking, and encourages spiritual growth for children and youth of all ages.

Adult programming inspires spiritual discovery. It includes learning about our UU heritage; studying the UU Principles, making connections with the global UU community, and exploring other religious traditions and contemporary spiritual writings. UUTC's highly interactive education and learning programs – offered in-person and online – strive to form intergenerational connections.

Lifelong learning is offered through adult programs, practices, readings and small group discussions. UUTC has developed strong ties with other UU churches in the region; we share learning and social justice opportunities and activities with them. UUTC also has a strong relationship with the Mountain Retreat and Learning Center and benefits from its various programs and resources.

We have established a strong strategic Leadership Development and Training program to nurture leaders in the congregation. UUTC annually recruits and trains a substantial number of Members to prepare for ongoing leadership and to encourage fresh perspectives.

Spiritual Growth

Caring for one another in our beloved community is a core spiritual practice for Unitarian Universalists. We are a heart-centered church which understands that we all long to know and be known, love and be loved, serve and be served, celebrate and be celebrated. Our pastor, a trained lay team, and caring Members offer support and compassion to those who are in crisis, experiencing grief or loss, or going through distressing transitions.

To enhance spiritual growth in this world of challenges and ever-changing dynamics, we offer a variety of small group ministries and adult religious exploration opportunities. We embrace wisdom from our own UU traditions as well as multiple world religions, belief systems, arts and philosophies.

Social Justice

In all areas of our ministry, UUTC maintains a strong focus on justice issues. We strive to make a difference by addressing white-supremacy, racism, gender discrimination, ableism and classism. We will pursue environmental and economic justice – and listen and respond to the voices of those at the margins of society. Members and Friends participate in social justice activities from the local to international levels and often in collaboration with others. Our congregation welcomes inclusion of people of color, immigrants, the LGBTQIA+ community and people with disabilities.

Services on Sundays often address justice issues directly, challenging us to a healthier relationship with often uncomfortable truths.

Finances

UUTC is committed to fiscal responsibility, transparency of its financial condition and a balanced operating budget. Strong pledges support the budget with most Member households pledging annually; Members and Friends are investing ever-greater percentages of their resources to ensure the sustainability and growth of UUTC.

The strong Stewardship Team regularly educates Members and Friends about the responsibility and privilege of meeting the financial needs of UUTC and its ministries, as well as the importance of providing a congregational Fair Share contribution to UUA. The Team annually offers various fund-raising opportunities and programs.

All Members and Friends are encouraged to become informed stakeholders in UUTC's financial planning and to give to the level of their ability. These actions contribute to the stability of UUTC's finances.

The church is financially healthy with a strong balance sheet, capital funds and endowments to support our campus evolution and advance its vision. It supports denominational affairs at regional, national and international levels.

Congregational Development

The growing number of Members and Friends provides both energy and financial resources to maintain UUTC's viability. The congregation spans all ages, including a large contingent of retired individuals as well as a healthy presence of young families.

We aspire to a model of equity in congregational life. With proactive outreach and investments in education and training by its leaders, UUTC is committed to involving and engaging all congregants in governance, ministries and programs. This includes those from historically marginalized and under-represented groups.

UUTC collaborates with local non-profit organizations to strive collectively to meet the community's goals. To integrate the church into the larger community, UUTC hosts activities at the UUTC campus and at other venues. We participate in community events and local nonprofit missions.

Staff, Infrastructure and Campus

The Board and Minister are committed to attracting and retaining highly-qualified staff. UUTC's Congregational Administrator works with the Minister and the Board of Trustees to develop strategic and operational plans to advance the Vision. The Administrator is supported by staff responsible for accounting, marketing, and other functions to proactively and professionally manage the daily operations and expanding requirements of UUTC's programs. UUTC is a Certified living wage employer.

UUTC's campus is a welcoming, easily accessible and safe place with physical and virtual entrances. Our campus comfortably accommodates UUTC's congregation and visitors for Sunday worship services, programs, committee and team activities, and social events. Meeting rooms can be configured for adult and children education classes, and group meetings – both large and small. Youth have their own home base for programs, activities, and discussions.

We host a variety of events, giving visitors with no other connection to UUTC (or, in some cases, any organized religion) a chance to experience our community. Our campus is increasingly used by others whose beliefs align with our UU Principles.

The UUTC campus – composed of buildings, green space, and an online platform – is designed for expansion and/or reconfiguration to support the evolving needs of the congregation, with a dynamic plan in place that reflects the church's resource capacity.

UUTC's thriving congregation, strong financial base, dedicated staff and volunteers, and welcoming campus are the cornerstones of a church that is a beacon for spiritual growth and social justice for those who come through its doors and also for the community beyond.