

The UUCG
beacon

June 2008

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

June 1
Outdoor Service @ River Park N
Rev. Ann Marie Alderman & Religious Educat Committee

June 8
All the Creatures
Rev. Ann Marie Alderman

June 15
Father Spirit, Where are You?
Rev. Ann Marie Alderman

June 22
Summer Solstice Service
UUCG CUUPS

June 29
Forgiveness
Dr, Kathleen Row, Ph.D.

Children's activities are available each Sunday.

President's Notes

Welcoming Congregation... at last!

I'd like to thank everyone who stayed for the Congregational Meeting and participated, regardless of how you voted on the issue of the Welcoming Congregation resolution. I'm glad that the vast majority of you voted in favor, as it is a goal I've had for the congregation since I started attending, and even before I was a member! For those of you who still have reservations or concerns, I'd like to assure you that we do not have any plans to hang any banners or flags on the outside of the building (there is no requirement or expectation to do so). Furthermore, any currently unforeseen future effort in that direction could not be done without bringing it to a separate full-congregational vote.

One possible initiative that came out of the congregational meeting was the idea of helping start a PFLAG chapter in Greenville. Apparently, some of the same concerns are being raised. First, let me explain that PFLAG is just an acronym for Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. (They also include bisexuals and transgender people, but didn't change their name.) It is primarily composed of straight allies to the community, and it doesn't actually have anything to do with a flag, it was just a cute name.

PFLAG is a support and advocacy organization whose main focus is the support of people in their "coming out" process, and also their friends and family members. Not only do GLBT people have a "coming out" process, but their friends and family do as well. Most parents assume their children will have a similar, but hopefully better, life than they did. They have expectations of their children marrying (to the opposite gender) and having grandbabies for them to spoil. While marriage (or some less recognized alternative) is still an option, as well as having children either naturally or through adoption, these life directions are not as easily assumed, nor are they easy ones.

Continued: **PrezNotes** page 3

Reflections

... of Rev Ann Marie Alderman

Reflecting on the past ten months...there is so much for us all to be proud of! (We must be doing something very right to have welcomed 17 new members since the first of September!) Here is a list of just some of the things I will remember about this church year;

Many of you laboring to move Karen and me, and all our things, into our new Greenville home.

Having a great "start up weekend" facilitated by the Thomas Jefferson, District Executive Annette Marquis, where UUCG leaders and I got to know each other better and sorted out who would be responsible for what.

The Search Committee putting on an inspiring Installation Service, followed by fabulous food and the company of UU's from neighboring congregations

The energy and commitment it took to have a successful Service Auction and a Raffle Ticket sale.

The annual pledge drive resulting in nearly 10% more in financial commitments from members and friends for next year, which allowed members to pass a balanced, no-borrowing-from-long-term-assets budget.

The Board's initiating of the Welcoming Congregation program, resulting in many wonderfully deepened relationships and new insights.

Many members and friends representing UUCG's caring presence in the community at the annual Crop Walk, the Interfaith Alliance's monthly services and forums, at First Born's food distributions, at peace demonstrations, while cleaning up Oakmont Blvd, etc., etc!

Having fun together at potlucks, dinners for eight, soup and sharing, during coffee time, and many, many more occasions when there was laughter and stories and smiles.

All the times we worshipped, sang, reflected and shared our joys and concerns together.

The many, many acts of kindness and caring and just taking care of what needed to be taken care of that I witnessed over and over.

All these reasons and so many more make me feel good to be here!

—Rev Ann Marie Alderman

June sermon topics:

June 1: 11 am, Short Outdoor Worship Service at River Park North, followed by a long potluck picnic, Rev. Ann Marie Alderman and the Religious Education Committee

June: 8: All the Creatures: What Our Pets Teach Us, Rev. Ann Marie Alderman

June 15: Father Spirit, Where Are You? Rev. Ann Marie Alderman

June 22: Summer Solstice Service, UUCG CUUPS group

June 29: Guest Speaker, Kathleen Row, ECU Chair of the Psychology Dept. will talk about forgiveness.

Deadline for next month's **beacon** is Tuesday, June 24 at 8:00 pm

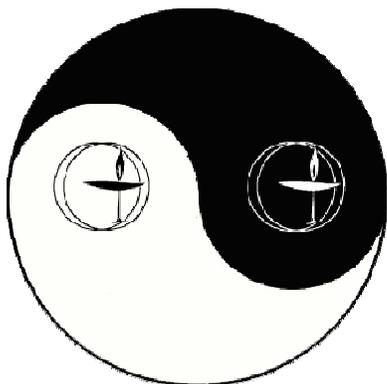
Affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every person

PrezNotes: Cont from Page 1

While PFLAG frequently works with various faith communities, including those who are supportive like UUs, but they also work with groups that work toward greater inclusion on faith communities that have a history of being more oppressive. Please understand that PFLAG itself is not a religious organization and is not affiliated with any religious group. My suggestion that UUCG help start a PFLAG chapter in Greenville is one that members who are interested would help to start a group which may choose to use our space for meetings (like the Sierra Club) but would be an independent organization with separate, although hopefully some overlapping membership with UUCG. Having a PFLAG which meets at our congregation is another form of outreach, showing our welcome, and hopefully welcoming new members who learn about us through their participation in PFLAG.

I was greatly pleased that several people came up to me after the meeting with an interest in PFLAG. It is a great continuation of the spirit of the Welcoming Congregation program and a noble endeavor. I'd encourage those of you with interest or concerns to visit PFLAG's website: www.pflag.org to learn more and hopefully get involved.

-Rich Elkins



FIRST BORN FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Please join us at First Born Holy Church on Saturday, June 28th, to assist with the food distribution. Our congregation has promised to have at least 9 workers for this distribution. The distribution begins at 9:00am until 12:00pm. We distribute food packages, help with administrative work, pack food boxes and carry food boxes to cars. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.

If you can provide a ride for other UUCG members please let me know. If you need directions, please contact me at 252-916-5069 or email toniebritt@clis.com.

Thank you for your help.

-Tony Britt

FIRST BORN COLLECTIONS

UUCG collects plastic grocery bags for First Born. There is a large plastic, blue container in the library for the bags. I deliver the bags to First Born each month. The bags must be clean, dry and odor free. Please do not bring plastic bags with RED letters. If you have food items, **non-perishable**, you can leave them in the library as well. I will deliver the food to First Born when I deliver the bags. If you have any questions concerning this Social Action project, please contact me at 252-916-5069 or email toniebritt@clis.com.

Thank you for your contributions.

-Toni Britt

Affirming justice, equity and compassion towards all

CUUPS & Earth-Centered RE

Join Green Weavers CUUPS for Exploring Earth-Centered Religion, an opportunity for participants to learn about pagan religious practice and philosophy. Sessions are based on [Paganism: A Guide to Earth-Centered Religions](#) by River and Joyce Higginbotham. Reading the book is suggested, but not required. Earth-centered religions form the sixth source of spirituality recognized by the Unitarian Universalist Association. Spiritual teachings of earth-centered, religions celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of Nature. All who are interested in understanding Earth-based spiritualities and exploring their beliefs are welcome.

This class will be held on from 6:30- 8:00 pm July 13-17 during the UU Harry Potter week. Educational opportunities for children are available concurrent with this adult class. Dinner is also available at 6 pm. For more information or to register for the class, contact Michelle at uucgoffice@uugreenvillenc.org.

Session 1 - What is Earth-Centered Religion? Join us for an interactive exploration of the general beliefs and characteristics of paganism and its focus on interconnectedness and blessedness. Learn about CUUPS (Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans) and how paganism relates to the UU principles.

Session 2- Earth Celebrations and Traditions How do earth centered people celebrate life and nature? Explore the wheel of the year, the cycle of the moon and rites of passage. We will introduce ritual forms and traditions in a religion that follows ancient cycles in a modern world.

Session 3- Earth-Centered Belief and Concept of Deity We will explore how our beliefs are formed and how we find our place in the world. We will overview the earth-centered concepts of deity and invite participants to build connections to what they considered sacred.

Session 4- Paganism in the World We live in a world that has not always understood or accepted people that were outside the mainstream of religious traditions. We will look at how the world has viewed pagans in the past and why. Then we will turn the lens around to see how people with earth-centered beliefs experience the living universe.

Session 5- Magick and Ethics Many pagans believe "Magick is the art of changing consciousness at will". In this class we will explore beliefs about magick and its purpose in our lives. We will also explore the ethical belief systems that are used by people practicing earth-centered religions.

Summer Solstice Celebration

Summer solstice will be June 20th in the U.S.; the overhead sun grazes the Tropic of Cancer at 7:00 p.m. EDT. (The Tropic, 23° 26' 22", passes between Havana and Key West, between Mecca and Medina, near Calcutta, and through Bhopal India.) So watch and listen for news of local ceremonies then to intensify our awareness of our planet's motion in the greater scheme of things.

—Carroll Webber



June 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><u>01</u></p> <p>▣ <u>9:30am» The Forum</u></p> <p>▣ <u>11am» All Church Picnic</u></p>	<p><u>02</u></p> <p>▣ <u>6pm» Worship Committee Meeting</u></p>	<p><u>03</u></p> <p>▣ <u>8:30am» Tuesday Breakfast Group</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» KTC Buddhist Group</u></p>	<p><u>04</u></p>	<p><u>05</u></p> <p>▣ <u>6pm» Girl Scouts</u></p>	<p><u>06</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» Course in Miracles</u></p>	<p><u>07</u></p> <p>▣ <u>9am» UUCG Leadership Retreat</u></p>
<p><u>08</u></p> <p>▣ <u>9:30am» The Forum</u></p> <p>▣ <u>10:30am» Worship Service</u></p> <p>▣ <u>11:30am» CUUPS meeting</u></p> <p>▣ <u>2pm» Membership Committee Meeting</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» UU Meditation Group</u></p>	<p><u>09</u></p>	<p><u>10</u></p> <p>▣ <u>8:30am» Tuesday Breakfast Group</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» KTC Buddhist Group</u></p>	<p><u>11</u></p> <p><u>7pm New UU Orientation</u></p>	<p><u>12</u></p> <p>▣ <u>6pm» Girl Scout Leader Meeting</u></p>	<p><u>13</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» Course in Miracles</u></p>	<p><u>14</u></p> <p>▣ <u>9am» Building & Grounds Workday</u></p> <p>▣ <u>1pm» EDS Support Group Meeting</u></p> <p>▣ <u>6pm» Members & Friends Potluck</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» Teen Night (Kitchen and RE rooms)</u></p>
<p><u>15</u></p> <p>▣ <u>9:30am» The Forum</u></p> <p>▣ <u>10:30am» Worship Service</u></p>	<p><u>16</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» Board Meeting</u></p>	<p><u>17</u></p> <p>▣ <u>8:30am» Tuesday Breakfast Group</u></p> <p>▣ <u>6:30pm» Social Action Committee Mtg</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» KTC Buddhist Group</u></p>	<p><u>18</u></p>	<p><u>19</u></p> <p>▣ <u>6pm» Girl Scouts</u></p>	<p><u>20</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» Course in Miracles</u></p>	<p><u>21</u></p>
<p><u>22</u></p> <p>▣ <u>9:30am» The Forum</u></p> <p>▣ <u>10:30am» Worship Service</u></p> <p>▣ <u>5:30pm» UU Young Adults Meeting and Potluck</u></p>	<p><u>23</u></p>	<p><u>24</u></p> <p>▣ <u>8:30am» Tuesday Breakfast Group</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» KTC Buddhist Group</u></p>	<p><u>25</u></p>	<p><u>26</u></p> <p>▣ <u>6pm» Girl Scout Leader Meeting</u></p>	<p><u>27</u></p> <p>▣ <u>7pm» Course in Miracles</u></p>	<p><u>28</u></p> <p>▣ <u>9am» First Born</u></p>
<p><u>29</u></p> <p>▣ <u>9:30am» The Forum</u></p> <p>▣ <u>10:30am» Worship Service</u></p>	<p><u>30</u></p>					

Acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth in our congregation

News from RE

Last month we publicly thanked our volunteers. It takes a lot of work to provide the family activities for our church throughout the year and RE every Sunday. Our primary teachers this year were Kim Smith, Marli Baker, Victoria Brown, and Rich Elkins. The assistants were Pat Dix, Shannon Terry, Feryl Masters, Patrice Alexander, and Jennifer Barr. Don English provided many hours of yoga instruction to our youth throughout the year and Gail Butler spends many selfless hours at the church helping RE in endless ways. I am very grateful for the participation we had in RE this year.

Two of our teens attended the UU Conn held at the Eno River UU Fellowship. Rich Elkins attended as their youth advisor. Nick Brown and Aaron Gade spent the weekend in small groups with other UU teens from across the state. Nick is now a Conn regular, but this was Aaron's first. Aaron made quite a first impression by needing emergency services after sliding across a gravel parking lot in a game of "capture the flag". Thankfully the

ERUUF volunteers were prepared to handle the emergency and Rich Elkins made a great surrogate parent. Aaron came home with 17 stitches in his knee and many abrasions. I hope the ERUUF will let Aaron attend another Conn.

The UU Harry Potter summer school is just around the corner: July 13-17 from 6:00 to 8:00pm. Dinner will be provided at 6pm every evening and the Hogwarts classes will begin at 6:30pm. Hogwarts parents may be interested in attending an adult class offered by the Green Weavers CUUPS or they are free to join their children in Hogwarts. There is a \$10 fee per person or child to cover the costs of dinner. Families with more than 3 children will receive a discount and we do accept donations to help with the costs of class materials. Registration forms are available from the UUCG office. There is limited space—sign up soon to reserve your space. Anyone interested in helping with the Harry Potter week in small or large ways should see Victoria Brown, Gail Butler, or Patty Gade. It is a very big week for RE and all gifts of time and materials or money are appreciated.

—Patty Gade

UUCG Calendar

For those choosing to access their Beacon online, did you know that you can hold down the Control Key and click on any calendar item and it will take you to the UUCG website for more information about that item?

Promoting a free and responsible search for truth & meaning

From the Membership Committee

We have six more new members! Seventeen new members have joined our UU family since September. Isn't that wonderful?! Seventeen people have spent time with us and found their church home with us. The six newest members are Nicholas Brown (Victoria's eldest child), Audrey Dunphy (an ECU student), Pat Tesh (who has volunteered to chair the Social Action Committee!), Laura Schroeder (a teacher), Dawn Stancil and Brenda Shepherd. Dawn and Brenda are both subcontractors who will surely help us take care of our building and grounds.

The next monthly Food and Friends Potluck Dinner will be on Saturday, June 14th. It will begin at 6:30. We have many new members, friends, and visitors to introduce ourselves to. Put the date on your calendars and come! Remember that you can bring whatever food you want - just bring enough to share.

—The Membership Committee

June Birthday Wishes

We have some June birthday celebrators. Send them a card or sing them a song....Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday dear...

Susan Foreman	June 1st
Ruth Leggett	June 15th
Jean Thatcher	June 18th
Toni Britt-Tyer	June 20th
Dawn Stancil	June 22nd

Happy Birthday to yoooooou!

—from the Membership Committee

Charles in Charge: Renaissance Man and Road Warrior

Charles Gunther was born in Raleigh. His parents divorced early and his mother relocated with him to Greenville. His mom was 44 when he came along and his two half sisters and two half brothers were basically adults when he arrived.

Charles even has a niece who was one year older than he was. One of his half brothers got his Doctor of Divinity from Harvard. Charles remembers moving to Wyoming when he was four or so, and remembers his mom putting him on a wild horse. He was able to stay aboard for a couple of turns around the corral. At six, it was back to Greenville. Charles has been a Greenville resident ever since.

Charles went to Sadie Saulter Elementary School and E. B. Aycock Middle School. He graduated from the old J.H. Rose High School in 1980. Charles was class President at Rose and President of the Chess Club. He still has a medal he won at the state chess tournament. He says that sports were his savior – they kept him out of trouble, especially football and wrestling. Charles was a running back and was good at it. Charles' mom sold insurance to folks who were poor. Many of these policies had weekly premiums which had to be collected in person, so mom worked in the late afternoon and evening a lot. That made Charles one of the original "latchkey kids." Charles didn't mind, he said that they didn't have a lot, but they did just fine.

In the Fall of 1980, Charles matriculated at ECU in their Industrial Technology Program. He graduated in 1984 and went to work for Grady White Boats. Charles was bored by the repetitive nature of what he was doing. He quit and went to work

continued: **Warrior**, page 8

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

continued: **Warrior**, from page 7 for a company in Conetoe for 18 months doing time and motion studies. Charles burned out again and decided to go back to school. Note that in 1983, Charles joined the NC National Guard unit in Tarboro as an infantryman specializing in anti-tank missiles. Charles regularly excelled in his training and was one of the very few to get to actually get to fire a real TOW missile, something that rarely gets to happen at \$200K per shot.

Before he graduated, Charles married the daughter of a Baptist minister. They stayed married for two years. They had no children.

OK, back to school: Charles decided to pursue a Masters in Industrial Arts Education from ECU while at the same time acting as a teaching fellow training students in drafting. Charles got his Masters and taught for two and one half years – one year in New Bern and the balance in Rocky Mount. After that, Charles had enough. Time for another change.

In 1991, Charles went back to ECU to become a chemist. He had a lot of undergraduate chemistry to make up, so he spent a year getting those out of the way at the rate of 18-20 credits per semester all the while teaching drafting on the side as he had done while working on his previous Masters.

Charles decided that chemistry was not exactly what he had in mind so he decided to try the X-ray Technology program at Pitt County Community College. He finished his first year with distinction and somehow blew his second year. He's still not sure what went wrong

Charles then got an idea from a friend who was an owner-operator of his own tractor-trailer rig. Charles had always had trouble

doing the same thing for long periods of time and from time to time had trouble with supervisors. Why not try this?

Charles went to driving school, got his Commercial Drivers License, then got a job with a trucking company for a year to get some experience. After that year, Charles bought his own tractor and now has his own flat bed trailer as well. Needless to say, the high diesel prices are painful to him, but he's still making a few dollars.

Charles was raised a Baptist and during 10 or so years at ECU, spent a lot of time with the Baptist campus minister there, Reverend Bob Clyde. Charles and Rev. Clyde would spend time together talking about life and theology – which Clyde called “chasing rabbits.” Charles says “that informal education was as important to him as his formal education because it taught him to question and to live life with an open mind.”

Charles found that religion as a Baptist was boring and pretty much had always been. He had been called “Doubting Thomas” and “The Devil’s Advocate” in Sunday School when he was young. As an adult, he found that most preachers were either trying to lay a guilt trip on him alternating with trying to put him to sleep. Neither was satisfactory

Our member Michelle Simko invited Charles to accompany her to the service one Sunday and he was immediately hooked. Charles says that not only was he not bored, he felt invigorated and he felt that everyone around him seemed alive and eager to grow also. He knew that he had come home.

Bruce Berberich

Affirming the goal of world community & peace, liberty and justice for all

Notes From the Board 5/19/2008

The minutes from the April meeting were approved as amended. The Treasurer reported that we are doing somewhat better than projected in terms of our spending and the Board does not anticipate the need to take any more money out of savings. Currently the net profit from the sale of raffle tickets is \$1,000+ and tickets are still available. The drawing will take place on Sunday, May 25th. The Minister reported that four new members have just signed the membership book, which means that we have seventeen new members YTD. The Board will have a special meeting on June 5th to appoint the Committee Chairs for the upcoming year and to review the proposed updates to the UUCG Policy Manual. The Program Council, comprised of the Committee Chairs and chaired by the Vice-President, will meet with the incoming and current Board on June 7th, from 9:00 to 3:00 for orientation. The Board is still working on defining and identifying members for the Committee on Ministry and the Strategic Long Range Planning (SLRP) Committee. The Board plans to move ahead with the proposed front entrance handicapped ramp. Now that the Congregation has voted in favor of becoming a Welcoming Congregation the Board and the Minister, working with the Social Action Committee, will be developing a plan for outreach and promotion. UUCG Family Day, including the service and a picnic, will take place on Sunday, June 1st at River Park North. All members and friends are welcome and encouraged to attend. The Harry Potter Camp will take place July 13-17th. In response to feedback from previous years, the camp will take place from Sunday through Thursday.

The UU General Assembly will take place in Fort Lauderdale June 25-29th. UUCG members interested in attending should talk to the Minister and Board President. UUCG can send two voting delegates. The UUA Thomas Jefferson District Fall Conferences will take place on October 17-18 in Chapel Hill, October 31-November 1 in Richmond, and January 16-17, 2008 in Charleston. All interested UUCG leaders are encouraged to attend. There is no funding in the budget to pay expenses or registration.

The next regular Board of Trustees meeting will be June 16th at 7:00pm.

Minister's Study Leave

Rev. Ann Marie will be on Study Leave June 16 – July 6th. She will not be in the UUCG office or at church events during those dates, yet will be available by phone or e-mail for pastoral or administrative matters! Rev. Ann Marie's normal office hours are Tuesdays 11:30 - 1:30 pm, and Wednesdays 5 -7 pm. Feel free to drop by and visit!

New Member Orientation Scheduled

New Member Orientation for those who have recently joined or are thinking of it will be held Weds evening, June 11th, from 7 – 9 pm. Learn more about UU and UUCG history, mission and organization...and get to know other new members!

UU Conferences in Great Vacation Spots

Want to take a UU vacation this summer? General Assembly is in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida June 25-29. SUUSI (Southeast UU Summer Institute) in Radford, VA, is July 20-26. The Rowe Camp and Conference Center has activities all summer in New England. Ferry Beach, a UU Camp and Conference Center is on the coast of Maine. Informational brochures about all these choices (and more) to be with UU's this summer are on the table under the bulletin board at UUCG!

Respecting the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part

Get Green, Get Your Beacon On-line (if at all possible)

In an effort to be more environmentally friendly, beginning with the July issue of The Beacon, UUCG will no longer print and mail newsletters to those for whom we have an e-mail address. If there is no e-mail address on file for you, OR IF YOU REQUEST IT, you will continue to receive a printed and mailed copy! A current issue of The Beacon is always available on the UUCG website www.uugreenvillenc.org. The most current calendar of events is always also available on UUCG's website!

—Rev. Ann Marie Alderman

Deadline for next month's **beacon** is Tuesday, **June 24 at 8:00 pm**

**The Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Greenville
131 Oakmont Drive
Greenville, NC 27858
355-6658**

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Religious Education Dir, Victoria Brown
President, Rich Elkins
Vice President, Feryl Masters
Secretary, Patrice Alexander
Treasurer, Claudia Sundman
Office Administrator, Michele Covi

Committee Chairs
Building and Grounds: Ruel Tyer
Endowment: Bill Paulson
Finance: Paul Alston
Hospitality: Gail Butler & Marcia Sobel
Membership: Jackie Wyman
Religious Education: Patty Gade
Social Action: Pat Tesh
Worship: Lora Hylton

