



wayfinding

Until we embrace and welcome back the scared, flawed and tender parts of ourselves with the kindness and forgiveness we so generously give to others, we will never be whole. We will never be home.

Rev. Scott Toyler



Soul Matters Sharing Circle

A new year of Soul Matters begins this month! Rev. Bob is providing two opportunities for an introduction to this Covenant Circle — the first on **Sunday, Sept. 24 from 11:15 to noon**, and the second on **Tuesday, Sept. 26 from 11:30-12:30** (and you are welcome to bring your lunch). This gives you an opportunity to figure out if this nationwide curriculum, which also provides the themes for Sunday worship, is a good fit for you.

Soul Matters packets guide your journey each month, with exercises in which you have both choice and challenge. One option that you can see each month, is based in music. Others are work centered on quotes, or interviews, or poems or questions. These exercises are rich with potential. Here is an example of just one question (these questions are very diverse, so don't imagine that this embodies

the spirit of all of them): *Who welcomed you in when you needed it most? How has that gift changed you? What would you say to the person if you had the chance?*

Join Rev. Bob on either of these two dates and enjoy the Sharing Circle!

Social Justice Giving for August: The Family Place

This is the first year that The Family Place has been selected as one of our monthly Social Justice Giving opportunities. With locations in Brevard and Rosman, The Family Place has become a vital link for the support of families in Transylvania County.



The Family place strengthens families and helps build resiliency through support, education, and community building.

WHERE FAMILIES MEET AND GROW.

The Family Place exists to support families in Transylvania County by providing learning experiences within the family environment, the community, and among peers. Through positive parenting education and adult/child interactive opportunities, we provide resources to help families grow and strengthen relationships, encourage nurturing and emotional support within the home, and assist the development of social and emotional health.

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 led two of the Thursday Men's Group in-person sessions; he attended the Chamber of Commerce and the Rainbow Alliance meetings; he joined Social Action Team meetings at the Haven as they promoted UUTC involvement in their community garden; he attended the reception for the new school superintendent at the Mary C. Jenkins center. *(more @ the Board's link)*

Treasurer's Report – Mike Griffith shared the August Treasurer's Report with Board members prior to the meeting. There was no July Financial Report, as some expenses have not yet been accumulated and entered. Pledge revenues show the expected early-year higher-than-budget trend, as some pledges were paid in the previous fiscal year and have just now been entered in the current fiscal year.

Operations Report – In the area of Space Use, RK reported that Common Cause NC will use UUTC facilities to host a "#UniteNC Town Hall" meeting on September 6, paying our standard use fee to offset AV costs. In the area of Safety, she reported that UUTC will take advantage of BRCC's launch of coursework for Church Safety in September. Kevin Lausch will attend the introductory course to test it's worth for our campus.

Old Business: Recommended Revisions to Bylaws – Recommendations will be presented for Board consideration by the Administration Committee in September.

Old Business: Minister-Ministry Review Update – Ian updated members on the first meeting of the Minister/Ministry Review Task Force. The Task Force reviewed documents used in the previous year's assessment and established a timeline for this year's review process, with the intent to complete the evaluation by November 1st.

New Business: Treasurer-Elect Position – Ian announced that, since the July meeting, Victoria Kerr had contacted him to resign as Treasurer-Elect. Per Bylaws, it is the Board's responsibility to appoint a UUTC member to fill the vacated position and complete the term of Treasurer-Elect for 2023- 2024, with the expectation that this individual will be a nominee for Treasurer in 2024-2025.

New Business: Safety Task Force – President-Elect, Phillip Thomason, agreed to chair the Safety Task Force. To provide direction, Ian made a motion to direct the Safety Task Force **to review current policy and procedures that make the UUTC campus safe and to make policy and procedure recommendations for maintaining and increasing protection of all who enter the UUTC campus.**

The next meeting of the Board is October 28, 2023 @ 5:30pm.



Welcome!

Rev. Bob Renjilian

I like the feeling of anticipation with this September start-up. We've got a new book to discuss in Spiritual Explorers, Children's RE classes starting, a reboot of the Soul Matters discussion group, a new Adult RE class launching, Choir rehearsals back on the schedule, the retreat at The Mountain, and more. It is as if the whispers in the air are encouraging "we're ready to go!"

I'm also embracing the welcoming we've been doing on Sundays and in our small groups. I'm anticipating the new member recognition ceremony later this month, and the newcomers to our small groups. This congregation has been a much needed destination for folks who hadn't known us before, and provided a welcoming reunion for those who'd been around in the past and just now are venturing back.

When we gather at Coffee Hour, **I'd like us to continue our welcome.** I'm the type of person who likes open circles - if a newcomer wants to join a conversation it is so much easier to slip into a gap in the circle, rather than looking at all our backsides. Please leave spaces in your conversations and in your clustering so that someone else can join in - or even better start a new encounter by walking up to folks who are on their own.

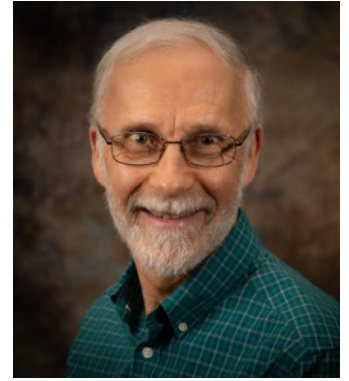
The Soul Matters packet this month (which will inform some of my sermons, and is for home study and optional discussion group) explores "The Gift of Welcome." Those exercises that catch my attention are the ones that stretch me to be more welcoming of various parts of myself. One of the optional exercises is to sit with some questions to unlock some "ah ha" moments. The questions include (just a sample): What's one of the biggest changes you've welcomed into your life that few people know about? Has welcoming change gotten easier or harder as you've grown older? Tell about a time that you welcomed a new piece of music into your life? Why was it helpful that this piece of music "knocked on our door" at just the right time? Tell about self-acceptance: What part of you is the hardest for you to welcome with open arms? The question about music led me to think about pop songs I'd purchase (starting with 45's as an adolescent, and now downloading from the iTunes Store as an adult). When my young heart was opening to love and relationships that got reflected in my music choices, later I'd choose instrumental pieces which welcomed the complex thoughts and feelings of adulthood, or a song about feeling awful but then getting up again and welcoming the bravery of resiliency. Feel free to reach out and ask for a packet if expanding the circle of welcome within yourself would be worthwhile.

Welcome to the energy and community. Welcome to the chance to expand your circles of conversation. Welcome to a place where we're in favor of expanding our acceptance of self and others as part of our spiritual growth.

See you at UUTC!

President's Corner

Ian Cowie



Rev. Margaret Weis wrote in her piece, “The Church Has Left the Building:”

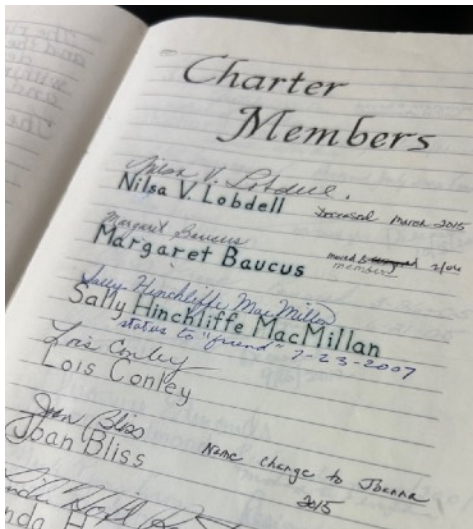
The church is not simply a building, a steeple, a pew.

The church is the gathering together of all the people, and experiences, and fear, and love, and hope in our resilient hearts; gathering, however we can, to say to the world: welcome, come in, lay down your heartache, and pick up hope and love.

For the church is us—each and every one of us—together, a beacon of hope to this world that so sorely needs it.

The heart of our UUTC community comes from the friends and members we see each Sunday or listen to their concerns over coffee or bump into while grocery shopping. The church is us.

Being part of UUTC, you share your life to enrich others. Everyone brings their individuality, their history, their creativity, their unique perspectives and dreams. We each work hard to fully accept and embrace our differences. We all want nothing better than to help each other find our niche, both spiritually and in a community sense.



Over the last weeks, I witnessed many new members who signed the book. As the pen left ink on each line, I felt a strong sense of UUTC history continuing. Each person and all those before them were making a commitment to this church wanting to spend time and energy, to grow and to be part of a greater whole.

What does it mean to “sign the book?”

A tradition in UU congregations, new members add their signature to a long list of people who are or were members of that faith body. Our book started with the charter members back in June of 1999. Since then more than 400 names have filled 45 pages.

Signing the book is more than just joining UUTC. It is a pledge to explore one’s spiritual growth, connect with others, develop an understanding of UU history and theology and share the good news of our faith.

Signing the book means more members and more pledges. But, far more important, this simple act means our church community grows. New ideas, new directions, new ways to explore who we are and how we want to enrich our lives.

After signing the book we want new members to be part of UUTC. This is a place to explore the inherent worth and dignity of every person, accept one another and encourage spiritual growth, search for truth and meaning, use the democratic process, work toward a community with peace, liberty, and justice, respect our interdependence of existence and help build a diverse and multicultural community that dismantles racism and oppressions.

As each new member now enters our church, it falls on everyone to be certain Nancy, Jaci, Elena, Chuck, David, Alexia, Marsha, Barbara, Gary and Wendy become connected to our faith community. We want them to become engaged within our walls and in the wider community in order for our church to leave the building.

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. **However, our next Souper Sunday is September 17th.** 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. Our next Wonderful Wednesday is **September 13th.** Programs are always stimulating, and this month we will hear more from Habitat for Humanity about their Critical Repair Program. 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.

The Art of Being

The Art of Being

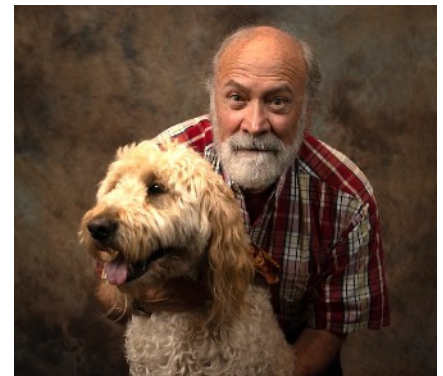
The Art of Being is returning to UUTC! And what, you may ask, is the Art of Being and how do I find out more and join? (*For starters, check Realm, or sign up at the front counter on Sunday!*)

The Art of Being is a transformative process created by Hilly Bernard, Ph. D. The purpose of these sessions is to facilitate an on-going conversation about the deep sense of Self beyond all forms (whether physical and/or psychological). This sense of Self will be explored in a comprehensive and experiential manner, including foundational understandings, psychological strategies/tools, and critical distinctions.

UUTC will offer a 8 weeks session to **8 participants** from **Sept 20 to Nov 8th, 2-4 pm each Wednesday**. The cost is \$50 for the course which is a donation to UUTC. (If this is a hardship, just speak with Rev. Bob.)

Please sign up through Realm and come to a **free informational, introductory, and experiential session** (limited to 20 people) on **Sept 13th at 2-4 pm** to learn more and see if the Art of Being is for you. If you are not yet using Realm, email **RK Young** and she will get you signed up. But do this right now, as others are already signing up in the app!

Once the information session on the 13th is complete, Registration for the actual course will open in Realm. Size of the group is kept small so that all may share within the two hour time. This, like the WAC*ky Women's Art Circle, is historically a high-demand course, so sign up for the intro quickly!



Hilly Bernard (with Sienna, former furry family)

Building a Safer Community



Scott Russell instructing on AED placement

This past Sunday, Transylvania County Emergency Management Services trainer Scott Russell led a group of 9 UUTC members and staff. This training covered Adult and Infant CPR, Choking, and the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). Scott was an excellent trainer, breaking up instruction with hands-on practice multiple times, completing the session in under 3 hours.

Each person who gets trained makes UUTC and our local community a safer place, since the training could be used in a restaurant as easily as it would be at UUTC. We are working on setting up a new training date in October, so please reach out to Trisha if you'd like that training.

*Memorial Service for
Tim McGann*

September 23rd, 1:00pm



**Walk for the World
with the Quiet
Meditation Group**

Join us and be part of a world-wide walking meditation on Saturday, September 23rd at 10 am. The meditation, organized by Dr. Joe Dispenza, will begin on the campus of the Unitarian Universalists church at 46 Varsity Street at the Chalice House, just off Broad in downtown Brevard.

We'll meet at 9:45, then walk across the street to South Broad Park. **The meditation will begin at 10 am, will last for 50 minutes, and will be happening simultaneously around the world to help bring peace, health, and healing to our planet and its people.**

Dr. Joe Dispenza holds a Bachelor of Science degree and is a Doctor of Chiropractic. His post-graduate training includes the fields of neuroscience and neuroplasticity, quantifiable electroencephalogram (QEEG) measurements, epigenetics, mind-body medicine, and brain/heart coherence. As a researcher, lecturer, author, and corporate consultant, his interest lies in demystifying the mystical so that people have all the tools within their reach to make measurable changes in their lives.

**Alone, we may not be able to make a difference.
Together, we CAN change the world.**



When It's Not About Us

RK Young

Kay and I moved to Brevard in 2008. Without employment. It was, quite literally, a leap of faith. We were moving into a community where neither of us was known, where I would have to find employment as someone who, while friendly, was on the LGBTQ+ spectrum, and where my health insurance from my previous employment would run out in three months. The only thing that would have made my situation more precarious was to have been a person of color.

And yet, 15 years later, I'm the happiest I've ever been. Finding the community which is UUTC was certainly a big part of that. It was unique to not have to explain myself, and, better yet, to have no one care how I was "wired."

Within our doors, UUTC has certainly been successful in creating an environment where it is possible for folks like me to feel loved and celebrated. Our sign, the installation of which was led by then President Joyce Henneberry, helps to communicate to the rest of town that this is a safe space for those on the fringe. There's very little ambiguity about the colors on that sign, much less than the expression "we are a welcoming congregation." It's not like we've really completed this work, but we have certainly taken concrete steps on this journey.

On August 20th, Rev. Bob asked us as a congregation to consider another journey — that of adopting the 8th Principle. It reads: "We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

So those words sound pretty easy, right? Isn't that just like what we're doing for the LGBTQ community? It's remarkably NOT like that. Here I'll quote [Rachel Anne Williams](#), from her Medium post "White Ego Is a Powerful Thing: "The only difference between "real racists" like the KKK ... and white people who proclaim to be anti-racist is that *we act differently in response to our thoughts*. Moreover, the action I refer to here is both internal and external. Given our conscious thought is under voluntary control, we have a choice on how to internally respond to our own thoughts. This is an important battleground independently of how our thoughts translate to actual behavior. Call this mental behavior." This is a place where I have had trouble, because, hey — I have good ideas, usually. Shouldn't folks of color want to try out my ideas?

No. I should be asking for THEIR ideas, and supporting them in achieving those goals. I can't even begin to know what it is like to grow up black. I've never had a cop car follow me (except when I was legitimately speeding). I've never been discouraged from filling out an employment application. I've never been denied a loan... even when *I* might not have thought I was a good candidate. To do the work of building a diverse multicultural Beloved Community, I have to step my white self back and practice good mental behavior and stand in the way of others who want to do even more harm piled on the sins of the past.

Unlike what some might think, and here I quote [Black Lives of UU](#): "Ours is not a religion of "anything goes." We endeavor to hold ourselves accountable—justice, equity and compassion in human relations. "While Unitarian Universalist have no creeds to which one must attest, our living tradition is a faith guided by **principled action**."

This past month, many of you showed up to support UpCountry Brewing, and I really appreciated that. Let's try something more difficult this month — **September 18th, 6:30pm**. We're needed to support both the LGBTQ and the Black community... in education. Join Alice Wellborn at the School Board meeting. Email jhunter@tcsnc.org to get the agenda for the meeting. Alice will make a statement, and we can be there to support her. Or you can make a statement of your own. If you've been reading the Times lately, there is plenty worth commenting on. Call Alice if you have questions!