



# The UUCG Beacon

## PRESIDENT'S NOTES



### My Brother's Keeper?

In the Book of Genesis, God asks Cain where his brother Abel was, to which he responded "Am I my brother's keeper?" Now if you know the legend, you may also know that this question was posed because Cain had just murdered his brother, but regardless of the context, the question deserves consideration.

When I first started attending UUCG regularly some 15 years ago, we were a much smaller, and at that time entirely lay-led congregation. We were about half the size we are today, but even then, we were growing beyond the phase of a "family congregation", defined as a church with fewer than 50 members where most everyone knows one other and newcomers are easily recognized. With fewer than 50, this level of intimacy is possible, but as a church grows from the Family category into the

Pastoral category (50-150, generally characterized by greater dependence on ministerial guidance) it becomes increasingly difficult to remember everyone's name, let alone to know the details of peoples' lives and struggles.

One of the ways of dealing with this loss of intimacy is to foster that connectedness within smaller groups. Some of these groups create themselves organically as subsets within the congregation who seek greater connectedness and find it with others who have similar interests or participate in the same congregational activities. Others, such as the Chalice Circles program which will start again this month (we had something similar about 10 years ago) provide new opportunities to gain that intimacy with others in the congregation with whom they might not have nearly as much in common, crossing generations, ideas, and connecting the newcomer with the long-time member. It is important to have these overlapping connections where more organic groups can lead to more insular groupings and divisions within the church.

Just as it is nearly impossible for any one of us to know everyone else even by name, it is also even more impossible for our church's Caring Committee to know when every one of our members is in need of their attention, whether it be in the form of a card or letter, a call or visit from the minister, or finding volunteers to help with transportation or food needs during a time of medical treatment. They do a wonderful job of this when they are aware of the need, but cannot help when that need remains unidentified. We must endeavor to facilitate the interconnectedness of our members such that when there is a need, it is known to those closer to us, who can be there to help. And when there is a need that is too great or too complicated for them to fill, that the whole of their congregational family can assist. Or just simply that someone recognizes and misses us if we were to unexpectedly be absent for an unusual period.

If you know that someone in the congregation is dealing with some struggle or crisis, you should do what you can to be supportive and help them. If the need is not within your means, ask them if it is okay to share this with the Minister or a member of the Caring Committee. They are all trained in dealing with sensitive or personal information confidentially and discretely, or if appropriate and welcome, share that need with the congregation, and lastly can initiate an appropriate effort to fill the need.

Rich Elkins

President, UUCG Board of Trustees

# MINISTER'S REFLECTIONS



What does it take to grow a feeling of trust among people?

Time together. Open-hearted listening and sharing. Non-judgmental attitudes.

We Unitarian Universalists are seeking to build a community of trust and trustworthiness. As long as we are strangers to one another, it's really hard to feel grateful for one another's differences, and it's difficult to create that community feeling of mutual trust and support.

Starhawk writes of community: *"Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion without having the words catch in our throats. Somewhere a circle of hands will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter, voices will celebrate with us whenever we come into our own power. Community means strength that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done. Arms to hold us when we falter. A circle of healing. A circle of friends. Somewhere where we can be free."*

Chalice Circles are one of our ways of building a community of mutual trust and support. They are listening circles of eight to ten participants who meet with the same folks monthly for an hour-and-a-half over the next four months. Topics for reflection will range from secular to spiritual, ethical and cultural, from serious to light-hearted.

If you have not already, congregants are invited to sign up for one of four Chalice Circles

Second Sunday	Chalice Circle (Judi and Laura) 3:00PM @UUCG
Second Monday	Chalice Circle (Pat) 4:00pm at Joanie De Groot's Home
Second Tuesday	Chalice Circle (Mort) 6:00pm @UUCG Chalice Circle (Lynda) @Lynda's home

Each of us has stories to tell, life experience and insights to hear that expand the wisdom of our individual lives. We will be enriched by listening and sharing. Strangers, no longer!

Sign-up sheets are posted on a display in the sanctuary. If your schedule does not work, please sign up when you would be able to participate in another circle.

Margaret Wheatley wrote: *"When we seek for connection we restore the world to wholeness. Our seemingly separate lives become meaningful as we discover how truly necessary we are to each other."*

Blessed Be!  
Rev. Rod Debs, Minister

## Second Annual Chili Cook-Off, Saturday, February 7th, 6:00pm

The Fellowship Committee is once again organizing a chili cook-off (or more correctly chili judging and eating). We will get together on February 7th to eat, talk, perhaps imbibe, and vote for our favorite chili. Once again, we will be voting with beans AND winners will receive the coveted 'Golden Ladle.' This year we are asking for \$5/person; \$15/family, which includes chili, salad, toppings, cornbread, dessert, and non-alcoholic beverages.



Alcohol will be available for a suggested donation of \$2/beer or wine. This is not for fundraising but to cover the costs of the foodie accoutrements.

What do we need from the congregation? CHILI-- 5-6 pots of rich and beany family favorite chili. There will be 2 categories: Meat and Vegetarian. Let us know if you will be bringing chili so we'll know what's coming. Also, reservations not required but appreciated as it gives us an idea of how many mouths we'll need to fill. Sign-up sheets for both Bringing Chili and Attending will be at back of sanctuary the next 2 Sundays. Contact: Cam Scales at [camrme@aol.com](mailto:camrme@aol.com); 252- 565-5611 or Ann Eleanor at [aeleanor@suddenlink.net](mailto:aeleanor@suddenlink.net); 252-227-4240

## Ambiance Committee invites your involvement!

Ambiance—what does it mean? Webster says “an environment or it’s distinct atmosphere: milieu.” But what does it mean to us? I think it means setting the tone of the UUCG as far as making it attractive, open, interesting, and a place you want to be in. So how does the Ambiance Committee make that happen? In many ways—decorating to suit the season, hanging art works that are interesting and different, choosing pleasing colors and styles when needed and many other less apparent means. But three or four people can’t do this alone. We need input from many, and if you are fairly new here perhaps you don’t realize all that goes into this.

Our Art shows and the Receptions we host for new ones are open to the public. This happens every two months. For any work that is sold the UUCG receives a 10% commission, and the artist of course gets the rest. This benefits our church as well. Being open to the public makes more people aware of us, where we are, what we do. That’s important but we do need help in making this happen.

We have fun getting decorations together and up for the various holidays. Join us! We’re always open to new suggestions.

We don’t have many meetings, that is a plus. If a few people would each accept doing one task that would make the work much easier. For instance, one person could agree to notify the newspapers and other organizations of upcoming art shows. Someone else could agree to make sure refreshments will be volunteered. Setting up and taking down could be handled by a few. And so it goes. Come out and join us. We are a small (now) but friendly group and really need some more participants. Let us know if this is something you would be interested in doing or helping with.

Thank you all.

Marcia Sobel for the Ambiance Committee



## Classic GLBT Movie Night, February 13th

To accommodate the KTC Buddhist rental group's guest teacher event at the church the next weekend, February's Classic GLBT Movie Night will be held on the second Friday of the month, rather than the usual third Friday.

The film for February is "The Broken Hearts Club" a romantic comedy from 2000.

The Movie Night event begins at 7pm with a time of fellowship and getting refreshments. Around 7:30, a brief period of announcements is followed by watching a selection of trailers from which the audience decides which is to be the movie chosen for the following month. Then we watch the film chosen the month prior.

The event is free of charge, although contributions are welcomed to help provide the refreshments.

This event is open to the public and is an intentional outreach to the local GLBT community, but is equally welcoming of the heterosexual and cisgender among us with a slogan, "The movies are gay, but the audience doesn't have to be!"

## Dinners with the Debs Returns!

The Fellowship Committee is scheduling a few more dinners with Jeannette and Rod Debs for those of you who may have been unable to attend one of the dinners this past Fall. At this point, we need Hosts/Hostesses for each of the following dates: February 19 (Thurs.), February 27 (Fri.), March 7 (Sat.), and March 22 (Sun.) If you'd be willing to host a dinner, contact Cam Scales [email](#) or call 252-565-5611 to discuss your options (which don't have to involve you doing the cooking.)



## Did you say "Trivia"?

For several months now, some of the regular attendees of the Roving Lunch Group decided that gathering for lunch after service just wasn't enough fellowship for them and started going on Wednesday evenings to participate in Team Trivia at a local restaurant and bar. Recently, our regular location closed for renovations, so we now compete on Wednesday evenings starting at 8pm at Buffalo Wild Wings in Arlington Village.

Our team name is "UU Can't Touch This" (a play on the 90's MC Hammer song title) and we are pretty good, frequently placing, and even occasionally winning the week's tournament. But we might do even better if you were to join us and share your knowledge! The top 3 teams each week earn gift cards to the restaurant, which we generally save up and then choose a week when most of our regulars can come where we eat and drink our winnings in celebration.

You don't have to be a trivia wiz to participate. Your fellowship is just as welcome as your contribution toward one or many more correct answers!

Team Trivia often runs around 2 hours, and sometimes we just aren't ready to leave quite yet, continuing our conversations and getting to know one another better.

Team Trivia is a popular and busy night at BWW, so if you're planning to join us, please let Rich Elkins ([webmaster@UUGreenvilleNC.org](mailto:webmaster@UUGreenvilleNC.org)) know so we can make sure to reserve a table to accommodate the whole group. If you want to become a regular, we can also add you to our Facebook messenger group where we coordinate this and other social events, planned or sporadic.



## Important Notice About the Beacon

The mailed version of the Beacon is going to be phased out (except for special requests). Print versions will be available at the church. (If we are out, please let someone know.) The last mailed version will be the March Newsletter. If there are problems with this, please let me know at [beacon@UUGreenvilleNC.org](mailto:beacon@UUGreenvilleNC.org).

## Did you hear the NUUS?

Maybe, possibly, by some odd circumstance you weren't aware, but we have a weekly news and announcements (called the NUUS) email which goes out weekly, almost always on Wednesdays. If you're not getting it, you can sign up by filling in the subscription form (it's just your name and email) on the front page of the UUCG website ([UUGreenvilleNC.org](http://UUGreenvilleNC.org)) or by sending your email address to Rich Elkins ([webmaster@UUGreenvilleNC.org](mailto:webmaster@UUGreenvilleNC.org)). If you're not new, but don't think you're receiving, let him check and make sure you're subscribed under the correct email address, and also give some pointers in case your email program is hiding the NUUS from you. Gmail users will likely find that the NUUS gets stuck in the promotions tab if you have contextual filtering turned on, but you can train it to route it to your inbox instead.

If you're too Web 2.0 to bother with checking your email, you can also get the NUUS by liking and following our Facebook page ([Facebook.com/UUGreenvilleNC](https://Facebook.com/UUGreenvilleNC)) or Twitter Feed ([Twitter.com/UUGreenvilleNC](https://Twitter.com/UUGreenvilleNC))



# 2015 MORAL MARCH



## ON RALEIGH

**Saturday: Feb 14**  
(bring a sweetie!)

**9-9:30 Gather - 400 S. Blount St, Downtown**

**10:00 MORAL MARCH begins!**

**12:30 Lunch @ UU Fellowship of Raleigh**  
(Registration Required!)

**1:00 Program w/ DemocracyNC (ends @ 4pm)**

**Registration and Details:**

**[www.SurveyMonkey.com/s/2015MoralMarch](http://www.SurveyMonkey.com/s/2015MoralMarch)**

### Stand on the Side of Love with fellow UUs at the Moral March

UUs from across NC and adjoining states will be participating in the 2015 Moral March in Raleigh on Valentine's Day, Saturday, February 14th. The UU contingent of the march will gather between 9-9:30am and the march steps off at 10am and should be over by noon. Lunch and workshops will be held at UUFRC afterwards for those wishing to participate (preregistration required for afternoon). Registration and more details link

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2015MoralMarch>

**FEBRUARY 2014**

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	"Religious Freedom Day" Rev. Rod
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Chili Cook-off 6:00pm
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	"Spots of Time" Rev. Rod Chalice Circle (Judi and Laura) 3:00PM @UUCG
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Chalice Circle (Pat) 4:00pm at Joanie's Home
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Chalice Circle (Mort) 6:00pm @UUCG Chalice Circle (Lynda) @Lynda's home
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Classic GLBT Movie Night 7:00pm
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	"This Too Shall Pass" Laura Schroeder
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	"An Ignorance-Based World View" Rev. Rod

**STAFF**

Minister: Rev. Rod Debs  
 Music Director: Mort Stine  
 Choir Director: Sue Jefferson  
 RE Director: Lilani Butler Masters

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

President: Rich Elkins  
 Vice President: Brenda Stewart  
 Secretary: Shannon Terry  
 Treasurer: Feryl Masters  
 At Large: Cam Scales  
 At Large: Laura Schroeder  
 Past President: Tom Thielen

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

**SUNDAYS**

9:30AM Mindful Meditation  
 10:30AM Worship  
 12:00PM Lunch Groups

**TUESDAYS**

8:00AM Breakfast Group  
 7:30PM KTC Buddhist Meditation

**WEDNESDAYS**

7:00PM Choir Practice

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**Building and Grounds:**

Chris Federico & Bob Hudson

**Ambiance:** Marcia Sobel

**Caring:**

Ruel Tyer & Ruth Abrahamson

**Communications:**

Rich Elkins

**Fellowship:**

Cam Scales

**Finance:**

Richard Baltaro

**Fundraising:**

Patrice Alexander & Jennifer Schultz

**Hospitality:**

Holly Brown

**Membership:**

Susan Foreman

**Social Action:**

Ray Sobel & Ann Eleanor

**Stewardship:**

Patrice Alexander & Feryl Masters

**Worship:**

Judi Hickson

**Youth Religious Education:**

Shannon Terry & Christy Hoppenthaler

Deadline for next month's *Beacon* is **Monday, February 23 at 8:00 pm**