



The UUCG Beacon

December 2012

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

December 2

Spiritual, but Not Religious

Rev. Ann Marie Alderman

December 9

Annual Holiday Music Service

September 16

Yule Celebration
GreenWeaver CUUPS

December 23

Sugar Plum Fairy Rev.
Rev. Ann Marie Alderman

December 30

TBD

Children's activities are available each Sunday.



President's Notes

President's Notes

It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.

Charles Darwin (Unitarian, naturalist, author On the Origin of Species)

Please forgive me if this month's Beacon article reflects my mixed emotions on Ann Marie's final few weeks with us. As she tackles the next chapter in her life, we as a congregation are losing a leader, an advisor, and a dear friend. Over the last several years, she has in many ways served as the face (and heart) of UUCG. She will be sorely missed.

And yet, in some ways I feel as though I don't have the time to properly grieve, as is too often the case in life, there is work to be done. The board's decision to hire an interim minister seemed on the surface to be a simple one, yet the process has been wrought with curveballs, disappointments, panic, regrouping, and finally hope. After an initial stumble out of the blocks, our task force on interim ministry has identified a suitable candidate minister interested in facilitating our transition. He and the task force have exchanged dozens of emails and phone calls, as well as a 2-hour Skype interview over the Thanksgiving weekend. Background and references are being checked now, and a draft contract will be presented to your Board of Trustees on Dec 3rd.

It is in these emotionally challenging times of transition that we need to be our most understanding and accepting of each other. We need to be careful to listen. We need to acknowledge and respect differing opinions without necessarily trying to "convert" others to our way of thinking. We need to be our best and truest selves. We need to be flexible.

In short, we need to be adaptable to change.

Tom Thielen
President
UUCG Board of Trustees

Reflections

... of Reverend Ann Marie Alderman



As you probably know, this will be the last time I contribute to this publication as your minister. I understand there will be a potluck on Saturday, December 15th where we can say goodbye in person. And my final Sunday service will be on December 23rd. Because this is my last Reflections column as well as the sea-

son of gift giving, it seems appropriate for me to share here my gratitude for all the gifts I have received from UUCG. First of all I am thankful for having been given the opportunity to have served these past 5+ years as your sole full-time minister. It has been wonderful to be in a setting where I could wear so many hats at once. From preaching to teaching, to going on candle runs to the Ayden Bible Bookstore, (where they always treated me with respect!), to the many, many conversations with those who came into my office who were struggling with something, to poking my head in the attic to see where the roof leaks were, to picking out wood floors for the nursery, to having to maintain my composure while conducting memorial services for the beloved members who have passed on during my time here, to rescuing and housing the pet of one of those members, to showing up for all the ways UU's try to make Eastern North Carolina a better place to live and the world more full of caring and justice for all, to the unexpected gifts so many have given me, the smiles and the encouragement and the laughs. I am thankful for the Board members and all the other leaders I have had the pleasure to know and to create community with. I am grateful for the other clergy and community leaders I have come to know and rely on in Greenville. I am thrilled to have been a part of weddings and unions and child dedications, and for all the new members I have had the great pleasure of welcoming into UUCG.

I will forever treasure the way all of you have been so willing and gracious about sending me off to a new adventure.

And, I leave with the sure knowledge that UUCG will make its own leap into the future. I know you have been and will continue to be the little church that can: whether that "can"

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Staff

Minister: Rev. Ann Marie Alderman
Youth Religious Education Director: Kimberly Scholl
Music Director: Mort Stine
Choir Director: Stephen Brand
Office Administrator: Michelle Covi

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UUCG Member Survey Results

UUCG members and friends were recently surveyed about their impressions of the congregation and the upcoming departure of Reverend Ann Marie Alderman. While a more detailed discussion of results will be available in the future, here is a brief summary of the results. For each question, the top two or three responses are discussed.

Question #1 was "What do you currently most appreciate about UUCG?" The community of like-minded individuals and the presence of liberal religion are valued the most.

Question #2 "What would you most like to see UUCG focus on the future?" 56% responded the music was very important! 54.8% noted the minister was very important while 53.7% responded the most important factor was the welcoming of diverse people and faith expressions.

When asked to rank the major strengths of the UUCG congregation, 45.5% strongly agreed that being compassionate individuals while 40.9% only agreed that service to those in need and having a clear mission and purpose were strengths.

About the departure of Ann Marie, 53% of the responses noted a concern about the quality of services and 48.9% were concerned about the loss of leadership.

For the future of UUCG over half of those surveyed said we need more social interaction and a bigger building. Along with that, over half the responses were to buy an existing structure rather than expand the building we currently have or build a custom building. 84% of those surveyed said that contributing a little more to their yearly pledge was something they were willing to do to achieve the facilities growth we need.

When asked in what areas they hope the interim minister is most skilled the responses were in leadership, preaching, and connection to the wider community.

More details about the survey results will be available at a later date – stay tuned!

There will be a Pot Luck Lunch to say farewell to Reverend Ann Marie on December 15 at UUCG from 12-2pm. Bring your favorite dish to share for fellowship and laughter as we wish Ann Marie Good Luck on her new road of life.

In Peace and Compassion,

Tammy
Board Secretary

December Classic GLBT Movie Night change in schedule

Since October 2011, UUCG has been sponsoring and hosting a monthly Classic GLBT Movie Night as an outreach to the local GLBT community and their straight allies as an exercise of our status as a Welcoming Congregation. Films are chosen the month prior by audience vote from a selection of films chosen to fit a monthly theme picked by organizers to provide a variety of film genres and inclusion of various communities.

Movie Night is regularly scheduled for the 3rd Friday of each month, with the event starting at 7pm with fellowship and time to get refreshments (sometimes just popcorn and drinks, other times more elaborate). Just before 7:30, we have announcements, watch previews, and choose the next month's movie. The feature film then starts a little after 7:30. Most movies are an hour and a half to two hours in length.

Refreshments are provided monthly by various community groups or individuals as a fundraiser. Refreshments are free, with a donation jar for those who are able to give.

Due to schedule conflicts with all of the organizers for the regular date being so close to the holidays, the December Movie Night will be Friday, December 14th at 7pm and the film will be "Love! Valour! Compassion!" (1997). Movie Night will return to its regularly scheduled date of the third Friday in January on January 18th.

The movies are GLBT, but the audience doesn't have to be! I hope you'll join us this month or sometime in the future.

Rich Elkins

The Worship Committee is planning two "congregation participation" services for January. We would appreciate *your* participation.

On January 13 we ask you to share poems of spiritual significance to you. Come and tell us about the poem and poet, why it moves you, and share it with the group.

On January 20 we will celebrate the birth of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. through readings, multimedia, and best of all, the personal recollections of the impact that his life has had on us. Your stories will be a powerful force in their own right.

Thanks in advance for your participation, whether you come to speak or listen! Please contact me (pkurmas@gmail.com) with any questions and to be penciled in for planning purposes.

PLEASE BE ALERT

There have been a series of car break-ins at churches in Greenville and Pitt County over the past month. These break-ins have been occurring at different times of day – whenever there is activity at a church. They have taken place in the County and in the City. (*We have also heard of break-ins at the Gold Gym's parking lot across the street– Editor*).

Please do not leave purses and other valuable items in your car. Be mindful of strangers in the parking lot and report anything suspicious to local law enforcement. —Greenville Police Dept.

~ December 2012 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Little Willie share half offering						1
2 9:30a-10:10a Mindfulness Group 10:30a-11:30a Spiritual, but not Religious? Rev. Ann Marie 12p-2p Baby Dedication Reception 12p-1p Lunch Group 4p-5:30p Celebration of Life for John Holden	3	4 8a-9a Breakfast Group 7:30p-8:45p KTC Buddhist Meditation	5 7p-8p Choir Practice	6 10a-11a Brand Helvig Music and Wellness 6:30p-7:30p Brand Helvig Music and Wellness	7 1p-2p Women's Lunch Group	8 9a-10a Brand Helvig Music and Wellness 10:30a-2p Private rental 2p-4:30p Celebration of Life for Bill Paulson
9 9:30a-10:10a Mindfulness Group 10:30a-11:30a Annual Holiday Music Service 12p-1p Lunch Group	10 5:30p-6:30p Worship Committee Meeting 7:30p-10p Sierra Club Meeting	11 8a-9a Breakfast Group 7:30p-8:45p KTC Buddhist Meditation	12 3p-4:30p CSCENC board meeting 7p-8p Choir Practice	13 10a-11a Brand Helvig Music and Wellness 6:30p-7:30p Brand Helvig Music and Wellness	14 7p-10p Classic GLBT Movie Night	15 12p-2p Rev. Ann Marie goodbye potluck
16 9:30a-10:10a Mindfulness Group 10:30a-11:30a Yule Celebration, CUUPS 12p-1p Lunch Group 5p-7p Vegetarians in Pitt County potluck	17 7p-8:30p Board of Trustees Meeting	18 8a-9a Breakfast Group 7:30p-8:45p KTC Buddhist Meditation	19 7p-8p Choir Practice	20 10a-11a Brand Helvig Music and Wellness 6:30p-7:30p Brand Helvig Music and Wellness	21 10:30a-11:30a Brand Helvig Music and Wellness 1p-2p Women's Lunch Group	22
23 9:30a-10:10a Mindfulness Group 10:30a-11:30a Sugar Plum Fairy, Rev. Ann Marie 12p-1p Lunch Group 12p-1p Shelter Action Group Meeting	24 7p-8:30p Book Club	25 8a-9a Breakfast Group 4p-5p Caring Committee Meeting 7:30p-8:45p KTC Buddhist Meditation	26 7p-8p Choir Practice	27	28	29
30 9:30a-10:10a Mindfulness Group 10:30: Worship Service 12p-1p Lunch Group	31					

Rev. Ann Marie's Reflections.....

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includes having become a truly Welcoming Congregation who is ready to now be multi-cultural, multi-racial, full of every generation and welcoming of even more diversity, or responsibility for launching a million dollar project to care for those living with cancer, or having achieved and staying over the 100 member mark, or having achieved and continuing to fund a multi-staff ministry that meets the needs of children and youth and for music, a place well known as an art venue, a movie house, a place to come to for those hosting meetings or alternative worship services, a place to dream that one day there might be an even better home for dreams...

Whatever you may do or become, I am deeply grateful, for having played some part in that...

Namaste,

Rev. Ann Marie

Happy Birthday to UUs this December

Dec. 1– Ann Eleanor
Dec. 10– Betty Greer
Dec. 15– Alice Arnold
Dec. 27– Betty Nelson



Deadline for next month's **Beacon** is Tuesday, **December 18 at 8:00 pm**

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