



The UUCG Beacon

PRESIDENT'S NOTES



Striking a Balance

In addition to the kickoff of our Spring Pledge Drive, this is also the season where the Nominating Committee goes seeking qualified and interested candidates to be elected to the Board for the next year, as well as nominees for the Board to name as Committee Chairs.

We had a campaign, more than a year ago, but what year, I don't remember, to inform the congregation about what committees there were and who to talk to about joining. These were put on posters, and when you looked at them in that way (it covered a couple of sheets), the number looked quite daunting. Why do we have so many and how do we fill them all from a Congregation our size? I can remember a time when we had many fewer, and at least key Committee Chairs served as Board members because of their roles, rather than having a separate Program Council composed of the Committee Chairs.

In honesty, a good number of the Committees were technically subcommittees, or an individual on a committee with a specific designated task role, such as Endowment Chair, but Board Members still often serve dual roles as a Board Member and a Committee Chair unrelated to their Board position. And in several cases, people can wear not only two hats, but instead three or four. Committees are flexible, established by the Board, and over the years some committees were split because someone expressed a willingness to be in charge of part of a committee, but not some other part. In trying to fill all the roles, one job became two, or maybe three. Often new committee chairs are willing to take on the role, but need a co-chair to assist. If every committee and subcommittee had 2 co-chairs, we start to approach needing about a quarter of our members to be in some leadership role.

But that number isn't really realistic. One doesn't often find congregations where that percentage of people are willing or realistically able to take that level of responsibility, and there are a few of us who have difficulty saying no when asked to do something we understand is critical to the functions of the church. But what can we do about it?

I personally think we need to reduce the number of committees, reuniting them into larger functional purposes, and that each "supercommittee" chair be more responsible for coordinating the activities of the committee, and delegating specific "tasks" or "projects" to individuals or groups within the committee who see that those tasks and projects get done. But the only way that this can work is if we have more people become active in committees, spreading the work among many people.

So this pledge season, in addition to your financial contribution, put some thought into what pledge of your time and effort you can make so that we can have an even more successful year and maximize the experience we all have to its greatest potential! Join a committee and make it come true.

MINISTER'S REFLECTIONS



Universalist suffragist Olympia Brown (1835-1926) was the first woman to graduate from a theological school in the United States, and then became the first full-time ordained woman minister, pastor to the Universalist Church of Racine, Wisconsin. She said:

"Dear Friends, stand by this faith. Work for it and sacrifice for it. There is nothing in all the world so important to you as to be loyal to this faith which has placed before you the loftiest ideals, which has comforted you in sorrow, strengthened you for noble duty, and made the world beautiful for you."

Friends, I am moved by how you work for this faith community. I do not have the courage to ask you to sacrifice for it, nor to say that there is nothing else in all the world so important as this faith community. But I do feel that its principles and lofty ideals are worthy of our loyalty and labor.

Our congregation's respect for others' "rights of conscience" as well as our own can be seen in how we open our doors to the community: Large gatherings of Pitt County Vegetarians share a monthly potluck here; the Sierra Club; Democracy North Carolina and a Buddhist group have evening gatherings here; A Course in Miracles and Mindful Meditation meet weekly. The Free Spirit Inclusive Catholic Community worships here.

You who are parents and grandparents and children know how to work and to sacrifice for your families. Committee leaders, who coordinate children's programs, worship, financial management, hospitality and greeting and newcomer orientation and member database for communication, display your love and loyalty for Unitarian Universalist faith community. Chairs and tables are set up and moved around, food shared and dishes cleaned up in the kitchen, the lawn is mowed, fallen tree branches are removed and shrubs trimmed without ever submitting a bill of "fees for service."

You don't do it for fees, and you don't withhold your services if others don't contribute. Some contribute five and six percent of your income, enough to cover the costs of others who do not have it to give. You give more than your fair share of volunteer labor and bear the weight of leadership.

Olympia Brown continued her words: *"Do not demand immediate results but rejoice that you are worthy to be entrusted with this great message and that you are strong enough to work for a great true principle without counting the cost. Go on finding ever new applications of these truths and new enjoyments in their contemplation."*

When the minister and a member of the Caring Committee visit poor, gay, persons of color facing homelessness after a stroke, the congregation is serving the underserved in our community. When you volunteer at the food pantry or homeless shelter or caring for fellow members, you are serving our mission of universal compassion and interconnected lives. All lives matter.

Religious community is not fees for service. It is a place where you can serve and receive nourishment. When we fill the plate, there will be nourishment both to serve and to receive.

What do you have to give? What service, to enjoy? Dear friends, stand by this faith.

Blessings!

Rev. Rod Debs, pastor

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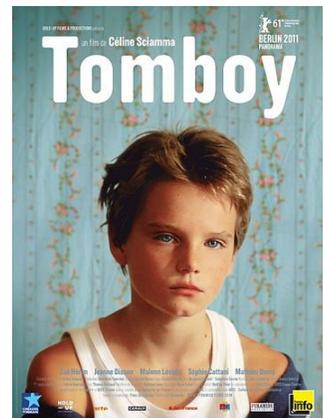


CAR WASH/YARD SALE

Get ready for our Semi-Annual Car Wash and Yard Sale **Saturday April 11th**. Have something you don't need, that's too good to throw away? We want it. Free pick up in the Washington/Greenville area on April 10th. We need people to sort and price items Friday evening. We need washers on Saturday (maybe your first good chance to work on your summer tan!). We are a welcoming congregation, all types of cars are welcome to come and be cleansed. We can also use help selling Saturday morning. You might just find the item you need at the sale. Contact Jennifer Thielen or Gail Butler to help with the Yard Sale, Feryl Masters (oferyl@gmail.com) to help with the Car Wash.

CLASSIC GLBT MOVIE NIGHT— Friday April 17th at 7:00 pm

TOMBOY (2011, written and directed by Celine Sciamma) – A 10 year old transgender boy moves to a new neighborhood with this family. He introduces himself as a boy for the first time to his new friends. French with English subtitles.



Famous Universalist minister Hosea Ballou argued with a Methodist colleague over the issue of eternal damnation. The Methodist asserted, "If I were a Universalist and feared not the fires of hell, I could hit you over the head, steal your horse and saddle and ride away, and I'd still go to heaven!"

Ballou answered, "If you were a Universalist, the idea would never occur to you!"

Man is the religious animal. He is the only religious animal. He is the only animal that has the True Religion--several of them. He is the only animal that loves his neighbor as himself and cuts his throat if his theology isn't straight. He has made a graveyard of the globe in trying his honest best to smooth his brother's path to happiness and heaven.

- Mark Twain

APRIL 2014

Sunday 5 th	"Easter Stories that Heal" Rev. Debs
Sunday 12 th	"It Matters What We Believe" Rev. Debs Chalice Circles
Monday 13 th	Chalice Circles
Tuesday 14 th	Chalice Circles
Thursday 17 th	Classic GLBT Movie Night 7:00pm "Tomboy"
Sunday 19 th	"Broken and Whole" Rev. Debs
Sunday 26 th	"Milk" ECU School of Medicine and College of Nursing Readers Theater

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 Sparrow
 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 Abramson

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 Sparrow & Christy Hoppenthaler

Deadline for next month's **Beacon** is **Thursday April 23 at 8:00 pm**