



THE BEACON

A Voice for Liberal Religion in Southeastern North Carolina



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LET LOVING KINDNESS LEAD THE WAY

www.uucwnc.org ♦ Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Wilmington
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Office Hours

MINISTER

REV. CHERYL M. WALKER

TUESDAY 11AM – 4PM

WEDNESDAY 11AM – 4PM

THURSDAY 11AM – 4PM

AND BY APPOINTMENT

DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION

LESLIE O’CONNOR

MONDAY 10:30AM - 3:30PM

WEDNESDAY 10:30AM - 3:30PM

THURSDAY 10:30AM - 3:30PM

ADMINISTRATOR

JULIE BURCHAM

TUESDAY 9AM – 2PM

WEDNESDAY 9AM – 2PM

THURSDAY 9AM – 2PM

FRIDAY 9AM – 2PM

Month Worship Schedule	
Feb. 7	Sara Jarvis
Feb. 14	Rev. Jaqueline Brett
Feb. 21	Rev. Cheryl
Feb. 28	Rev. Cheryl



*Subject to change - please call ahead



EVERYDAY LIVING BY REV. CHERYL

I like numbers and spreadsheets, which is probably no surprise to anyone who has known me for more than like a day. I have kept my checkbook on a spreadsheet for years, I balance my accounts daily. I have been keeping a spreadsheet of COVID cases in the United States and Worldwide almost since the beginning. I get data, every morning at 10am, from Johns Hopkins University of Medicine and the World Health Organization. I know how many new and total cases we have and the mortality rate. A year ago, this month is when the virus began to spread. There were a few cases in January 2020, but it was February that marked the beginning of the end of our innocence.

It would not be until March that our everyday living would dramatically change, but in February we knew it was here and the only question left was how long would it take before it took hold. And it took hold big time. More could have been done earlier to mitigate the spread, but with this virus nothing could have been done to keep it totally at bay. Viruses don't much care about government policies, but government policies could have made us safer if not safe.

For a year we have been living with the stress of COVID19. No matter how well we *think* we are doing, all of us are living with a heightened level of stress. In the beginning the stress was about getting food and toilet paper. Now we have the stress about when we might get vaccinated. In between we've been living with the stress of the unknown. We don't feel well and instead of thinking "I might be catching a cold" we think "do I have COVID?" And rightly so because over 25 million people in this country have or have had COVID. The number is growing, January was the deadliest month so far.

We live with the stress of isolation. We cannot see our families; we cannot see our friends. For people who live alone it is especially stressful. Though there is also the stress of living with someone 24/7 if you are living with people. Parents live with the stress of what to do with their children every day and whether they should send them to school if school is open. We all are living every day with stress.

The first way to cope with our stress is to recognize and name it as such. This is not the time to keep a stiff upper lip and pretend that we are immune to the stress. The second thing is to be aware of how the stress is manifesting itself in our bodies and our emotions. The third thing to do is to develop a personal plan for relieving our stress. The fourth thing to do is to reach out when the stress is getting too much – phone a friend, call your pastor. The last thing is keep breathing, literally and figuratively.

We are not at the end of this pandemic, though the end will come. In the meantime, it is important for all of us to realize the toll it is taking on us in our everyday living and do what we can to minimize our stress. Name it, be aware of it, make a plan, make a call, keep breathing. Together we shall make it to the other side.

Many Kind Blessings, Rev. Cheryl

AN OPTIMISTS VIEW BY JAMES LUDWIG

Optimists see the happenings in our life as working for us versus to us. 2020 was certainly a disaster for so many giving focus to look forward at 2021's opportunities to improve our life. While developing my plan for 2021, I have spent the last few weeks reflecting on my 2020.



Working with the Board has been rewarding as many initiatives have been given life by the excellent work of your Board and the many members who make the business of the Congregation hum. Last month's Beacon celebrated the start of the Program Councils coordination amongst the operating committees. The Committee for Ministry is a reality. The Congregation approved the financial plan for the fiscal year. Thank you.

For Rose and I the year started slowly. Eventually we tired of sitting on the patio watching the wind blow the leaves around. I committed to renewing enjoyable hobbies, took another writing class and began a family memoir. We engaged in a 3-month program of nutritional improvement which achieved our goals of improved health and weight loss. The weekly dash through Harris Teeters bakery and pizza area still gives us whiplash.

On a higher level, I am thrilled at the changes in our Federal government. Perhaps the backlash of the January 6th episode from citizen sentiment and political donors will have an effect on those who need redirection. The Biden-Harris administration could deliver many changes consistent with our UU principles. We hope for a continuing reduction in paralytic division. Thank you and wishing you all a prosperous, joyous, and healthy 2021.

SEEKING INTERESTED CONGREGANTS FOR OUR NEW COMMITTEE FOR MINISTRY BY JERRY HURWITZ



In last month's Beacon, we announced that we are restarting a team to be called Committee For Ministry (CFM). The CFM will be responsible for evaluating and providing feedback on our ministerial stakeholders. The committee will have six members: 2 appointed by Reverend Cheryl, 2 appointed by the BOT and 2 selected by the BOT from volunteer congregants.

We are looking for volunteers who hold strong credibility with their fellow congregants and who represent a diversity of views, make up and perspectives of the congregation. The two volunteers selected will serve terms of 1-3 years. (We are still working out these details). If you are interested in volunteering or just learning more please contact BOT President, Beth O'Connell (ebethoc@gmail.com) or BOT member, Jerry Hurwitz (jerry.hurwitz1@gmail.com). We plan to start up our CFM in the next couple months.

USING OUR GIFTS IN SERVICE TO OTHERS BY BETSY RANDALL-DAVID

Spotlight on Kelley Wheat-Rivers

I must confess that during pre-pandemic times, I got to church early on choir Sundays so I could position myself as close to Kelley Wheat-Rivers as possible. Kelley is a cherished choir member and her beautiful singing voice is balm for my soul. I didn't want to miss one note.

Clearly Kelley was gifted an amazing voice and she offers this gift to others both in our church and, also in her work with patients as a hospice chaplain. Apparently one of her mentors encouraged her to “see singing as an act of service” and Kelley has enriched many lives by singing **to** and **with** others. Kelley told me a wonderful story about a patient who was verbally non-communicative and rather disengaged socially. Kelley brought in her Methodist hymnal (from her days growing up as a Methodist) and worked her way through the entire hymnal singing **to** and then later **with** this patient. Staff at the facility were surprised and excited by the change in the patient as a result of Kelley's intervention. She had connected at a deep level through her gift of song.



“THERE IS INCREDIBLE
VALUE IN BEING OF
SERVICE TO OTHERS.”

- ELIZABETH BERG

Kelley also has great compassion and uses this gift to connect with each patient and family she serves as hospice chaplain. She said she is guided by the fifth Unitarian Universalist principle and assists patients in a “free and responsible search for truth and meaning”. Kelley often meets patients and their families at the end of life, but she emphasized that everyone has their own needs and desires in how they wish to spend their remaining days. Some people want to be read to, conversed with or sung to. Others want to do a life review. Kelley starts with assessing what has been spiritually uplifting for the patient throughout their life and then tries to bring that to them in their final chapter. Kelley said, “this is where being a UU is beneficial because I try to honor each person's individual faith and spirituality though it is often different than my own.”

Kelley was raised a Methodist but like many of us expanded her understanding of religion and spirituality in college. She learned about Unitarian Universalism from fellow students in seminary and has been an engaged UU ever since. Her career has taken some twists and turns but she feels that she has found her true calling. She has been working at Liberty Home Care and Hospice for over ten years where her special gifts have benefitted many patients and families. At UUCWNC we're lucky to have her sharing her gifts with us as a choir member, occasional worship associate and participant in spirituality groups. Thank you, Kelley, for showing us how one can live ones Unitarian Universalist principles through service to others. We're glad that you and your husband Dan and daughter Emma call UUCWNC your spiritual home.

FULL MOON BY JESSICA HOLM

The February Full Moon is called the Snow Moon. It is the month to celebrate Imbolc, the first Celtic holiday of the year. It marks the halfway point between winter solstice and the spring equinox. Celebrations include honoring the Goddess Brigid, who was evoked in fertility rites and oversaw poetry, crafts, and prophecy.

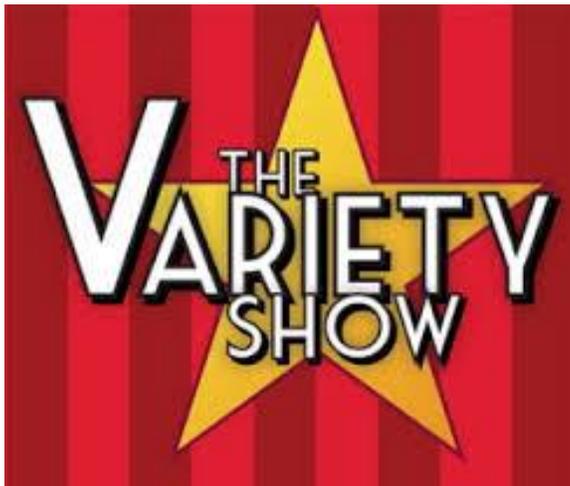


Did you know that originally, February was made the last month of the calendar year in the Roman calendar? Around 450 BC, February was moved to its place as the second month.

Join us at our February Full Moon Gathering on Tuesday, February 23rd at 7:00 pm on Zoom. Robin B will lead our ritual. A Zoom invitation will be sent out prior to that date.

All women of any age are welcomed to these gatherings. If you would like to attend and are not on the mailing list, please contact fullmoon@uucwnc.org for additional information.

5TH ANNUAL VARIETY SHOW BY JESSICA HOLM



It's almost showtime again! Our 5th Annual (has it been that long?) Variety Show will be held virtually, again, over Zoom. Mark this date on your calendar...

Friday, May 7th, 7-9pm.

Performances are live, unless 2 or more people are performing in different locations. So, all mistakes and gaffs will be seen and welcomed. It's part of the fun of doing this live!!

We need performers as well as audience members!

For those who have not participated in previous shows, there is a reason that we call it a "Variety Show" and NOT a Talent Show. **Talent is optional!** So, don't be shy! Let me know you want to sing, dance, tell a story, or whatever you want to do.

Contact me! Jessica, at jsholm58@gmail.com!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SERVE? BY JEANETTE KOSCHAR

I have had the privilege of serving as the January Caring Committee Coordinator. Sometimes free thinkers like UUers can be viewed as “herding cats.” No surprise, the people on this committee do not embody that stereotype. Your Caring Committee members: Cathy Campau, Carol Anne Davis, Diane Halley, Jeannie Lennon, Kami O’Keeffe, Jill Pollock, Betsy Randall- David, and Rev. Cheryl M. Walker have all contributed to serving UU congregants and beyond.

In addition, Pat & David M, Beth O’C, Doris C and Robin & Carl M provided meals to nourish fellow UUers. Thanks also to Diane H and Kami O’K who continue to provide comfort food soup.

Serving is different from helping or even supporting. Service embraces the basic premise that the nature of life is sacred and holy. **Serving is based on equality, a relationship between equals.** It intertwines UU’s First and Seventh Principles: We honor “the inherent worth and dignity of all people” and “Respect the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.” We lean into the experience with a willing heart and capable hands.

We look forward to the day we can open the sanctuary doors and share Sunday services together. Yet, I am thankful for our Zoom experts that make Sunday services, classes and meetings possible. Sharing our Joys and Sorrows in the chat box provides a way to support those in our community. We learn there are people recovering from the coronavirus, surgeries, cancer therapies or broken bones. We also embrace those struggling with anxiety, aloneness and uncertainty during these trying times. Our hearts ache for those who have lost loved ones. I am reminded of the Bruce Lee quote: “The key to immortality is first living a life worth remembering.”

We also celebrate our joys. We are grateful for the availability of the Corona virus vaccine, for families finding ways to safely celebrate birthdays and other milestones, for people being able to return to work and for volunteers who can resume their services to the broader community.

Despite all the chaos in 2020 and this first month of 2021, we still have lots to be thankful for. I am thankful for serving in a caring and compassionate community.

Acting in concert with the minister, members of the caring committee are here to serve you in times of need.

Jill Pollack is the February Coordinator of the Caring Committee. You can contact her directly or through the caring committee e-mail (caring@uucwnc.org).



KEEPING UP WITH SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVITIES BY PETER RAWITSCH

Here are four ways to stay up-to-date on Social Justice activities in our area:

1. Read the weekly UUDigest. And if you want to share your Social Justice activity, send it directly to: uudigest@uucwnc.org
2. Read the Side with Love - Lower Cape Fear Facebook Group page. You can join this private UU group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/sidewithlovelowercapefear>
3. Join the UU Social Justice Ministry of North Carolina / Forward Together's online activities. They have an Action Hour every Friday at 11:00am. Here is their Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/91029655107>
4. Coming soon! The UUCWNC website will be adding local Social Justice links in the near future. Here is the link: <https://www.uucwnc.org>

Thank you to everyone who is participating in and reporting about their Social Justice activities in our community.

ANNOUNCING BOARD LIAISONS BY BETH O'CONNELL BOT PRESIDENT

Last month, the Board of Trustees (BOT) approved a proposal to establish liaisons with church committees and teams that serve the operational, educational, social, and spiritual needs of our congregation. We hope that liaisons will foster better communication between the board and these groups, as well as help the BOT to gain more insight into the state of the church. Each BOT member will be assigned as a liaison to 3 or 4 groups.

Typically, liaisons will contact the group chairs to arrange for conversations twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, although the chairs are encouraged to contact their liaisons at other times as needed. The BOT would like to know how the chairs feel about their groups' meeting process and accomplishments, as well as whether there any issues or concerns the chair would like to discuss.

The BOT will start "liaisoning" this year, so chairs should expect an email within the next few months to arrange for an initial check-in. Next year, there will be newly assigned liaisons who will start the twice-yearly conversations, so stay tuned!

FOUR THINGS I KNOW BY LESLIE O'CONNOR

My Unitarian Universalist faith compels me to walk the walk of our principles and not just talk the talk. That is why my mind was in utter turmoil as I watched our capital get sacked. How do I set a good example that might inspire our UU kids when I am so infuriated that I honestly daydreamed of meeting violence with violence? In the weeks that have passed since January 6th, I have taken a few steps back from the edge and cleared a path to the future for the good of my mental health.

I know three things that will help me process the situation my beloved country is in. One is that my anger will be tempered by justice. My biggest challenge is to have enough trust in those who hold power to ensure that justice prevails.

The second thing I know is that we must, indeed, follow the advice of so many bumper stickers and co-exist with each other. At least for a while I think that is the best we can do. It is the best *I* can do. *Both* sides require 'de-programming', to different measures certainly, but we can all learn to listen to each other with more compassion.

The third thing I know is that my faith in the UU principles will carry me from being merely tolerant to being loving. I have heard the words 'our democracy is fragile'. I think we were all surprised at just how fragile it is. How do you treat something that is fragile? Carefully. Gently. In time, with love.

With incredible coincidence, I started an online class, "Our Shared Humanity: Finding Common Ground in a Divisive World", sponsored by the Charter for Compassion, two days before the capital insurrection. Now, I am not saying that this class will show me the solutions. But, to walk the walk, I know that I must take responsibility for initiating experiences that will help me grow and change, enabling me to better live our principles in the community. Occasionally, these experiences will present themselves as if they are a gift to the soul seeker. But I usually I must seek them out myself.

I miscounted. That is four things I know. I am your *Lifespan* Religious Educator and I am here to help you seek out your own experiences for growth and compassion. Let me know how I may help you.

Shalom.

Leslie O'Connor
Director, Lifespan Religious Education

IS TECHNOLOGY YOUR THING? BY BECKI SCHREIBER

Perhaps website design or technology is your thing? We are looking for a volunteer who has good experience and understanding with website upkeep. Experience with Wordpress is a must. If you are interested in volunteering or just want to learn more about this project please contact the BOT Vice President Becki Schreiber at becki.schreiber@gmail.com Thanks!

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 9:30 AM Worship Rehearsals (Z2) 10:30 AM Sunday Worship (Z2) 11:20 AM UUCWNC Youth Group (Z1) 12:00 PM Quest (Z2)	1 5:00 PM Program Council (Z1) 5:00 PM STP Meeting (O)	2 5:30 PM SJAG (OZ)	3	4	5 9:00 AM Weekly Cleaning	6 4:00 PM Worship Rehearsals (Z2)
7 9:30 AM Worship Rehearsals (Z2) 10:30 AM Sunday Worship (Z2) 11:20 AM UUCWNC Youth Group (Z1) 12:00 PM Quest (Z2)	8	9 1:00 PM MET (Z1) 1:00 PM ROMEO Lunch (O)	10 5:30 PM GLT (Z2) 6:00 PM Worship Team Meeting (Z1)	11	12 9:00 AM Weekly Cleaning	13 10:00 AM SSC (P) 4:00 PM Worship Rehearsals (Z2)
14 9:30 AM Worship Rehearsals (Z2) 10:30 AM Sunday Worship (Z2) 11:20 AM UUCWNC Youth Group (Z1) 12:00 PM Quest (Z2)	15 2:00 PM Poetry Group (Z1) 7:00 PM Book Group (Z1)	16 4:00 PM Exec Committee Meeting (Z1) 5:30 PM SJAG (OZ)	17	18 2:00 PM Poetry Group (Z1)	19 9:00 AM Weekly Cleaning	20 4:00 PM Worship Rehearsals (Z2)
21 9:30 AM Worship Rehearsals (Z2) 10:30 AM Sunday Worship (Z2) 11:20 AM UUCWNC Youth Group (Z1) 12:00 PM Quest (Z2)	22	23 1:00 PM MET (Z1) 1:00 PM ROMEO Lunch (O) 5:15 PM BOT (Z1)	24 5:30 PM GLT (Z2)	25 9:00 AM BEACON ITEMS DUE	26 9:00 AM Weekly Cleaning 1:00 PM JUULIETs (Z1)	27 4:00 PM Worship Rehearsals (Z2)
28 9:30 AM Worship Rehearsals (Z2) 10:30 AM Sunday Worship (Z2) 11:20 AM UUCWNC Youth Group (Z1) 12:00 PM Quest (Z2)	1	2 5:30 PM SJAG (OZ)	3	4	5 9:00 AM Weekly Cleaning	6 4:00 PM Worship Rehearsals (Z2)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES DIRECTORY

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