

The UUCG Beacon

The beacon is published monthly by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Greenville
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President's Notes

The spirit of generosity binds the community together.
-Sam Trumbore, UU minister

The board would like to thank all who responded to last month's request and have updated their pledge contribution. Thanks to your financial responsibility, we have the cash on hand to continue to meet the day to day needs of the church without having to draw upon our savings. This is especially important this year, as you will remember that we voted at the congregational meeting in June to pass a budget that 1) dramatically slashed our membership contribution to both the district and the national organizations, and 2) still had a roughly \$3000 shortfall that remained unbalanced, but will likely require us to draw upon our congregational savings prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Save the date, February 23, 2014, for the Pledge Drive kick-off luncheon that will be provided by the Board!
Fun, fellowship, and entertainment will also be provided!

We did this to preserve the current programs that this church values--including our professional minister, our building maintenance, our youth religious education, and our social action initiatives. It was a courageous move, as we will obviously need the assistance of the district and national organizations with securing a Developmental Minister this summer, but couldn't justify slashing our current programs any further, as many committees are unfunded, and the ones that are budgeted funds operate on a shoestring.

That having been said, imagine what we could do, both within the congregation and within the larger community, if we had more than we could ask for. Imagine a fully funded congregation facing the decision of where to allocate surplus funds, rather than where to make cuts. Imagine a congregation with dreams and goals, working to achieve positive change. As the developmental ministry task force continues to refine the goals for our next minister to help us work towards, please keep in mind that the work depends upon our own generosity. As we begin the traditional pledge season, may we approach our pledges with an honest and generous assessment of what we can give, of our time, our talents, AND our treasures. Give what you can, when you can. But plan to give. Then do it. And may we all give our loving thanks.

Thomas Thielen, President
UUCG Board of Trustees

Worship Services

Jan 5 **“A Continuing Process of Epiphany”**
Led by Rev. Rod Thompson, Interim Minister
 According to the Christian calendar, January 6th is the date of the Epiphany (when the Magi were supposed to have arrived). I want to look beneath the specific event to the more general, more universal meaning of Epiphany. Happy New Year!

Jan 12 **“Love is the Doctrine of This Church”**
Led by Rev. Rod Thompson, Interim Minister
 We say the Unison Affirmation every Sunday, which begins with this line; but I wonder if we know to what we are committing ourselves. I’m going to look at each of the six lines of this affirmation, one at a time, one a month, beginning with this Sunday. I’ll want your responses, too.

Jan 19 **“Where is Dr. King’s Dream for Us?”**
Led by Rev. Rod Thompson, Interim Minister
 As our nation celebrates the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., it gives us a chance to look at his legacy and his challenge for religious liberals in this illiberal age. See you in church.

Jan 26 **“New Years Resolutions: How Are You Doing?”**
Led by Jake Melnyk
 New Years Resolutions - We all make them, and by this time most of us have probably broken some (whether we want to admit it or not). Today we will explore the idea of resolutions and commitments for the New Year. Beyond hitting the gym or cutting up the credit cards, why do we challenge ourselves to grow spiritually in the New Year and what must we take on or let go of to achieve this growth? We will examine our thoughts and reaffirm our commitments to ourselves and each other through a unique ritual. See you in church for this **InterGen service!**

Staff

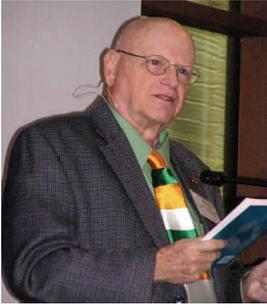
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Rod's Ruminations

I was going to give you a list of workshops and other important dates, but you'll find most of them elsewhere in this issue. Instead, as I sat here today with Christmas music playing, looking at a picture of my college looking glorious in snow, with my mind already in the new year, I remembered Robert Weston's poem [A Year Begins Today](#) and decided that was more important to share this month. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

A year is gone.
 It matters not when it began
 For it has ended now.
 There were other years,
 And some began with a birthday
 And some with a death;
 Some with one day of the month
 and some with another.
 Some began with a song
 and others with a lament,
 But today I start another year,
 whatever the month or season;
 It is what lies before me
 that concerns me now.
 There will be decisions
 and tasks;
 There will be drudgery, achievements and defeat;
 There will be joy and grief,
 All the raw stuff of experience
 waiting for me to shape;
 to fashion as I will,
 And it will never become
 just what I planned.

However it may appear to others,
 I can turn it to knowledge and wisdom . . .
 Or folly.
 If it be hard, I can make of it strength:
 It may become bone, sinew and steel
 Or ashes and waste.
 Some one might say, "It all depends on what the year may bring,"
 But what I make of it, depends on me.

GOAL PRIORITIZING CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

At noon on Saturday, January 25th, you'll have the opportunity to set the priorities for your work with the Developmental Minister who will join you next summer. The following Goal Statements have been carefully crafted by the Developmental Minister Task Force from your responses to our question: "As you think about UUCG's future, upon what does the congregation need to focus its energy?" at the Cottage Meetings. At the Priorities Setting meeting on January 25th you will be able to hear our reasoning for each Goal, share your reactions, and then be able to prioritize them.

Here in no particular order are the Goals:

"To heal the remaining hurts, manage the current conflicts and learn how to work together even when we disagree."

"To grow the congregation to at least 150 by 2017."

"To serve the underserved within our larger community."

"Using information learned in the past and the present, and considering the congregation's future needs and goals, to institute plans for appropriate organizational structure and leadership development."

"To develop a plan for a Life-Span Faith Development Program by 2016."

"To learn more fully the spiritual needs of the congregation and to make accommodations that are realistically appropriate, by 2017."

"To develop a financial support system that is driven by our programs, involves more of our members, and stresses communication with the congregation, by 2017."

"To find/build/remodel a building by 2016 that will be large enough for our Life-Span Faith Development Program, our Sunday worship, and our governance."

*Affirming the right of conscience and the
use of the
democratic process within our
congregation and in society at large*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
					1pm: UU Women's Lunch	10 am Winter Music Together Demo
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9:30 am Mindfulness Meditation 10:30 am Worship Service, A Continuing Process of Epiphany 12 pm Lunch Group 12:15 pm: Program Council		8am: Breakfast Group 7:30 pm: KTC Buddhists	10am: Brand Music and Wellness 6pm: staff meeting 7pm: Choir Practice	5:30pm Brand Music and Wellness 7pm: Board of Trustees meeting	5:30 pm: Art Reception	10am: Brand Music and Wellness
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:30 am Mindfulness Meditation 10:30 am Worship Service Love is the Doctrine of This Church 12 pm Lunch Group	3pm: CSCENC Board meeting 4pm Task Force Meeting 6pm_ Special Board Meeting 7:30 pm: Sierra Club	8am: Breakfast Group 5:30 Worship Committee meeting 7:30 pm: KTC Buddhists	10am: Brand Music and Wellness 7pm: Choir Practice	5:30pm Brand Music and Wellness	1pm: UU Women's Lunch 7pm: Classic GLBT Movie Night	10am: Brand Music and Wellness
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:30 am Mindfulness Meditation 10:30 am Worship Service: Where is Dr. King's Dream for Us? 12 pm Lunch Group 5pm: Vegetarians in Pitt County		8am: Breakfast Group	10am: Brand Music and Wellness 7pm: Choir Practice	5:30pm Brand Music and Wellness		8:30 am First Born Food Pantry 10am: Brand Music and Wellness 12pm: Goal Prioritization
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9:30 am Mindfulness Meditation 10:30 am New Years Resolutions: How Are You Doing? 12 pm Lunch Group 12:15 pm Shelter Action Group	7pm:Book Club	8am: Breakfast Group 6pm: Democracy NC 7:30 pm: KTC Buddhists	10am: Brand Music and Wellness 7pm: Choir Practice	5:30pm Brand Music and Wellness	1pm: UU Women's Lunch	

Youth Religious Education Report

Greetings from Youth Religious Education!

This can be a hectic time of year for many of us, and often especially for those of us with children. I hope all can find peace and joy within, and perhaps in spite of, the bustle of the season. We look forward to seeing everyone in the New Year as we continue our questioning and exploration.

Brightest Blessing of the Season!

Jennifer Thielen

Chair, Youth Religious Education



Happy Birthday to UUs this January

- Jan. 1– Jennifer Perry-Hildago
- Jan. 10- D. J. Hall
- Jan. 11– Rich Elkins
- Jan. 12– Ashley McIver
- Jan. 15– Kelly Kurtz
- Jan. 17– Judi Hickson
- Jan. 22– Gary Greer
- Jan. 24– Sue Daughtry



Deadline for next month's **Beacon** is Tuesday, January 21 at 8:00 pm

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