



The UUCG beacon

September 2009

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

Sept 6
*Annual Ingathering Water
Ceremony*
Rev. Ann Marie

Sept 13
Leading the Way
Rev. Ann Marie

Sept 20
New Member Welcome
Rev. Ann Marie

Sept 27
Intergenerational Service
Green Weavers CUUPS

Children's activities are
available each Sunday.

President's Notes

Summer is coming to an end. I know this because ECU, PCC, and all the K-12 schools are now in session. The traffic is busier, Fire Tower Road is finally open, and every store has stacks of paper, notebooks, and writing implements for sale. Attendance at our services has increased over the past two weekends as folks have come back to town and the familiar routines. There were forty folks in attendance at last Friday's Italian potluck dinner and movie night, sponsored by the Fellowship Committee.

It has been fun catching up on the vacation news and we are seeing lots of enthusiasm around fellowship and community activities. Four of our members volunteered at the 2009 Million Meals Event last Saturday. Several of our members will be participating in the Health Care Can't Wait Rally on Saturday, August 29th at the intersection of Charles and Greenville Blvds and then coming over to help out with our Car Wash/Bake, Book, & Plant Sale which will run from 9:00-2:00 on the same day. We have a slew of volunteers, and could use more, signed up to help wash, dry, and sell. Now we need lots of hungry customers with dirty cars since Chef Claudia will be grilling..... Later in the afternoon Reverend Ann Marie will be conducting an orientation session for new and returning Youth Religious Education teachers. It is going to be a very busy UUCG Saturday! Hope to see you all there.

We have been hearing about UUA's recent annual General Assembly (GA) from several of our members who

Reflections

. . . of Rev Ann Marie Alderman

My life partner senses a change in the intensity of the sunlight on this hot summer day. She has to point it out to me, as I am oblivious to this! “It’s over 100 degrees”, I say. “The calendar still says it is summer.” She sees fall coming. She tries to point it out to me, to show me how the sunlight has changed. But I don’t see it.

I do see changes of a different sort. I see that many of us are leaving summer breaks and vacation time behind, to return to school or to work, or congregational life! We’ll celebrate this transition with our annual Ingathering Service on September 6. (Remember to bring water from wherever you’ve been.) And, I see folks who have moved from another place to this place who are exploring ways to form new relationships and establish a sense of community, strangers in this strange new place. Lots of visitors and new families are finding their way to UUCG this time of the year! I am constantly reminded of how long it takes me to put names to faces, and how jarring it can feel when one is “shopping” for a spiritual home. A warm welcome always helps! And, in the midst of all this obvious change, I see, even when I don’t want to, the con-

stant process of aging. We are all growing older every day! Sometimes we have to step back from the day to day to look from the perspective of years or even decades to really take it in. Suddenly, we’re 60, when just yesterday we were 40... Be gentle with us, there are times when we’re either in denial or in a state of shock!

Just yesterday, UUCG was a small congregation. Everybody knew everybody else. We’ve changed. We’ve grown older. We’ve grown younger and more diverse. There are strangers all around! Yet, I sense, more than anything else, a shift in the symbolic sunlight that fills our building, our congregation, our chalice, our hearts... We aren’t who we have been, yet we are all deep inside, who we have always been. We’re all, each and every one of us, standing occasionally in some form of denial and/or shock, yet there is a growing awareness that the light is changing.

It is shining the way to who we will be... Celebrate it! Welcome it! Move in it!

—Ann Marie

Adult Religious Education opportunity!

Rev. Ann Marie will lead “Spirit of Life”, a nine session Tapestry of Faith adult religious education program focused on exploring spirituality for Unitarian Universalists starting Wednesday evening Sept 9 at 5:30 pm. Each Wednesday evening program will be repeated during The Forum on the following Sunday morning from 9:15-10:15 am. The Sunday sessions will begin on September 13. So you have two choices! Whatever workshop we do on Weds will be repeated the following Sunday. You are welcome to come to either the Wed or Sunday sessions (or both)! The nine workshops are designed to be welcoming to many spiritual sensibilities and theological persuasions. You will be invited to claim an inclusive definition of spirituality and to recognize the spiritual aspects of your own life. Please let Rev. Ann Marie know in advance if you need childcare in order to participate!

Deadline for next month’s **beacon** is Tuesday, September 22rd at 8:00 pm

Affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every person

PREZ NOTES (continued from page 1)

attended this year's GA in Salt Lake City. This past Sunday we learned about a new UUA initiative: "Standing on the Side of Love." It is a UUA public advocacy campaign promoting respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person. It is based on the belief that no one should be dehumanized through acts of exclusion, oppression, or violence because of their identities. The goals of the campaign are:

To elevate and focus Unitarian Universalism's voice in the public square, to influence public attitudes about the worth and dignity of all.

To mobilize quick and effective responses to incidents of exclusion, oppression, or violence based on intolerance of people's identities.

On the UUA website Standing on the Side of Love is defined as a core statement of the UU belief in the power of love and our commitment to living our values. The slogan has been used effectively in describing our challenges to exclusive marriage policies. We want to build on that success to open a larger umbrella under which many people, both Unitarian Universalists and others, can take action in a broad range of arenas where people are excluded, oppressed, or attacked based on real or perceived identities

If you want to get involved do not be shy – VOLUNTEER to serve on a committee. On the back page of this edition of the Beacon is a list of the 2009-2010 UUCG Leadership Team. Please feel free to contact them to share ideas and to volunteer your time and energy.

The new directory is ready for email delivery in pdf or Publisher format. If you would like to receive a copy to read electronically or print yourself, please send Michelle, our Office Administrator, an email (www.uugreenvillenc.org). Please also let her know if you need a printed version.

There will be lots going on at UUCG over the next couple of months. New member orientation will take place on September 20th. UUCG has been invited to participate in the Greenville Human Relations Council Inclusion March on September 26th. The Thomas Jefferson District (TJD) of UUA, of which we are a member congregation, is encouraging all members to attend the Standing on the Side of Love National Equality March in Washington, DC, on October 11th. Annette Marquis', TJD's Executive Director, goal is to have 1,000 TJD members in attendance. Several congregations across North Carolina are hiring buses to make it easier for their members to attend.

PREZ NOTES (continued on page 4)

Affirming justice, equity and compassion towards all

PREZ NOTES (continued from page 3)

The Strategic Long Range Planning (SLRP) Committee has begun conducting focus group meetings, to discuss the results of the recent congregational survey. To date we have held three that have been full of animated discussion. There will be about six more focus group meetings scheduled through September and early October in an effort to ensure that every UUCG member and friend has an opportunity to participate. The locations of the meetings, as well as the time and days, are posted at UUCG. Sign up there or contact Brenda Stewart or Patrice Alexander.

Stephen Brand, our new Choir Director, will start holding Choir Practice on Wednesday evenings at 7:00. Please check the calendar on the UUCG website for the most up to date schedules and announcements. Stephen is a new member of UUCG, a graduate student in ECU's School of Music, has experience as a church music director, and really wants to build both our adult and children's choirs. So let the singing begin.

The Board and the Program Council will be holding their annual Leadership Retreat on September 11th and 12th. This is when the Board Goals for 2009-2010 will be developed to give guid-

ance to the Committees as they develop their plans of work for the year. We welcome the input of our members and friends. Please share your ideas and thoughts with us – it helps if they are in written form – so we can bring them to our discussions.

Plans are also in the works for our Annual Holiday Service Auction and a new fundraising project – gift wrapping at Barnes & Nobles. A member of the Fun (d)raising (Feryl has re-named the committee) will be contacting all our members and friends to ask for auction donations and to sign each of us up for gift wrapping. Right now it looks as if the Auction will be in November and that we will be wrapping on Thanksgiving Friday and the five days prior to Christmas Day. Please be generous, since the monies raised are a critical piece of our budget and will be used to support our activities and programs. If you have not been contacted please talk to Claudia or Feryl to volunteer.

We have made some progress in all of these areas. We also have many opportunities to make things better. Together we can accomplish what we cannot accomplish on our own. If we covenant to listen with respect to each other and celebrate our differences we will be successful.

--Patrice Alexander, President
UUCG Board of Trustees, 2009-2010



September 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		01 8:30am» Breakfast at Cracker Barrel 7pm» KTC Buddhist Group	02 7pm» Choir Practice	03	04 6pm» A Course in Miracles	05 10am» Building Cleaning
06 10:30am» Worship Service 12pm» RE committee meeting	07	08 8:30am» Breakfast at Cracker Barrel 7pm» KTC Buddhist Group	09 5:30pm» UU Spirituality 7pm» Choir Practice	10 6pm» Girl Scout Leader Meeting	11 5:30pm» Art Reception 6pm» A Course in Miracles 7pm» Annual Board Retreat	12 9am» Annual Leadership Retreat 9am» Building & Grounds Workday 10am» Building Cleaning 7pm» Teen Night (Kitchen and RE rooms)
13 9:15am» The Forum 10:30am» Worship Service 4pm» Green Weaver CUUPS Intro RE at Sojo 7pm» UU Meditation Group	14 5pm» Worship Committee Meeting	15 8:30am» Breakfast at Cracker Barrel 7pm» KTC Buddhist Group	16 5:30pm» UU Spirituality 7pm» SLRP Focus Group 7pm» Choir Practice	17	18 6pm» A Course in Miracles	19 10am» Building Cleaning 1pm» EDS Support Group in Library
20 9:15am» The Forum 10:30am» Worship Service 12pm» New Member Orientation 5pm» Vegetarian Pot Luck	21 6pm» Girl Scouts 7pm» Board Meeting	22 8:30am» Breakfast at Cracker Barrel 7pm» KTC Buddhist Group	23 5:30pm» UU Spirituality 7pm» Choir Practice	24 6pm» Girl Scout Leader Meeting 7pm» SLRP Focus Group 7:30pm» UU Men's Group	25 6pm» A Course in Miracles	26 9am» First Born Food Distribution 10am» Building Cleaning
27 9:15am» The Forum 10:30am» Worship Service 4pm» Green Weaver CUUPS Intro RE at Sojo 5:30pm» UU Roddenberry Circle	28	29 8:30am» Breakfast at Cracker Barrel 7pm» KTC Buddhist Group	30 5:30pm» UU Spirituality 7pm» Choir Practice			

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

Exploring Earth-Centered Religion

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 Sundays from 4:00- 5:30 pm at the Sojourner store, 414 Evans St in Uptown Greenville. For more information contact MarshAster at marshaster@embarqmail.com.

September 13- 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.

September 27- 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.

October 4- Session 3- Earth-Centered Belief



CUUPS National Emblem

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.

October 11- 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.

October 25- 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.

--Michelle Covi

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

Religious Education

It has been a summer of change here in the Religious Education department. I've taken over as committee chair and we are actively working on finding a new Director of Religious Education. I want to thank everyone who has helped make this transition go as smoothly as possible, including Gail Butler who is graciously filling in as the acting Director of Religious Education and our former RE Chair, Patti Gade, who has been continuing to offer her assistance and insight. And we can't forget all the volunteer teachers who instruct our youth every Sunday – thank you all!

Summer is coming to an end and we are all getting ready for the new school year. This means we will be wrapping up our summer activities as we prepare to start on our fall curriculum. The Elementary and Primary classes have been combined this summer, and we'd like to invite the congregation to come see some of the work that our UU children have done. After the service on August 30th we will hold an RE Open House in the big RE room in place of having coffee in the sanctuary. Please come back, enjoy some food, drinks and fellowship and learn a little more about what our youth are doing while we are in service. I hope to see everyone there!

—Jennifer Thielen

UU Meditation

All are welcome to join the UU Meditation Group on Sunday evening, September 13, from 7:00 to 8:00.

The purpose of our meditation is to connect with God, as we understand that force which is greater than ourselves. For beginners we will spend a few minutes at the start introducing meditation, after which we will meditate on our own. There will be breaks during meditation.

—Don English

Quilter's Guild Exhibit & Reception

Members of the Greenville Quilters Guild will be exhibiting their artwork in the church beginning the first week in September. A reception for the public including our friends, neighbors and families will be held on Friday, September 11, from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. The Guild, formed in 1980 to promote and perpetuate the art of quilting, creates traditional bed quilts as well as artistic wall hangings.

The Guild composes quilts, and donates them annually to the Ronald McDonald House and to the Howell House. For the ECU Centennial Celebration the quilters were asked to create a commemorative quilt depicting the campus buildings. It now hangs in a place of honor in the Joyner Library.

The Greenville Quilters Guild of about 40 members meets monthly.

--Terry Shank

Fellowship Activities

Last month's Italian Potluck and Movie was very well attended, and enjoyed. The movie was not enjoyed by all, but the food was magnificent. Dinners for 7 or 8 and Dinners for Families (It might be time to start calling these dinners something simpler) is scheduled for September 19th at a time set by the host or hostess. We're going to need four hosts/hostesses for the Dinners for 8, and two or three for the Family Dinners. Volunteers? As always...PUT IT ON YOUR CALENDARS! DON'T MISS THE FUN AND FELLOWSHIP!

....From the Fellowship Committee

—Jackie Wyman

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

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

Staff

Minister: Rev Ann Marie Alderman
Interim Religious Education Dir: Gail Butler
President: Patrice Alexander
Vice President: Theresa Sparrow
Secretary: Susan Foreman
Treasurer: Brenda Stewart
Music Director: Mort Stine
Choir Director: Stephen Brand
Office Administrator: Michelle Covi

Committee Chairs

Building and Grounds: Feryl Masters,
Richard Weir & Terry Shank
Endowment: Bill Paulson
Finance: Paul Alston
Hospitality: Kathy Weigel & Tracy
Donohue
Membership: Alan Bailey & Heidi
Luchsinger
Religious Education: Jennifer Thielen
Social Action: Pat Tesh & Tom Long
Worship: Bev Harju

