



The UUCG Beacon

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Revisiting the past and seeing today



Rich Elkins

I was having some problems coming up with what topic to muse upon this month, and that maybe I should look back and see what I wrote about seven years ago as I was getting started in my first of two terms as Board President 2007-2009. Would something I wrote back then inspire me to some new conclusions? Or might I even be able to get away with reusing one I'd written before?

For October 2007, my column was about the changing weather, my ideal weather, and a climatological analysis of why giving me a thermostat for the outdoors wouldn't turn out to be a very good idea. It doesn't sound much different than something I'd consider writing about now. Even if you were with us seven years ago, and read it back then, would you remember it today?

I actually looked through a couple of whole issues July to October of that year, seeing many names of people who should be familiar to us all, but also noting a lot of names of people who've left us. I saw some events we still do today (like the CROP Walk and a Ministerial Start-up Retreat), while other events (such as the weekly Wednesday Dining Out and Dinners for 8) have gone by the wayside, but been replaced with others, such as the Roving Lunch Group and Classic GLBT Movie Night. Maybe some things from our past will be revisited? Our Book Club has just restarted, and there is some thought to a greater emphasis on small-group ministries, much like we did ten years ago when I first joined the Board.

Seven years ago this month, Ray Sobel, then chair and now back as co-chair of Social Action, had an article in the Beacon about the crisis in healthcare, and there was an announcement that we would be undertaking the Welcoming Congregation series of workshops as an Adult RE program, culminating in our becoming one by a unanimous vote at the Annual Congregational Meeting the following May.

Most notable parallel that I noticed comparing where we are to where we were in my first term seven years ago was that at that time as well, we had just finished our time with an Interim Minister and were getting to know our new Minister.

It all just brings me back to the idea of a cyclical view of history:

"What has happened before will happen again. What has been done before will be done again."

–Ecclesiastes 1:9

"All this has happened before, and all of it will happen again."

– Sacred Scrolls (Battlestar Galactica)

"Everything that needs to be said has already been said. But since no one was listening, everything must be said again."

– André Gide

MINISTER'S REFLECTIONS



Rev. Rod Debs

Two Bostonians were chatting on one of the narrow streets of Boston's Beacon Hill, when a passing motorist stopped and inquired through his open window, "How do you get to Navy Yard in Charlestown where Old Ironsides is docked?" One directed him to turn right onto Charles Street, but the other said, "No, the city changed the direction of Charles Street. It's one way south now." "Yes, yes, you're right," he said, "So turn left onto Charles and left again onto Beacon that becomes School Street, and then turn left onto Cambridge." But no, the big construction project "depressing the artery" was rerouting traffic away from downtown. The two discussed a number of possible routes. It must have been ten minutes before they suddenly stopped talking. Silent seconds passed. They looked at each other, then at the driver and said, "I'm sorry, but you can't get there from here."

Unitarian Universalists all over the world aspire to create a world that celebrates human diversity, a sustainable global ecosystem, and a world with peace, liberty and justice for all -- nobody left behind. Each congregation has articulated our aspirations in a mission statement. The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Greenville named ours to be "a more just and compassionate society."

I'm sorry, but you can't get there from here.

So, where can we go that we can get to our goals from there?!

When Rev. Rod Thompson was here, you met in groups to identify five developmental goals that the Board is charged by the congregation to reach with the support of the congregation and of a Developmental Minister (that's me). The same is true of these wonderful goals: We can't accomplish our goals without some new and creative strategies, new structures, new support.

I don't know what actions will get us to a place of greater power and appeal and excitement and greater influence. But I'm willing to plan and experiment with you what actions the Board might guide us to take that get this congregation to where our goals can be reached. As we experiment and play and cooperate and give of our time and treasures, we will get to a place that our goals are attainable!

Consider our mission. Is a more just and compassionate society worth it?

Please join me in supporting the Board and its appointed leaders as we all strive to get to new "places" where we can say: Yes, we can get there from here!

Blessings!

CONGREGATIONAL DINNER AND START-UP

Friday October 10th 6:00PM—9:00PM

This weekend is when Kathy McGowan, Congregational Life Staff responsible for our area will visit us and do workshops and activities devised to help the Minister and Congregation at the beginning of a Developmental Ministry. The Start-up Dinner Friday night event is for the entire congregation and will include dinner starting at 6:00pm. It is important that as many members of the congregation attend as possible.

Saturday the 11th will be workshops designed for the Church Leadership (Board, Committee Chairs, and Staff).

YALE SALE AND CAR WASH

The Fall UUCG Yard Sale and Car Wash is happening **October 4th**. Pack up all those still usable items you don't need and bring them on down the beginning of October. We rejoice in a diversity of items. Bring that filthy (or just slightly dusty) car or truck in later to get it thoroughly washed. We believe all vehicles have inherent worth and deserve to look dignified. Help with transporting items is available. **Anything to be sold should be brought by Friday October 3rd**. Contact Feryl at oferyl@gmail.com if you need assistance with transporting items or want to help with the Car Wash. Contact Jennifer Thielen if you want to help with the yard sale. Indoor yard sale starts 7am. Outdoor car wash starts 9am.

SOCIAL ACTION

On **October 19th** UUCG will join with other local churches to raise funds to promote awareness of local, national, and global hunger issues. Again this year, the walk will begin at Third Street School on 600 W. 3rd Street. The walking route will pass several community gardens that Third Street has supported with funds from the CROP Walk. As the event center, Third Street will receive 25% of all donations.

There is a sign-up sheet on the flip chart. Get pledges from family, friends, and neighbors. I'm new to this but I think we have a UUCG banner and probably meet at the church before going to 3rd Street.

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

Caring:

Ruel Tyer & Ruth Abrahamson

Communications:

Rich Elkins

Fellowship:

Cam Scales

Finance:

Richard Baltaro

Fundraising:

Patrice Alexander & Jennifer Schultz

Hospitality:

Kim Fleming & Holly Brown

Membership:

Susan Foreman

Social Action:

Ray Sobel & Ann Eleanor

Stewardship:

Patrice Alexander & Feryl Masters

Worship:

Michael Betteken

Youth Religious Education:

Shannon Terry & Christy Hoppenthaler

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

Send articles to beacon@uugreenvillenc.org

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The UUCG Beacon is published every month, on or before the last Sunday of the month. It is posted electronically to both the church website and the church Facebook page. It is also emailed with the weekly NUUS following publication.

If you are receiving this copy by mail, please consider using one of the methods above. If you must receive a paper copy (and we are glad to do so) please contact the church office OR email the beacon at the email address below OR contact Toni Broshears directly. Thank you.