



wayfinding

You are remembered for the rules you break.

Douglas
MacArthur



Soul Matters Sharing Circle

This month we break out the Gift of Heritage.

“Ancestors remind us that we are *part of something larger*. Even *obligated* to something larger, because as much as we need these larger webs and stories, they need us too. Ancestors say: Whether or not the sacred stories and values stay relevant, depends on you! Whether or not each other’s histories are told truly, depends on you! Whether the family cycles of health are strengthened and family cycles of dysfunction are stopped depends on you! Whether or not that arc is bent back toward justice, is up to you! Ancestors plop these incomplete and intimidating endeavors in our laps and say, ‘We’ve done our part and taken it as far as we can. The

next step of the journey is in your hands.’” Reach out to Rev. Bob or Kevin Lausch to get this month’s packet!

Social Justice Giving for October: Sharing House

Sharing House connects with residents of Transylvania County to provide crisis assistance and programs that cultivate lasting solutions to hunger and poverty. We offer food and fresh produce, gently-used clothes, rent and utility assistance, household goods, camping equipment, hot showers, a safe place to share stories of struggle, and a refuge of social interaction and empowerment.

Why do we need Sharing House? Rent is unaffordable for 45 percent of renters in Transylvania County and 35 percent of residents are considered low-income (<\$55,500 for a family of four). From 2022 to 2023, the costs for housing increased by 31 percent, food by 16 percent, and heating sources by 46 percent. Since wages have not kept pace with the cost of living, our neighbors struggle to stay in their homes.



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, Glenn Cockerham, Ian Cowie, Mike Griffith, Vicki Held, Phillip Thomason, Kay Webb, Rev. Bob Renjilian and RK Young.



Minister's Report – Rev. Bob was among those involved with the NAACP religious leaders group in addressing concerns over the posting of racist/anti-LGBTQ signs in downtown Brevard, resulting in a letter published in the Transylvania Times. On the issue of Social Justice, his service message “Radical Hospitality” urged UUTC to widen its circles. (more @ the Board's link)

Treasurer's Report – Mike Griffith shared the September Treasurer's Report with Board members prior to the meeting. Some expenses are relatively low, but most are very near budget.

Operations Report — RK reviewed safety measures that have already been completed and updated the Board on the progress of the appointed Safety Task Force. She reported that she and Chelsea would be zooming with Jackie Toone of the UUA to work out what needs to be done to “right” retirement contributions that may have been missed.

Old Business: Recommended Revisions to Bylaws – The Board voted to accept the recommendations to the Bylaws. Bylaw revisions must be voted on by the Congregation; a Forum will be held Feb. 15, 2024, with a Special Congregational Meeting the Sunday following for these Bylaw revisions to take effect.

Old Business: Minister-Ministry Review Update – Ian reported that **only 33%** of the ministry review surveys had been returned, and that the Task Force would begin phone calls next week.

Old Business: Safety Task Force — Phillip updated the Board on the activity of the Safety Task Force. Members of the group include Alexia Blackwell, Beth Clauss, Ian Cowie, John Dreier, Kevin Lausch, Rev. Bob Renjilian, Bart Renner, Phillip Thomason (Chair), and RK Young. This group will review an assessment conducted by a previous Task Force at its next meeting and begin to propose plans for implementation.

New Business: Staff Holiday Bonus — Ian reminded Board members of the need to make decisions on holiday bonuses earlier than was done in previous years. During discussion of staff holiday bonuses, Vicki suggested allowing congregational members to make donations to help fund the bonuses. Members agreed that opening the funding of bonuses to donations is appropriate and suggested accepting donations on two consecutive Sundays, dates to-be-determined.

The next meeting of the Board is October 26, 2023 @ 5:30pm.



Finding New Ideas

Rev. Bob Renjilian

September provided UUTC with some new opportunities for involvement, such as the return of the Spiritual Explorers, a new ARE course from Hilly Bernard, gardening with the Social Action team at The Haven, and a UU Family Camp Out. We also had an attempt towards another Wonderful Wednesday, thwarted by COVID-19, but don't worry we'll have more in the future.

After a hiatus last year, I offered a re-boot of Soul Matters discussions on either a Sunday after church or (new) a Tuesday... but it didn't draw any interest in September. That's ok, we'll give it one more try and if that isn't what folks want I'll happily apply my leadership to a different course or discussion. I know how important Soul Matters was during the pandemic, but perhaps it is indeed time to shift to new ideas!

The other opportunity in September that drew nearly two dozen UUTC folks was the retreat at The Mountain. Wonderful camaraderie and beautiful setting - and this year we included a fascinating UU history presentation by visiting scholar, Mark Harris, in the mix. But I've told all the participants we won't be doing it again, at least not the way it has been done over a weekend. I've come to the conclusion that our efforts might be better if we planned a mid-week retreat, rather than a weekend, especially as members kept telling me they'd love to go but that weekends were busy for them. I'd love to have more of our UUTC family engaged, so let me know if this new idea would be something you'd like!

We've got folks stepping forward with other new ideas. Keep an eye on the UUpdates. Sometimes we'll highlight options on Sunday during announcements, too. This place is the busiest I've seen since arriving, and RK tells me it is even busier than pre-COVID. We'll keep adding new things and sunsetting those activities that no longer have involvement.

Thanks for being a part of UUTC! See you at church!

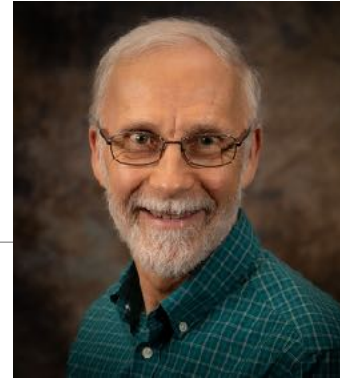
"If I wanted to make a difference... Wishing for things to change wouldn't make them change. Hoping for improvements wouldn't bring them. Dreaming wouldn't provide all the answers I needed. Vision wouldn't be enough to bring transformation to me or others. Only by managing my thinking and shifting my thoughts from desire to deeds would I be able to bring about positive change. I needed to go from wanting to doing."

— John C. Maxwell

President's Corner

Ian Cowie

Exploring Covenant



Live your values aloud, not alone. Our open-minded, open-hearted spiritual communities help people lead lives of justice, love, learning and hope.

As Unitarian Universalists we live our values to build a better world.

What ties us together is the promise to focus on how we treat one another than to focus on specific beliefs. UU's live in covenant. Developing a covenant with one another helps clarify expectations and create a safe environment for congregations. Covenant is Latin for "come together." It is a promise from the heart.

Covenants help members and friends to respect and hear each other. Creating and agreeing to a covenant can be an extremely effective tool for setting guidelines and building trust.

A covenant is the silk that joins our congregations, communities, and individuals together in a web of interconnection. We are a promise making, promise breaking, promise re-making people. We need to practice to make covenant happen. Covenants are not meant to be easy. They are meant to be aspirational. They are meant to bring out the best in us.

And we will fall short. We will break covenant. But a covenant isn't truly working unless we can break it, make a correction, and try again.

Just because we have a covenant doesn't mean that we will never be hurt by others. It means that we promise to respond lovingly, patiently, and kindly when we are. It means that we will put the goals of the community and our ideals for what it could be above our own personal vendettas. It means that we forgive and restore.

Our board of trustees has a covenant which they approved in September. They promise, in part, to work as a team, foster healthy relationships, model professionalism, commit to our vision and be aware of the sacredness of what they do.

We need to be acquainted with our covenant for it is the foundation in how we cultivate, sustain and create working relationships.

Editor's Note:

UUTC's Covenant is overly long and hasn't been updated for years. Your Board of Trustees has reaffirmed a Board Covenant dating from 2016, but the Congregational Covenant appears to predate that document. To see our current Covenant of the Congregation, follow this [LINK](#). Want to be part of revision? Email your administrator!

Putting the Action in Social Action

We are hopeful that you have completed your 2023 surveys on the Ministry at UUTC and have mailed them or stuffed them into the locked wooden box on the front counter at UU. Or, at least, you WILL be doing that as soon as possible! Because now...

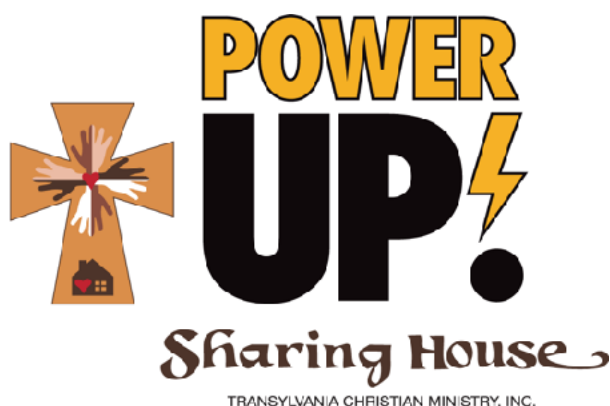


We have a NEW survey! This one is very open-ended, with lots of space for thought and words. It's an online survey, but it was created by Social Action using [Survey Monkey](#), and is super easy to use. I was using a tablet when I filled this out. If you need a paper copy, they will be on the counter—but the survey response fields seem to have lots and lots of room, so, if you like to be complete in your answers, you may wish to use the online version. Printed, this is a single page, with just six questions.

It is important that you give this at least 10 minutes. The Social Action Team wants to know what is important to you, which organizations you **have** or **are** serving with, who you donate to (cash or non-cash donations)... ALL THE THINGS. When they know what is really important to you, they will be better able to select “the work.” Work that they know is important to this congregation, because you told them it was.

Served on a Board? They want to know. Regularly take the kids older clothes to SAFE? They want to know. Donate to all UUTC's charitable organizations? Let them know that, too. Do you have certain organizations that get more of your money? Tell them. This is not about the amounts you give, it is about how important your selected agencies are to you and your vision of justice in community.

Please don't put this off — filling it out will go really quickly, as you think about who you support and why they are important to you. Just do it—Now!



On that note, it's time to get rolling on **POWER UP!** Last year, the event raised \$31,761 dollars to help our community. The event is sponsored by the Brevard Jewish Community, UUTC, and St. Phillips Episcopal Church. Meals are prepared at St. Phillips, UUTC provides brownies, and we all help the event go smoothly, providing traffic control, handing out meals, etc.

This year, new Members Gary Chodoroff & Wendy Hillebrand are new helpers from UUTC for **POWER UP.** They will be working with “old hand” Sharon Moya to make sure that UUTC meets its commitments. Speaking of which — **THANK YOU TO**

OUR BROWNIE BAKERS! WHAT A TURNOUT! There is still time to [sign up for a meal](#) — where else can you drive through for a “home cooked” meal?

Thanks for your support!

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 October 8th.** 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 **October 11th.** This month we will hear about earthquakes, which could be quite relevant since Brevard has its own Fault. Mark your calendar!

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.

Safety Task Force—Reconvened

Back in late 2019, a group led by then-President Joyce Henneberry was considering campus safety at UUTC and identifying areas of weakness, concern or strength. They had just come to the place of implementation in February of 2020 when Covid arrived. While we did get the new egress doors the Fire Marshall wanted us to have, we have the air exchange system to protect us from airborne disease, and we now have an AED, an awful lot of what the Safety Group was preparing for was, shall we say, *project interruptus*.

So now a new Task Force has been convened by the Board to pick up this baton and continue the work. They will be bringing in public safety experts to evaluate the campus and provide suggestions that their evaluations determine to be good practice. While they will be getting lots of expert feedback, the Task Force really needs to hear your thoughts, as well. What would make you feel more secure in this space, what would make you feel worse, what would you consider to be good safety practice, both on Sundays and at special events on campus.

The Task Force members are Phillip Thomason, Alexia Blackwell, Beth Clauss, John Dreier, Bart Renner, Kevin Lausch, RK Young and Ian Cowie. Send them an email, corner them on Sunday – but DO get involved in this discussion. We want you to feel safe and fully able to participate in the life of UUTC—indoors, outdoors, during daylight and after dark.

*CPR/AED Training October 22nd – **4 slots are left!** If you'd like to be one of those that can prevent a death due to heart attack, please [email Trisha Wesley](#). She will put you on the training list!



Not everyone stuck around for the photo!

coordinated the walk, and several members of the congregation participated, as well as folks from the area. Those who took part expressed that the guided meditation had been intensely moving, and the fact that people from 160 countries worldwide made the event even more meaningful.

The meditation exercise used a recording prepared in advance for Walkers. Participants downloaded the recording prior to the walk and then played it through headphones for a very immersive experience.

Quiet Meditation Group Walks for the World

On Saturday, September 23rd at 10 am, a group of 11 gathered at the picnic tables outside the Chalice House to participate in a simultaneous world-wide “Walk for the World.” The event was a guided, walking meditation sponsored and offered by Dr. Joe Dispenza, a chiropractor-turned-neuroscientist whose life's work has been devoted to healing the planet and those who live in/on it.

Joanna Bliss and Judith Moore



160 Countries!

HalloweenFest!

It's the time of year when we celebrate Halloween the way only a County named Transylvania can celebrate! As we have for the last two years, UUTC will have a booth at HalloweenFest. Staff is holding down the fort for the purpose of ticket sales, **but we really need your help in saying hi to kids, and handing out candy** so that we are free to hustle the ticket sales. PLEASE COME IN COSTUME. ;)

What ticket sales? Well! For the third year, we are raffling an "urban utility" e-bike. Not racing, not permitted on mountain trails, but beefy and able to haul. This e-bike has a 750watt motor, pedal assistance at the level you choose, and even a throttle, which your administrator finds especially lovely when cranking back up to cross the street. This year's model is much as you see here, except it will have fenders and a front-mounted basket for carrying your haul from Bracken Mountain Bakery and Highland Books. It will also make an open-mouth-awesome gift for those teenagers in your life.



Tickets are a mere \$10, and we will sell only 488 of them (that being the precise number of what is leftover from last year). We're having a cash or check presale at UUTC on Sunday, October 8th (Souper Sunday!). Funds from this raffle go towards our Children's Religious Exploration programming. After that, we will open up the online ticket sales.

But wait! There's more! You have the option on this year's ticket to select **"Wheels To Work"** for Sharing House, if you don't really want an e-bike, but you'd like to support our kids. AND, you can get 10 tickets for only \$90 if you purchase them on Souper Sunday! The bike will be on campus by next Sunday so you can check out it's big juicy tires for softening the road and it's highly adjustable seat. The RadRunner, from RadPower Bikes, lets the rider sit in a more erect manner, not leaning way over the handlebars, making it easier to keep an eye on road conditions. Last year's auction bike, also by RadPower Bikes, was so enjoyed by last year's winner than he bought one for his wife to ride.



Mini Membership Class!

We had some folks who had a conflict with the date of the last Membership Class... maybe you were one of them? Or maybe you're one of those who prefers shorter meetings? Either way, now is your chance!

In honor of Halloween, this mini orientation will be on Friday, October 13th, from 10am to 12:15pm. If you want to hang out afterwards, bring a sandwich!

Membership means different things to different people, but if you're one of those who feels deeply connected to this community, or think that your judgment calls you to vote on issues before the congregation, or just feel like you've found "your people" — reach out to administrator@uutc.org, so we can be sure to send you a proper invitation. Susan Slocum and Rev. Bob will lead the class.

Attending a class is not, in an of itself, a commitment. But if you're curious, why not show up? Find out what makes UUs tick, and about this congregation, in particular. Short and sweet!

Fall Retreat at The Mountain

"I especially liked the presentation on UU History."

"Loved the focus on Vision, and opportunities to do things off campus." "I liked the Saturday morning small group exercise —it was a really rich discussion." "I loved ALL of Kevin's sessions!"

"Conversations at Happy Hour — some good individual conversations with people I do not usually get to talk to."

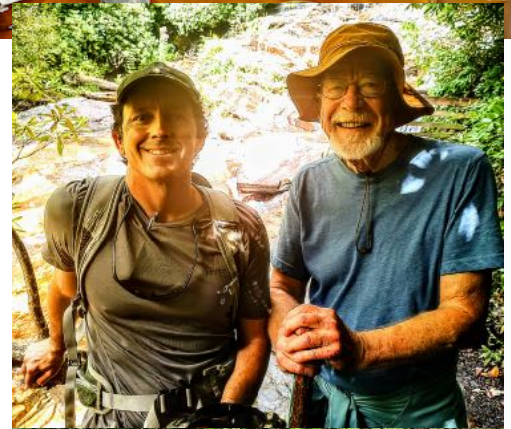
"Meals and staff were great!"

"Appreciated so many good vegetarian and vegan options."

"We enjoyed the empathy workshop!" "The location was idyllic." "Loved the small group work." "I loved taking photos from the top of the tower and the decks at the Lodge!"

"I'd like an additional small group discussion or two to give people more time to share their thoughts." "Mostly, I love deepening our relationships with the heart of the church community during our times in retreat."

Do you want to return to The Mountain? "YES!!" "It was a good mix of getting to know one another (including at meals) and strengthening our commitment to UU."





Covenantal Relationship

RK Young

“It (Covenant) provides one pathway to spiritual growth, leads us to engage with one another openly, honestly, and respectfully, and helps to strengthen our UUTC community.” This text is pulled from the introduction to UUTC’s current Congregational Covenant, linked on page 4 of this edition of the WayFinding.

The UUA has a whole section under “Governance for Congregations” on [Covenant](#)— it is that important to the healthy functioning of congregations.

Covenant is embedded in everything we do. Inside our hymnals is the Covenant most of us will recognize most quickly — it contains our 7 Principles. I fully admit that this is the covenant that I find most memorable. There’s another, however, that the choir sings from time to time, based on the Williams Covenant, which many congregations recite together:

*Love is the Doctrine of this church,
The quest of truth is its sacrament,
And service is its prayer.
To dwell together in peace,
To seek knowledge in freedom,
To serve human need,
To the end that all souls shall
Grow into harmony with the Divine—
Thus do we covenant with each other and with God.*

Kimberley Debus, over at FarFringe.com, has a wonderful [post](#) on this idea of covenant, meditating out from the Williams Covenant and a bit of discussion on the differences between Old Testament God and the socialist bleeding heart liberal dirty hippie named Jesus. And then into UU history. And into why covenant is both a noun and a verb. Covenant is a process, a call to generosity, both obligation and blessing, and “a bit audacious.” It’s an excellent post, truly.

Currently, at home, I am watching my 7th Principle covenant, because we are in the season of migration, and that calls for keeping the lights invisible to the insects and birds outside. We use blackout curtains to accomplish most of this, and Dark Sky fixtures outside when I have to turn those lights on to take out the trash. But this is the easy stuff.

In Debus’ column, she speaks of a bad week (the week Robin Williams died) in which she was “overwhelmed with grief, frustration, anger, and fear.” And she couldn’t see how her covenantal faith made any difference.

And then others reached out to her, supporting her on social media. Two ministers reached out, encouraging self-care and rest— a couple hours at the beach. “And I was transformed. I could go from overwhelmed to determined, from scared to focused. I could take those next steps knowing good people have my back, who listen to me and trust that their support does not diminish but rather increases their own selves.” Seriously, you should read the whole post.

This is the part of faith communities that is so essential— this keeping of covenant **with other people**. Because that is the hard part, and it’s what keeps communities from moving into despair, anger and bad governance. Covenant “begins when we listen. And it calls us to engage.” (Debus)

We will all fail sometimes. But beloved communities are made of nothing less... the covenant, and the second effort.