



The UUCG beacon

March 2005

The **beacon** is published monthly
by the Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Greenville
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Sunday Services -- 10:30 am

March 6

Simple Learning
Rev Karen Day

March 13

UUSC Justice Sunday
Rev Chester Freeman

March 20

*Investing in the
Dream*
Rev Karen Day

March 27

Snatching Life
Easter Sunday
Rev Karen Day

Children's activities are available
each Sunday.

President's Notes:

Dana Paramita: The practice of bestowing joyfulness to all living beings (giving of oneself) is a principle of high order in Eastern religions. An exemplar of this practice is the Bodhisattva Mahasattva who gave without doubt, without fear, without regret, without need for profit. They only give in order to abide by the original practice of the Buddha: to eliminate all suffering and help all humans attain contentment.

In an age where 2 million people are homeless in the Sudan, where Uncle Sam stretches the truth to create fake news items, and 49% of the children at North Pitt High School qualify for free and reduced lunch, dreaming of the total eradication of suffering seems to border on madness-- a halcyon obscenity. Tonight, my ten-year-old ignored me when I kissed her cheek. Earlier, I removed TV from her life until her reading scores improved. As I stood, feeling the full brunt of Rachel's icy pout, Beyonce's popular new song played on BOB 93.3, with the pop-diva wailing for a lover "known to carry big things/If you know what I mean." Should I have banned the radio for my daughter's own good? What ripples would result from that protective action?

How is it possible to create peace when almost any well-intentioned action leads to a negative ricochet? I admire the courage exhibited by those who forsake the ironic distance currently in fashion. And perhaps even the Bodhisattva Mahasattva had bad hair days and inadvertently caused loved ones to suffer. I can't figure it all out, but I'd like to think that trying to be more generous today is enough.

Randi Finley

Reflections

Reflections . . . of Rev. Karen Day

It's just not working! I read the simplicity stuff and nod. I think, "Yes, this is just what I believe. I can do this." Then I read my column from January and find I was saying the very same thing two months ago. I resolve to get rid of some of the books in my cluttered office. After carefully looking through the shelves, I choose five and move them into the church library. Not a huge breakthrough. My simple Shabbat remains sporadic (though no more trips to Big Lots!).

On the other hand, I'm proud of my thrift store clothes and hand-me-downs. I look for recycled cards and handmade gifts. Drive a high-mileage car. So, if simplicity is a continuum, I'm not on one end or the other. In January I suggested that we take some small steps, acknowledge where we are on the scale and tip a bit further toward sustainability. Of course the key is to feel the enticement of simplicity, the desire to release my tight grip on all my stuff and all my complications in order to get down to some simple pleasures.

What entices you? Does a quiet moment under the stars beckon with wonder? Does a single hyacinth in the yard call you to nature's core and your own center? Could a game of Monopoly or Crazy Eights entice you from the TV or video? Spring is definitely an enticing season here, with birds already flocking and calling, blossoms already appearing. Just walking through the neighborhood and greeting others you see could be a simple and counter-cultural act. Inviting a friend to North River Park in-

stead of shopping could be an enticing alternative.

Simplicity is evoked not just with less stuff but in simple emotions, concrete connections. We can entice each other with a smile showing our delight in being together. We can directly express what remains hidden in a complex world-care, concern, even fear and anger. "Here's how I'm feeling," or "What's going on for you?" can lead to some simple but remarkable conversations. Honesty is one of the simplest, yet most difficult, ways to share. It doesn't really matter how uncluttered your closet is if you can't clear out your heart. So, for now I'll keep checking the bookshelves, but also check those inner chambers for the cobwebs that keep me from being direct, clear and compassionate.

Be gentle, Karen

Upcoming Pledge Dinner

The Stewardship Committee headed by Toni Britt and Susan Foreman is hard at work on the 2005/2006 pledge drive. Personal invitations to the dinner will be mailed soon. Mark your calendar for March 19th. Social hour begins at 6:30pm with dinner, and entertainment at 7:00pm. The co-chairs are assisted by: Bill Baker, Mark Barnes, Gail Butler, Robert Carroll, Karen Day, Janet Doig, Tracy Donohue-Stine, Rich Elkins, Sylvia & Don English, Cindy Fanning, Marcia Fletcher, Karen Hall, Hooker & Diane Horton, Feryl Masters, Peter Sachtjen, Larry Spell, Brenda Stewart, Richard Weir.



On The Horizon

Sunday Morning Fare

. . . by Karen Day

Worship Services for March

March 6 "Simple Learning" Rev. Karen Day

In discerning the difference between wisdom and information what sources do you continually return to? What is your personal canon, the places you look for guidance on your most pressing questions? We'll explore how we choose the sources that are most important for each of us.

March 13 Rev. Chester Freeman, guest speaker. We will also commemorate UUSC Justice Sunday with a short reflection from the Social Action Committee.

March 20 "Invest in the Dream" Rev. Karen Day, Roger Robbins, Susan Foreman

We are combining our annual canvass Sunday with the Spring Equinox service as we celebrate the renewal of life and our investments in our dreams. If you have felt renewal in this congregation you may want to commit with your own "Investment."

March 27 "Snatching Life" Easter Sunday Rev. Karen Day

Spring's renewal unfolds slowly but there are moments when life bursts out of death. We'll consider both the cycle of life and the unexpected leaps we experience, in light of the age-old stories of Easter.

Social Action...

Volunteers are needed to help the First Born Church with their food distribution on the last Saturday of the month. This month the date is Sat. March 26th. Arrive at First Born Church at around 9:00. The food distribution starts at 10:00 (although lately they have been starting earlier). Strong arms are needed to carry the boxes of food. Or, you can work at the desk.

I was proud to carry a car full of UU teens (Eli Stine, Aaron Gade, and Rebecca Gade) last January. We had lunch afterwards. If any other teens want to participate, let me know. It's a fun way to help out the community.

--Tracy Donohue (758-0693)

Sunday with the UU World

UU World discussion 4th week with Ed Day at 9:30 March 27. We will use the March/April issue Possible articles "real moral values" by William Sinkford "Whatever happened to 'we'?" "Seeds of simplicity" --Ed Day

WATCH FOR:

On April 3 we will begin an Adult Religious Education study on "Understanding the Bible." Our guide will be the book of the same name written by John Buehrens, former UUA President. In it Buehrens asks, "Why bother with the Bible?...The influence of the Bible remains pervasive in our culture. Its language and stories resonate throughout our literature and public rhetoric. Many contentious political debates in our public life...disguise sharply divergent interpretations of the Bible." So together we'll look at Unitarian Universalist interpretations of the Bible, Buehrens' and our own. If you are interested in this Sunday evening class, sign up on the bulletin board.

--Karen Day

News, Notes and Other Stuff

UUCG: The Village of Liberal Religion.

Have you heard the saying it takes a whole village to raise a child? Well we, Unitarian Universalists, are the village of liberal religion, and we, the UUCG, helped raise a success story. Duncan Masters was brought up in the congregation since infancy. He attended the RE Program and I have heard it said his favorite teacher was our own Carroll Webber. Due to the help of his UU village, he is now in Cape Verde helping his own village as part of the Peace Corps. Duncan has not forgotten us. Nor has he forgotten that we stand for service and helping those who need it. He is looking for some help, from us, for his village in Cape Verde.

No one there has ever graduated from high school because logistically and economically it is too far away. His dream is to have us sponsor one teen graduate from high school. Some of our Youth Group has an interest in taking this project on and if they do, they need your help in more than one way. They do not only need your money, they need your time: your service commitment. We need more Carroll Webbers.

It has been brought to my attention, during the recent council meeting, that what Randi and I have been trying to do with the RE Worship Service, Member Surveys, the Congregational Conversation, and the subsequent RE Service Surveys has not been made clear to the congregation. So I will try to be as clear and frank as possible. I am looking for a whole bunch of volunteers to work with the Children/Youth RE Program. We have had many wonderful RE teachers over the years, and these people can tell you that the younger members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Greenville

need more than one point of view in their religious education. They need diversity. The congregation should never lean so heavily upon one member for so important a task as creating our future.

If we want our future global village to be versatile, adaptable, curious, caring, other-oriented, (OKAY, OKAY like us, the adult UUs,) then we need them to get to know us and learn from us. How many older members have children who are not UUs although you would like them to be? Were you involved in a UU church when they were growing up? If your children are UUs and were UUs growing up, did you do all the religious education teaching they ever had? Did it take a whole UU village to educate them? Have they dropped out of the UU faith because the whole village did not get involved? These are the questions we have to ask ourselves. The only answer is not to assume someone else is doing it, but help to do it.

No one should feel they are unable to help. Due to safety issues we have now instituted the rule that we have teacher teams, meaning at least two adults per class at all times. If we don't get enough volunteers we may have to abandon some programs. This is why we need as many volunteers as we can get.

Volunteers will be on a rotating basis so no one be there more than once a season. Due to the new rule, all parents will be expected to help once a month, unless sufficient volunteers can be found to cover this duty. This will put a difficult strain on single parent families. Even with this rule,

(VILLAGE: Continued on page 5)

(VILLAGE: Continued from page 4)
there are not enough parents to cover the two adults at all times rule. We all covenant every week to serve and love one another; this is a good place to start. You are only required to be in the room to observe. You may participate in the class activity if you wish, you are there primarily to observe.

Has anyone heard the saying it takes a whole village to raise a child? We are that village, and one villager has succeeded in helping another village. The UUCG is a bona fide global village. Lets keep it up.

Please fill out the RE Service Surveys that are coming to you and hand them in to the collection plate or to a RE Committee Member: Gail Butler, Marli Baker, Richard Weir, April Weir, Tina Baldrige, Kathy Weigel, Lorri Kessler or Cindy Fanning.

--Cindy Fanning, RE Chair

Religious Education

The next Religious Education committee meets Tuesday, March 1st (1st Tuesday of each month) at 7 pm in the large RE room. This is an important meeting because we will be trying to comply with the TJ District's recommendation to plan the curriculum 3 years in advance. We hope to see all parents, teachers, and those interested as we select the curriculum for the next couple of years. Remember, you're always welcome at our meetings but especially at this one.

--Cindy Fanning

Social Action

There are two social action events occurring this month. The First Annual State-Wide gathering of the NC Religious Coalition for Marriage Equality is Tuesday, March 15th. The schedule consists of an interfaith worship experience, training, a march and rally at the state capitol, and an afternoon of lobbying our legislators to reject the state constitutional amendment that bars same sex marriage. Karen Day would like to take a car load of us to the meeting with her.

The other event is a March and rally for peace and to bring the troops home on Saturday, March 19th, from 11-4 in Fayetteville. The rally will be in Rowan State Park. March 19th is the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq.

Anyone who is interested in attending either of these events should contact me, and I will try to organize carpools.

--Joan Sachtjen

Hospitality Committee

Refreshment hostesses/hosts for March:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 3-6 Sue Farris | 3-20 Sharleen Berkowitz |
| Helen Foster | Brenda Stewart |
| 3-13 Randi Finley | 3-27 Kay Alston |
| Patty Gade | Janet Doig |

--Janet Doig

On a Personal Note . . .

Jackie Wyman's already back at meeting after surgery for colon cancer. Remarkable since inches were removed. The pathology report is that they got it all.

Bob and Annie Franke celebrated their 54th wedding anniversary on Valentine's Day. Since the ceremony took place in Germany, where Bob was stationed, he made the arrangements.

Terry Shank's eldest son, Michael, has been in Sri Lanka working with a religious group providing medical services....

As firm believers in the separation of church & state, we probably should be careful what we say about Larry Spell's coming candidacy for political office -- but ask him!

Sondra Haynes recently fell and broke her shoulder. We wish her well, and suspect that she'll need all the good wishes she can get.

Tracy's Donohue-Stine's 92-year-old mother fell and broke her hip. Also bad news.. But according to my last report she should be out of the hospital now. Hurrah. But after three score and ten any broken bone is bad news.

Andy and Michelle Probolus are looking forward to a visit from his mother and the arrival of a second child (and yes, there is a connection). Our Sunday School grows.

We join Paul and Kay Alston in rejoicing over the first birthday of their grandson.

Bob and Cynthia Jeffcott have interesting travel plans including a cruise to celebrate their 52nd.

Marcia Fletcher expects to be in South Carolina helping her mother celebrate her 94th birthday when you get this newsletter.

Alice Arnold showed a neighboring congregation a number of slides of her study visit to Russia. Maybe we can see them, too?

And, speaking of surgeries again, Sylvia English, who had a cyst removed from her hand, recovered so well and fast that she's explaining why the operation was needed..

Rebecca Powers is home recovering from surgery.

Interfaith Alliance

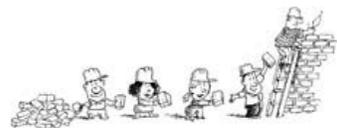
The Interfaith Alliance hosts Prayers for Peace on the fourth Monday of every month at 7pm. This is a wonderful opportunity for all members of our community to come together to express our desire for peace-in our own hearts, our neighborhoods, our country and our world. Please support this effort by attending this short gathering when you can. This month's prayers will be hosted by Congregation Bayt Shalom at 4351 E. 10th.

--Karen Day

Spiritual Book Club

Book Club which usually meets the Third Sunday before services will not meet in March. A new book will be announced later for the April meeting. If you have any suggestions, please pass them along.

--Paul Alston





THE MONTH in PREVIEW

Church Calendar for March

- 1 8:30am Breakfast at Cracker Barrel
7:00pm RE Committee
- 2 6:00pm Eat out at Finelli's
7:00pm Covenant Group Leaders
- 5 10:30am *Simple Learning* -- Rev Karen Day
- 7 7:00pm Worship Committee
- 8 8:30am Breakfast at Cracker Barrel
- 9 6:00pm Eat Out at Longhorn
- 13 10:30am *UUSC Justice Sunday* -- Rev Chesster Freeman
- 15 8:30am Breakfast at Cracker Barrel
10:00-11:30am Women's Covenant Group
Lobbying Day in Raleigh
- 16 6:00pm Eat Out at the Lemongrass
- 19 Peace March in Fayetteville
6:30pm -- Canvass Social
7:00pm -- Canvas Dinner
- 20 10:30am *Invest in the Dream* -- Rev Day,
Roger Robbins & Sue Foreman
- 21 7:00pm -- Board Meeting
- 22 8:30am Breakfast at Cracker Barrel
12:01pm Beacon deadline
- 23 6:00pm Soup & Sharing
- 26 9:00am First Born
- 27 9:30am UU World Discussion
10:30am *Snatching Life* -- Rev Karen Day
- 28 7:00pm -- Interfaith Peace Prayers -- Congre-
gation Bayt Shalom
- 29 8:30am Breakfast at Cracker Barrel
- 30 6:00pm Eat Out at The Daily Grind

BOARD TIDBITS

Besides regular business at the monthly board meeting (approval of agenda, minutes, treasurer's report), we talked about some of our dreams for the upcoming year. We want children's RE to continue growing, and we want additional furniture for the RE rooms. We want to get a campus group organized, and start a program for young adults or, maybe, a singles group and a couples group. We want to expand the wonderful covenant groups and would like to continue expanding Social Action activities. We would like to plan to expand facilities, and continue taking good care of our current facility. Hiring a part-time church secretary would be nice. The list goes on and on . . .

Karen will represent us at the Coalition for Marriage Equality Lobby Day in Raleigh on March 15th. We would like to have a delegation go to the Peace March in Fayetteville in March. Until next month . . .

--Jackie Wyman

Women's Covenant Group

The Women's Covenant Group will meet on Tuesday, March 15 from 1000 -1130 AM in the RE Room. We will discuss the INITIATION section of "The Dance of the Dissident Daughter" - pages 87-130 and finalize plans for our community project.

--Sylvia M. English - Chair

Deadline for next month's **beacon** is Tuesday 12 noon, March 22, 2005

UU Wednesday Dining Out Menu*



March 2, **Finelli's** -- 2905 E. 5th Street -- 695-0020
March 9, **Longhorn** -- 520 SE. Greenville Blvd -- 830-6100
March 16, **Lemongrass** -- 650 E. Firetower Road -- 758-7878
March 23, **Soup & Sharing** -- UUCG 131 Oakmont Dr -- 355-6658
March 30, **Daily Grind** -- 1909 E. Firetower Road -- 830-2233

Let's Eat!

* Wednesday dining out starts at 6:00 pm & is Dutch treat. Please let Ed Day (355-0652) know if you plan to come so that an appropriate number of places can be made available at the restaurant.

**The Unitarian Universalist
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131 Oakmont Drive
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355-6658**

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