



wayfinding



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Courage to Embrace Your Inner Self

Livestream & In Person at 10:00am

We all struggle at times to know ourselves, to delve into parts we don't relish exploring—and standing up to pressures to conform.

Speaker: Rev. Bob Renjilian

This Month's Theme: Courage

"To love our neighbors as ourselves."

[Sharing House](#) is the agency in Transylvania County that coordinates efforts and gifts from other congregations (48 of us, in total) and other non-profits to alleviate as much suffering in the county as they can. They rely on our volunteer hours, our in-kind gifts, and critically, on our financial generosity.

If you are not in the habit of giving to our monthly charities, make this the month you set a new habit. "No one is left at arm's length away." In other words, Sharing House embodies our First Principle. #Worth&Dignity



Sharing House

TRANSYLVANIA CHRISTIAN MINISTRY, INC.

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Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.

—Unitarian Universalist 3rd Principle

"We don't have to wait until we are on our deathbed to realize what a waste of our precious lives it is to carry the belief that something is wrong with us."

—Tara Brach

September

Excerpts from the Minutes:

Present: Glenn Cockerham, Ian Cowie, Michael Griffith, Vicki Held, Gail Meyers, Quim Moya, Kay Webb, Alice Wellborn, Rev. Bob, and RK.



Minister's Report – Rev. Bob's report covered much ground. He reflected on the annual Retreat at the Mountain, sharing some of the comments from participants discussing what has given them positive energy at UUTC and how we might have more of that. He suggested that a good priority for leadership is to go further in the discovery and dreaming of where we could be in the future. He recognized LHHH for the wonderful work they do in caring for congregants, and commended Kevin Lausch for participating in training for the OWL teacher certification for younger ages. He attended Fellowship on Tap at Oskar Blues and an Ecusta Trail clean-up project... much more in the linked report on the website.

Treasurer's Report – Gail reported that our average monthly expenses (mostly fixed expenses) is close to \$30,000. We expect an increase in revenues as we near the end of the year, but the Board will need to watch the financial situations closely and put significant efforts into fund-raising events.

Operations Report — RK addressed her administrative goals for this fiscal year, one of the most important of which is to renew our volunteer base. RK reported the work of the Facilities Team on increasing the functionality of the Chalice House and how the Team is addressing issues like mustiness. She also discussed the Sponsored Projects list, highlighting the projects that she and the Ministry Teams deemed priorities.

Old Business: Sponsored Projects List— Prior to the meeting, RK sent Board members a list of sponsored project needs that Ministry Teams voted on as important to their mission. From the list, some projects will be funded through Team budgets, the Capital Fund, or grant-funding. The five remaining will need to be funded through donations. There was lengthy discussion on how to best approach funding these five projects. Ian Cowie made a motion to accept gifts to five designated projects (1. complete sanctuary paint job, 2. outdoor security cameras, 3. social hall insulating shades, 4. choir chairs, 5. coated metal picnic tables), and, *once these goals are met, any remaining gift funds will be rolled into the general Capital Fund*. Gail seconded the motion. After further discussion, the motion was approved..

New Business: Reserve Funding vs. Sponsored Projects – The Board referred the issue of how the Reserve Fund can be used to the Finance Committee for discussion and guidance.

For the full Minutes, the Treasurer's Report, the Operations Report and the Minister's full report, please visit the [Board's Page](#) and select the reports you wish to view.



Fear, Courage, and Us

Rev. Bob Renjilian

Courage is no stranger in this congregation. We listen and come to know the stories of those who faced challenges in their personal lives, and we have stories of the founding of this congregation (and we'll hear more of those as we approach the 25th anniversary) as a bold new adventure. We "Side With Love" when we open our eyes to the courage of people who are challenged by the ingrained and intersecting "isms" (such as racism), or who grew up gay/lesbian/bisexual/trans in homophobic cultural conditions. We are amazed by the courage of people facing severe illness, and the stamina of their caregivers.

Our Soul Matters theme, "Courage", will help us explore in sermon and discussion what it means to be a people of courage, a community of courage, and a person of courage. For example, you may come from religious roots which made it a matter of courage to find your ways to our doors (or wherever you first arrived at the doorstep of a Unitarian Universalist congregation). I've asked a member of the worship team to share her story of growing up in this faith, and later this month I'll lift up the stories of famous folks whose faith gave them courage to make a difference.

We'll have the **discussion on this month's Soul Matters packet** after Children's classes clear the classroom after church **on October 23**, and you are welcome to come even if you don't receive the packet (or [ask me](#) to send you the PDF file—I'm happy to get that to you). That gives us a chance to go deeper. The final Sunday of the month, close to Halloween, there will be a co-created service touching on courage, and the root of fear.

I have a sense that next month, November, with elections, we're going to need lots of courage. I'll be offering a post-election prayer service on Wednesday, Nov. 9, at Noon. We do not need to feel alone.

See you at church.



Letter from the President

Alice Wellborn

I expect that many of you are curious about what's been happening with the Ministry Evaluation surveys, so my message this month is the scoop on what's been going on and where the Task Force is right now in our work.

Sharon Moya and I began this evaluation process last May, when Sharon offered to put together a fair, accurate, process-oriented evaluation that would identify appropriate goals for the coming year. Evaluation instruments and processes are Sharon's academic area of expertise, and she has been amazing! She answered all my questions and made any changes I suggested, and our collaboration turned out to be a learning experience and a pleasure. It's been wonderful to work with someone who really knows what she's doing.

All of the items in the survey are taken directly from UUTC and UUA documents: Rev. Bob's Covenantal Agreement with the congregation, our Vision Statement and Bylaws, our Operating Guidelines and organization structure, and guidelines and recommendations from UUA. The survey truly represents the official expectations this congregation has for a minister and the ministry.

At the June 23rd Board meeting, the Board unanimously supported the proposed evaluation process and instrument and appointed a Task Force as outlined by our Operating Guidelines: President and President-Elect, congregational leaders, and staff. Ian Cowie and I were a foregone conclusion; Kevin Lausch, Joanna Bliss, and Michael Solomon agreed to participate on the Task Force in service to the congregation. The Task Force fine-tuned the documents and procedures, wrote a cover letter, and set our timeline. The final documents were complete and ready to be printed by the middle of August. (Thank you, RK!) The envelopes were stuffed and the surveys mailed by the end of August.

By September 15, the due date, 70% of the surveys had been returned. That's a phenomenal return rate! Many of you took time to write detailed comments, which have considerably enhanced our understanding of the data. As promised, I was the only one who opened envelopes and the only one with access to the coding system. I used the coding system to match the number with the name and then immediately crossed out both with permanent black marker before tossing the survey into a pile. In that way, we were able to protect privacy while still being able call those whose names were still visible on the list.

Everyone on the Task Force worked to enter data into our spreadsheet and transcribe comments into a document – which was 25 pages long when we finished! We're a wordy bunch, but the insightful, thoughtful comments showed a dedication to UUTC and a willingness to work together to become the church we want to be.

We are now in the process of analyzing the data, with expert help from Sharon and Michael. This step has taken longer than I hoped because it has been much more complex than I expected. The Task Force has made an intentional decision to focus on quality rather than speed. We hope to finish up our analysis and produce a draft report by late October. After that, Ian and I will conference with Rev. Bob, and the three of us will come up with a proposed action plan. Task Force members will then present the report and action plan to the Board. The final step will be to present a summary of the report to the congregation. The entire process will be complete by the end of November.

Thanks to the congregation for their participation, and a special heap of gratitude to Ian, Kevin, Michael, and Joanna for their time and energy, lovingly given.

Questions or concerns? Please call or email — I'll be glad to talk with you.

In covenant, Alice

Retreat at The Mountain

Reflections by Michael Solomon & Ian Cowie

Michael: Heading to the [Mountain](#) at Highlands, NC for the first time to attend the UUTC Retreat, I anticipated a weekend in beautiful natural surroundings at 4,200 feet and an opportunity to spend quality time with my UUTC friends. Well, this past weekend far exceeded my expectations. Fellowship, tranquility, immersion in an ancient forest, learning more about each other, and discussing what more we want from UUTC were just some of what happened in those two days.



View from the Lodge (above & below)



Social hour

We were lodged and fed by a dedicated staff; Rev. Bob had an agenda of workshops, social time, and free time for us – from social hour at first arrival Friday to the Sunday service. The workshops were especially thoughtful, starting with sessions designed for each of us to share more with, and learn more about, each other, and ending with reflections on what about UUTC is wonderful that we want more of; all with a positive, upbeat tone. I left the Mountain refreshed and energized to help UUTC continue making a difference for its congregants and the

broader Transylvania County community, and to keep on nurturing the friendships with those I was blessed to spend time with this past weekend. I hope to be able to go again next year to see many more UUTC members and friends to take advantage of a priceless opportunity.

Ian: I paid little attention to the numerous announcements about the UUTC retreat. When brought up in conversation, I first checked the calendar before agreeing Vanessa and I should go. I packed a change of clothes, found a long sleeve shirt, two pairs of shoes and at the last minute threw the raincoat in the car. We drove across Western North Carolina finally arriving at The Mountain, UU's retreat and conference center near Highlands. As we settled in and had our first meal, I was still being pulled back home – because of a phone meeting I almost missed dinner!



Rev. Bob & Alice in the lead on a hike

Our first session was that evening. Rev. Bob provided guidance in answering our first question - "Where do we come from?" Our group of twenty shared personal items/artifacts that identified us. This was a great way to introduce ourselves.

Next morning arrived wet and much cooler. Morning sessions explored who we are. Several exercises brought us closer to answering this question and to better knowing ourselves and each other.

After lunch, the afternoon was a time to explore. Some left the mountain top and went to Highlands. They brought back their discoveries – fresh flowers. A few hiked the trails. Some visited the Farm Fest, a small gathering for the local



Michael & Vanessa

community to hold baby chicks, press apples for cider, and eat food grown on site. The soggy weather did not dampen our enthusiasm.

That evening, Rev. Bob got us to think outside of ourselves. As a church, where are we going? We met in small discussion groups then, shared ideas on how our church community can be closer connected.



Ian checks the damper

The retreat's overarching theme – *Where Do We Come From, Who Are We, Where Are We Going* (Hymn #1003, Singing the Journey) - comes from the French title of a famous oil painting by Paul Gauguin created in Tahiti in 1897 and 1898. The three groups of women, represent the three questions. The women with the child represent the beginning of life “Where Do We Come From?” The middle group represents the daily existence of adulthood “What Are We?” The old woman facing death is asking, “Where Are We Going?”



D'ou venons-nous, Paul Gauguin, Wikimedia Commons

Coming back home, I was refreshed and again refocused. Where is UUTC going? New norms create new challenges as we continually strive to be a positive change for ourselves and our community. I am excited about what we as a church can do. The question is how you will be a part of this new life?

One exercise of the retreat was the creation of a Cinquain poem. Five lines in this structure: a noun, 2 words modifying the noun, 3 “ing”

words related to the noun, a 4 word phrase, related, and a final synonym for the noun. You may have heard Ian’s poem during the service that day. Here’s another from the submissions, at right. We hope more of you will be able to join us next fall!

*Wind
gentle, fresh
rolling, twisting, flying
skipping through my being
Breath.*



Jingle Bells—Already!?!

Christmas Day falls on a Sunday this year, and UUTC will have its two traditional Christmas Eve services (an earlier family celebration and a later-evening service) on Saturday, December 24. We hope our minister and staff, along with Santa, will enjoy some well-deserved rest on Sunday, December 25.

The Worship Team is planning an informal, in-person observance for Christmas Day. We'd like to know:

- Are you planning to attend UUTC service on Christmas morning?
- Would you be willing to share a short reading, song, or personal story about this holiday, or another seasonal holiday of importance to you?
- Would you like to participate in singing traditional Christmas carols?
- Do you have other suggestions for a December 25 service that would be meaningful to you?

Please reply to Vanessa Cowie, Worship Team leader, at 155vcowie@gmail.com. Thank you!

Sponsored Projects

RK Young



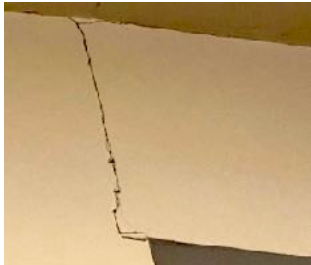
Why do we have “sponsored projects?” Well, because adopting a budget that truly factors in all annual expenses is not a place we have yet reached. When non-profits “trim” their budgets, what it usually means (outside of cutting staff) is deferred maintenance or an inability to invest in necessary infrastructure to maintain or advance the mission of the non-profit. We have made some progress— we now have a budget line for annual HVAC maintenance, for instance, but we have a ways to go.

So UUTC’s process has been for the Ministry Teams to request funding in this way to make it possible for them to meet their Functions, as defined by Team Operating Guidelines. This year, the master list had: replacement of PPA hearing assist packs (3), a complete sanctuary paint job including drywall repair, updating sanctuary lighting to LEDs to increase light without increasing heat/energy costs, outdoor security cameras to cover entrances and the Chalice House door, insulating blinds for the social hall, parking lot lights, choir chairs, a non-borrowed popup tent for Team initiatives and events, and coated metal picnic tables that don’t start rotting within 3 months of being placed on our property. **The colored grid to the left is how the voting fell on these items.**

By the time this vote was completed, the Board had already taken action on committing to the replacement of the parking lot lighting—an item that came in at \$9600. It was funded with Capital Fund monies... which takes that fund (outside of those funds earmarked for Building) down under \$1000, again. The Facilities Team, thanks to lower-than-expected bids, will fund the lighting upgrades for the sanctuary. I have purchased a tent of our own with Administrative funds. And we have been encouraged

to submit a bid for a hearing loop and PPA replacements from the Community Foundation of WNC thanks to our community programming offerings. So that item is now covered, as well (we believe).

Two items on the list had 100% consensus... all teams agreed that these are things that need to happen as soon as possible. Those two items were the painting and repair of the sanctuary (old bid was \$5,000, but I'm expecting an increase) and the outdoor security cameras (\$3,200). But, as you will already know based on the Board's Business page, the Board supports all of the remaining items as well — Social Hall insulating blinds (\$4500), choir chairs (min. \$2400) and coated metal picnic tables (between \$6500-\$9200.) Therefore, we are establishing liability lines (I'll explain that next) in the Capital Fund to allow for any who wish to support these projects to contribute specifically to these projects.



Broken seams of drywall

A liability line is the way we keep the books to ensure that if you donate money to paint the sanctuary... the money is spent to paint the sanctuary, even if the expense falls in a different fiscal year. The Board did add a line to their motion so that if a project is fully funded, any excess can go into the Capital fund to assist in funding other projects. But your money doesn't get spent until the project you desire to see is fully funded.

So here's the skinny on these remaining items. The sanctuary painting and repair will take more than two weeks... if we are fortunate enough to fund it by then, we will do this in January when attendance is impacted by weather, and heating will dry the paint quickly. The security cameras will probably reduce the trash being placed in our cans by others than ourselves (in other words, they will serve as deterrents), and we hope they will serve to protect LGBTQI youth who will be meeting at the Chalice House.



The last two Sundays have seen increasing attendance, so the comfortable blue chairs have had to be pulled back out of the foyer and placed back into the sanctuary. Choir chair purchases don't just benefit the choir with hymnal racks — they also free up chairs to be used in the Chalice House and in the foyer or social hall. The minimum order is 12 chairs (\$200 per chair) — Aesthetics, of course, would like us to order at least two complete rows to keep the look tidy. **They will NOT be pink.**

And finally, there are the picnic tables. Our traditional tables, besides being prone to rot, can be difficult for folks to navigate— the new ones would allow all to slide in from the side instead of having to climb over the seat to sit down. These would be round tables like you may have seen at Oskar Blues or some other spot. They are available from more than one manufacturer... the higher priced table has a 20 year warranty, the lower priced table (shown) has a 5 year warranty.



Coming soon — Black Friday. Then Cyber Monday. And finally, **Giving Tuesday**. Plan a gift to one of these projects! Checks should name the project in the memo line. E-giving options are coming soon.

WACKy: Women's Art Circle

Unconventional, Eccentric, Amusing...Jeanie's Way!

Join Jeanie Bernard —always a treat! —who will lead a circle of women to explore how playing with art can become a spiritual practice. No need to call yourself, or even see yourself as an “artist,” just be open to possibilities and bring your willing self.



The Circle will be limited to six women, but you are encouraged to put your name down after #6 anyway, because Jeanie will likely be offering another class after this first single day project process. This first offering will be on Friday, October 21st from 1:00-4:00 in the large classroom in the main building.

Our time together will focus on making Blessing Bowls... all materials provided ... sign up with all your curiosity ...the sign up is on the front counter at UUTC. Get to church early and get to that front counter!

DOING OUR PART

This is another thing your gifts support — our support of the UUA!

We rely on support from the UUA in many ways, and we are fortunate to be able to fund UUTC's pledge to our Association because of your generosity.

The pledge is based on a percentage of our budget and is not a measure of membership.



Dear Leader,

Every year, each congregation in the Unitarian Universalist Association is asked to give a financial contribution to support the wider movement and sibling congregations across our Association. This contribution supports the Annual Program Fund, which is the single largest source of income for the work of our UUA. It also strengthens the covenant among us.

Your congregation gave the **full amount requested** to the Annual Program Fund during this past fiscal year. **This means you are an Honor Congregation, honoring the covenant among and between our congregations.** THANK YOU!

Your giving is a concrete expression of our congregations' covenant with one another, and is a recognition that we are not alone, but are part of an Association of Congregations. This support allows the UUA to serve the diverse needs of the 1,006 member congregations across five regions. **Congregational giving through the Annual Program Fund (APF) makes the work of the UUA possible.**

Please display this Honor certificate somewhere prominent and share with your congregation my personal appreciation on behalf of all the congregations that your generosity benefits.

Your support strengthens Unitarian Universalism. No individual congregation can possibly tackle the challenges of our society alone; we need one another, and our values are amplified powerfully when we support one another. Thank you for your giving to the Annual Program Fund. You make so much possible.

With deep gratitude,

Rev. Susan Frederick Gray
President
Unitarian Universalist Association

October 2022 At UUTC



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sharing House is this month's Social Justice Giving		New to Soul Matters? Contact Rev. Bob to receive this month's materials. Discussion 9/23 after Coffee.		CRE and Nursery Care available during Sunday services.		Fall Work Day and Yard Sale
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10:00 service In-Person & livestreamed 3:30 Book Grp 5:30 pm BYOB at the RING	10 Caregivers Support Group 11:30 Grief Support Grp 4 Moral Mon. @Courthouse 5:30 Week of Peace	9 am Men's Grp Zoom 9-11 Grow Getters 11:30-1:00 Fellowship on the Green 4:00 NAACP Education Comm 4-5 Quiet Meditation	1:30- Women of UUTC 4:00 Choir Rehearsal 5:30 Wonderful Wednesday	2:00 Spiritual Explorers 3 pm French Conversation 4:00 A Course in Miracles	5:00 Emotional Centering	2 pm Freedom Festival
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
CHOIR SINGS 10:00 service In-Person & livestreamed 2:00 On Being	4 Moral Mon. @Courthouse 5:30 Week of Peace	9 am Men's Grp Zoom 9-11 Grow Getters 11:30-1:00 Fellowship on the Green 4-5 Quiet Meditation	1:15 Dream Grp 4:00 Choir Rehearsal	2:00 Spiritual Explorers 3:00 French Conversation 4:00 A Course in Miracles 5:30 Rainbow Alliance	5:00 Emotional Centering	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
CHOIR SINGS 10:00 service In-Person & livestreamed	10 Caregivers Support Group 11:30 Grief Support Grp 2 pm LHHH 4 Moral Mon. e 5:30 Week/Peace	9 am Men's Grp Zoom 9-11 Grow Getters 11:30-1:00 Fellowship on the Green 4-5 Quiet Meditation	1:30- Women of UUTC 5:30 Team Meeting Night	2:00 Spiritual Explorers 3 pm French Conversation 4:00 A Course in Miracles	CRE Camping at Davidson R. 5:00 Emotional Centering	CRE Camping at Davidson R Circle Dinner
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
CRE Camping at Davidson R 10:00 service In-Person & livestreamed 11:30 Soul Matters	4 Moral Mon. @Courthouse 5:30 pm Week of Peace	9 am Men's Grp Zoom 9-11 Grow Getters 11:30-1:00 Fellowship on the Green 4-5 Quiet Meditation	1:15 Dream Grp	2:00 Spiritual Explorers 3 pm French Conversation 4:00 A Course in Miracles 5:30 Board Mtg	5:00 Emotional Centering	Halloween Fest
30	31	November 1	2	3	4	5
10:00 service In-Person & livestreamed	10 Caregivers Support Group 11:30 Grief Support Grp 5:30 pm Week of Peace	9 am Men's Grp Zm 9-11 Grow Getters 11:30-1:00 Fellowship on the Green 4:00 NAACP Ed Com 4-5 Quiet Meditation		2:00 Spiritual Explorers 3 pm French Conversation 4:00 A Course in Miracles	5:00 Emotional Centering	