



wayfinding



Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity.

Simone Weil

Soul Matters Sharing Circle

This month we open the Gift of Generosity.

“Deep down we know the difference between giving and giving generously. The former is taken from our “extra.” The latter is taken from what is essential. It’s the difference between giving our loose change and giving of ourselves. And when you hand over a part of you to someone else, you’re tethered. Your vulnerability meets their vulnerability. You haven’t just helped; you’ve shown you care.”

Reach out to Rev. Bob or Kevin Lausch to get this month’s packet!

Social Justice Giving for November: The Haven

The Mission of The Haven is to assist families and individuals in crisis in Transylvania County by providing safe temporary refuge in a clean, comfortable shelter. Jill Beach, a member of UUTC, serves not only on our Board but also on the Board of The Haven.

“Many people will make their beds tonight in the woods of White Pine, Cathy’s Creek, Pisgah Forest and in cars scattered throughout the parking lots of Transylvania County. They have lost their homes and they have lost hope.” On average, 150 students each year in Transylvania Schools are either homeless or “precariously housed” (couch surfing).

You may have read in this week’s T Times of shelters that are no longer able to meet the need, for one reason or another. **Let’s support The Haven as strongly as we can to help as much as possible.**



Minutes & More

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

Present: Jill Beach, Ian Cowie, Vicki Held, Kay Webb and RK Young.



Minister's Report – Rev. Bob was among those other UUTC folks attending the World Homeless Day ceremonies at the Courthouse gazebo, and he greeted at the PowerUp! Dinner distribution at St. Philips' church on Oct. 22. He included Christian, Jewish, and Native American perspectives in the October services. And he officiated his son's wedding on October 28th— ask to see pictures!

Treasurer's Report – Mike Griffith reported that over half of the \$280,500 pledge amount has already been collected as of September 30, 2023; this puts total revenues well ahead of the anticipated quarterly budget. Regarding expenses, salaries, wages, and cost of ministry are about on budget; administrative costs are on target; utilities and maintenance are below budget; worship and lifetime RE are on budget.

Operations Report — RK shared that UUTC's onsite image backups of the financial records and the AV Mac's digital assets no longer fit in our Network Attached Storage (NAS). A motion to approve the \$2000 acquisition of greater NAS was approved. RK reported that a meeting with UUA Retirement specialist, Jackie Toone, confirmed that all retirement contributions have been met by UUTC, as required.

Old Business: Insurance Review Update – Ian reported that Church Mutual, UUTC's insurance provider, announced an increase of the deductible to \$10K and a premium increase of \$1637 to raise the total annual premium to \$7037. Treasurer Mike Griffith and Finance Committee member Rick Laws reviewed the current Church Mutual policy, and they recommend staying with Church Mutual for insurance coverage.

Old Business: Minister-Ministry Review Update – 96 individuals responded to the Minister/Ministry Review survey this year, compared to 118 responses in 2022. The data and survey comments have been entered into a spreadsheet and are being reviewed by the task force.

Old Business: Safety Task Force — Please see the article on Safety on page 7.

Old Business: Staff Holiday Bonuses — The Board agreed to allow congregational giving to this fund and to determine the size of bonuses after the deadline for donations (Nov. 26) has passed.

New Business: Restricted Reserve Fund — After some discussion, there was consensus by Board members to change the name of the Restricted Reserve Fund to Sustainability Fund to better communicate what the fund is used for. Last year, this fund had to be tapped to get through the year. A discussion and decision on reallocation of funds to replenish the Sustainability Fund was tabled until the November Board Meeting.

The next meeting of the Board is November 30, 2023 @ 5:30pm.



Generosity

Rev. Bob Renjilian

November is the month when Christy and I set aside all the donation requests into a basket, and then start to write checks to our favorite charities. It is a ritual so different from filling out Christmas wish lists for our family to consider for us, or Black Friday purchases to get great discounts on gifts for each other or the kids. We know that our circle of generosity is needed for folks we'll never see, or perhaps see passing on the street without our knowing we'd helped through some of the local agencies - and the national groups we support.

Locally, we're going to give a special boost to the amount we allocate for The Haven, as I learned on "World Homeless Day" in October that a major part of their funding has fallen through just recently. I've been there at the Haven while the UUTC Social Action Team attended to the gardens this summer and early Fall, and have met some residents. I have a sense this will be a difficult winter for more people to be struggling, and I'm alarmed that this one small piece of safety net needs an infusion of funds. Our generosity will very much matter.

Please keep an eye out for solicitation reminders from your favorite charities, and give generously. We're all part of this big circle, all of us interconnected, and every bit helps.

INTERFAITH SERVICE OF THANKS

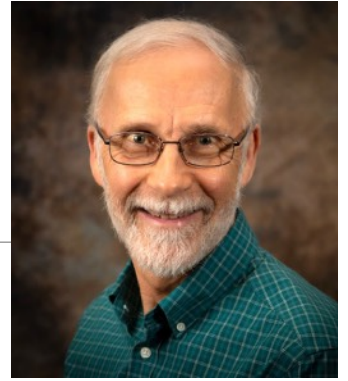
Tuesday, Nov. 21, 6pm

On the Tuesday evening before Thanksgiving we will host a community gathering for prayers of thanks from many congregations. I am still in the process of arranging details and invitations to various Christian, Jewish and Muslim representatives in Brevard, but have confirmations from a handful of them already. Our own choir will sing one piece on "Thanks" and I'm hoping for at least one other musical piece from another congregation. I've been told by longer-serving colleagues in Brevard that there used to be an ecumenical version many years ago, so I'm glad to be instigating a revival with a broader interfaith participation. I hope you will set aside an hour of your time that evening to be with us!

President's Corner

Ian Cowie

Share Your Story



I like to hear stories from UUTC members and friends. I like to learn how someone's journey brought them to our front door. I like to learn what may be the next adventure in their lifelong journey.

In the latest issue of UU World, UUA President Reverend Sofia Betancourt writes, "personal story rests at the heart of what we know about interdependence, justice, generosity, equity, pluralism, and transformation. It invites us to wrestle with how we center love and lean into our common values in everyday life."

Each month to begin board meetings I ask those sitting around the table to check in. It is a pause from their busy lives to reflect, to tell others how they feel, what thoughts they may be wrestling with, what tribulations they have encountered. It is a place of community to share stories.

Betancourt believes that when we share ourselves our stories may teach us something we could not have learned in any other way. But, she cautions there is risk telling our story.

"Taking such risk requires trust," she points out, "it requires being in a place where we know we will be listened to, and held, in love. A place that allows us to finish the telling stronger than we began it, because our community will know us more fully, and love us just as much."

Each time I enter UUTC I find a strong, vibrant community of trust and love. I want to engage others and learn their stories. To listen to stories and come away stronger because of what is shared.

Think how you can make a change. With your next trip to church for a service or mediation group or choir practice or team meeting, be the one who takes time and listens to others.

President Betancourt says this give and take is one of the greatest gifts that we offer to each other. It lives and breathes in our UU tradition. "It is the heartbeat that grounds our values and guides us in our work for justice. Let us hold one another's faithful witness with compassion and respect so that our stories can guide us in the days to come."

Editor's Note:

If you have trauma associated with sharing, you may wish to start in the Women's Group or Thursday Men's Meeting, where facilitators ensure you are in a safe space, and you can share your stories in a covenant circle that will not betray your trust. Contact Trisha for meeting dates and times.

Staff Holiday Fund

Would you like to make a donation to the Annual Staff Holiday Fund? Funds will be distributed in early December. Click [HERE](#) to donate via PayPal or Credit Card. You can also make a contribution by check -- just put "Holiday Fund" in the memo line. You can drop your check in the basket or use the Donations box on the front counter.



THANK YOU!

Thank you to the Board for the lovely hand-made stole presented to me in the service on October 8. I have been wearing it each Sunday since, and even brought it to Ohio with me to show family members at the wedding!

—Rev. Bob

Understanding Trauma The path to healing

Join us as we discuss the causes and effects of trauma and explore pathways to resiliency and healing

Sponsored by CARE Coalition

Wednesday, November 15th

7 pm

Doors open at 6:30

Unitarian Universalists of
Transylvania County
24 Varsity St

New Groups Forming at UUTC

Genealogy Group

Meeting on Thursdays starting at 12:30 in the Social Hall. Join Erin Lausch and explore your ancestry every Thursday from 12:30-2:30 in the social hall. Bring your own device- laptop or tablet. Everyone welcome, beginners through advanced!

Earth-Centered/Pagan Group

Pagans believe that nature is sacred and that the natural cycles of birth, growth and death observed in the world around us carry profoundly spiritual meanings. Human beings are seen as part of nature, along with other animals, trees, stones, plants and everything else that is of this earth. (*#CarbonBased*) An Organizational meeting is taking place on Friday, November 17th at 4:00 at the Chalice House.

Fellowship Opportunities-Time to Know Each Other!



Souper Sunday is a kid-friendly, congregational shared meal. It relies on volunteers who cook or bake and on others to attend and enjoy their gifts. It's a great time to sit down with someone you don't know as well and have a conversation. This event happens every 'Second Sunday' of the month. **Our next Souper Sunday is November 12th..** If you can bring soup or some other simple item to share for that day, please sign up this Sunday at the front counter—and thanks!



Fellowship On Tap is typically a “pop up” event, but has also been held in restaurants, where we need to set up reservations. Since Covid, we hunt for venues that are open air, usually in Transylvania County. **To be aware of these, you will want to join the Fellowship on Tap group in Realm,** where text and email messages are sent from. We shoot for at least monthly events. **Not yet on Realm? Drop by the office with your device and let's get you set up!**



Wonderful Wednesdays are “Dinner and a Program,” with a more relaxed meal, prepared by volunteers. Dinner starts at 5:30pm, and the program starts at 6:30, leaving folks time to chat more than they typically have on a Sunday after church. You must register for dinner on Realm or at the front counter. Our next Wonderful Wednesday is **November 8th.** This month we have a **concert with John Gage.**

Small Groups!

Women's Group: Led by Janice Canon and Sandra Kirkman, this group meets on the **first and third Wednesdays of the month from 1:30 to 3:00pm in the sanctuary.** All discussion is kept in confidence.

Book Group: Exactly as described, this group selects a title, reads the book, and discusses it. **Meets monthly on the 1st Sunday.** To get on the email list, reach out to Krista Moore. **Meets in the foyer.**

Quiet Meditation Group: Exactly as described, this group meets weekly **in the Chalice House** on **Tuesdays at 5PM.** Arrive early so that meditation can start right on time.

A Course in Miracles: A Course In Miracles (ACIM) is a very practical approach to changing one's perception in order to move from physical “sight” to true “vision” as seen by the Christ already in each of us. All are welcome. **Meets Thursdays at 4PM in the Chalice House.**

Dream Group: This covenant group requires commitment, and you need previous experience in dream work. Meets in the Chalice House **on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 1:15pm.** Contact Carol Flake.

Thursday Men's Meeting: This group meets **in the Social Hall weekly at 9AM on Thursdays.** Drop ins welcome! This group shares together in person only. This is a covenant circle—confidentiality expected.

What is Safety, Really?

RK Young

The Safety Task Force has had a couple more meetings and has been getting a lot more data to work with. It would probably not surprise you to know that for insurance companies, wind and storm damage is what costs them the most money. But would you have guessed that 50% of all church injury claims are from... falls? And, as Rev. Bob has told us from the pulpit, greater than 50% of 911 calls from churches have to deal with heart attack or cardiac arrest.

This and other data really got discussion going about how a safety Team could have the most impact. While the Task Force recognizes that our building creates a number of challenges, necessary components of any safety Team would include a) being on the lookout for tripping hazards, b) providing members of UUTC with the types of support that make them less likely to have a fall, and c) having training annually to better prepare the congregation as a whole to be able to respond to a cardiac or fire emergency. Eight minutes waiting for emergency personnel is too long. The Task Force believes there are many common sense interventions we can implement to make safety part of the daily practice at UUTC.

However, a Task Force is not a standing group. It dissolves after it has met its charge from the Board. So the first step in meeting an ongoing need is to create a new Ministry Team (like Worship, Facilities, Social Action, etc.) dedicated to the health and welfare of our members and their children. The Function of that Team is being considered, and some initial procedures of the Team are being put into place (**like having an annual fire drill — get ready for December 3rd!**). As a Team, **it would need to determine an annual operating budget to submit to the Treasurer** for inclusion in the next UUTC Budget. For that, it needs to plan what it wants to do. Since Teams have to present budgets to the Treasurer in January, we need to build this team, pronto!

This new Team will be known as the **Sentinels**. You are probably all aware of the habit of meerkats to have periods of activity when they stand watch to alert others to danger. We're asking for a large enough team of people so that we can have two people a week, just like ushers, who can be a watchful presence on one Sunday a month each. The Team would schedule AED/CPR trainings, maybe let members in who overslept and didn't get to church on time. They might set up a yoga class, or dance class, to help build core strength. Who knows what they will dream up?

If you are a bit of an introvert, you may be an ideal Sentinel... because you are less likely to be in conversation with people! You certainly don't need to be built like The Rock, either—you just need good or corrected vision. Like our Meerkat friend, here. But everyone is invited to be part of this Team. Formally, or not. To look for the spilled water, the trip-threatening extension cord, the choking hazard, etc. We can all be Sentinels... but a Team is more effective. **Please email or call RK if you are willing to watch out for your tribe, and thank you!**



We've Got This. ;)



Health, Welfare & Welcoming

RK Young

Back in the day when I first began working for UUTC...well, it was a turbulent time. Long-time minister (now Emeritus) Ernie Mills had just retired, we had an interim minister coming in, and we needed to put together a packet to try and recruit a new settled minister. Since UU ministers don't grow on trees, it gets competitive.

It's times like those when you take a hard look around and think "Ye Gods! What a Mess!" Our entrances were not ADA compliant, the exterior bulbs and the parking lot lights were half out, we had carpet peeling up in the classroom and nursery, and our library was housed in broken-down particle-board bookcases. All the lighting was florescent, with that lovely greenish cast. The kitchen appliances were mismatched, and Wonderful Wednesday dishes had to be completed by hand because one dishwasher was insufficient. That was at the start of 2016.



"Recruitment" photo of classroom.

The first thing to get dealt with was the appliance "shortage." The Men's Group took the lead on this issue and made Wonderful Wednesday much easier for our hostesses through the addition of a second dishwasher and larger capacity refrigerator. After that, the concrete work to create ADA compliant egress from our front and back doors got handled. Curbs can be a real safety threat as we get older, and at least one person had fallen because of a curb and non-existent lighting.



Curbed entrance being cut out.

After this messy stage, cabinetry was installed in both the classroom and foyer. One to hold children's programming needs, the other to move our library to a place of prominence— and out of what is now our nursery, providing more space for children. In the classrooms and nursery, old carpet was removed, and a surface more conducive to proper sanitation was installed. New bulbs were installed everywhere. All of that happened within the span of about 18 months. For about five years from that time, we slowly replaced the florescent lighting with LED recessed fixtures, which are less harmful to eye health and considerably better looking.



New appliances going in.

When Covid hit, we were forced to think about indoor air quality, since not a single window in the building can be opened. All in all, around \$85,000 has been spent in capital improvements which have made UUTC a safer and more appealing place to be for all of us. Last year, we installed the hearing loop—which, by making it easier to hear, reduces cognitive decline. Sometimes, "luxuries" are how we care for one another.



Library crammed in current nursery.



Rear curbing removed.



Curled carpet comes out.

All this to say that thoughtful facilities management and the investment of members of this congregation continue to move UUTC forward on issues of health, welfare and making us all feel more welcome—while making better use of our spaces.