



THE BEACON

A VOICE FOR LIBERAL RELIGION IN SOUTHEASTERN NORTH CAROLINA



WE WILL NOT STOP SINGING TILL THE WORLD CAN SING ALONG

Table of Contents

THE DOOR OPENS BY REV. CHERYL M. WALKER	4
ACTING IN ALLYSHIP BY RAINE MORGAN.....	5
UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY BY LESLIE O'CONNOR	6
THE ROAD TO UUCWNC BY JIMMY REEVES.....	7
STAYING CONNECTED BY JEANNIE LENNON ...	8
A GENEROUS LIFE BY DON WOOD	9
THE PINK MOON BY JESSICA HOLM	10
APRIL CALENDAR	11
BOARD OF TRUSTEES DIRECTORY	11

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

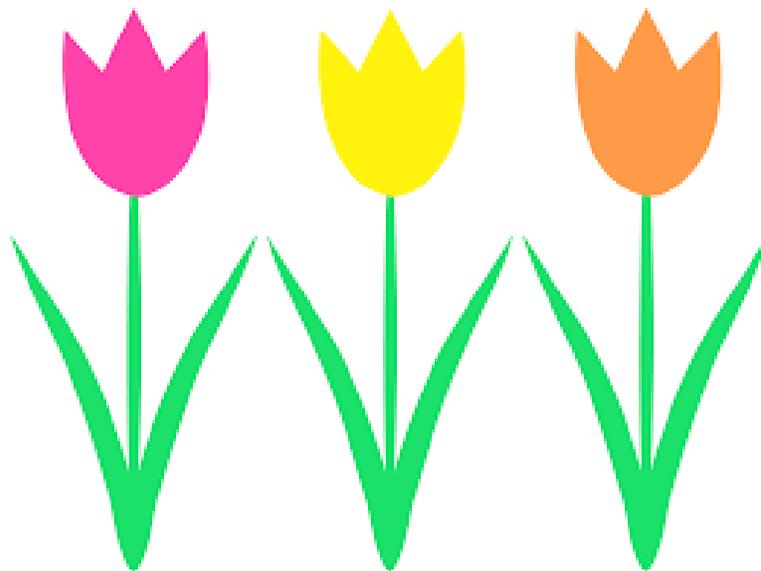
THURSDAY 9AM – 2PM

FRIDAY 9AM – 2PM

Month Worship Schedule	
April 4	Rev. Cheryl
April 14	TBD
April 21	Rev. Cheryl
April 28	Rev. Cheryl



*Subject to change - please call ahead



THE DOOR OPENS BY REV. CHERYL M. WALKER

“When one door closes, another door opens.” I’ve always liked that quote but for the longest time I had no idea who said it. I don’t think it mattered to me very much who said it, I just liked the quote. Then along came the Internet. I looked it up and found to my surprise that it is attributed to Alexander Graham Bell. I don’t know why it was surprising to me, I guess I didn’t think that inventors made up pithy sayings. What I also found is that it is only part of a longer quote:

When one door closes another door opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us.

I like the longer quote even more than the short pithy saying. I wonder how many times have I spent too long thinking about the door which has closed instead of thinking about the one that might have opened? I also like the quote because it doesn’t say that we shouldn’t look regretfully upon the closed door at all, just that we look at the door so long that we don’t see the one which has opened. When a door closes we should spend time processing what it is that we have lost. Just enough time to fully appreciate what we lost, until we can transition to appreciating what we had. And then looking to what might be. I wish there were a timetable, but there isn’t one; things are not so cut and dry. We just know when we have looked too long at the closed door.

Sometimes we look so long at the closed door because we are afraid to go through the open one. We don’t know what is on the other side, in the next room. We know where we came from but we don’t know where we’re going. We are comfortable with the past. We know what it was, but the next room is uncertain. We know it won’t be the same as the room from which we came, but what if we don’t like it as much? Even if where we came from wasn’t so great, at least we knew it. And so we sit looking at the closed door.

What the saying doesn’t address is the time between when we leave the one room and we enter the next. That in between time of transitioning. The in between time need not be wasted time, it can be just the opposite. It can be a time of reckoning with the past, while we prepare for the future. It can be a time of imagination and creativity. It can be a time of evolution.

We are in such a time. A door will be opening soon, the door back into the church. We closed the door a little over a year ago and now we can imagine opening it again. We are not ready to enter through the door, but we can imagine it opening. Now is the time to start planning. I have asked representatives from several groups to start thinking about that time, worship, Religious Education, Quest, Welcoming/Membership. We will begin planning for reopening, hopefully in September. When we shall all come home again. It is exciting and a little scary.

We have all been changed in this past year and we all need to start planning to go through the open door. Not just the church door, but the door to society. How will we feel to go back, while knowing we can’t really go back to way things were? Each of us may feel differently about the door that closed and the one that is opening. What I do know is that we must go through together and find what awaits us through the open door.

Many kind blessings,
Rev. Cheryl

ACTING IN ALLYSHIP BY RAINE MORGAN

"We can't become what we need to be by remaining what we are." Oprah Winfrey

The wide web of the internet has been called many names-and it has been exalted for its triumphs and blamed for the scourge. Whatever one's opinion of the online world, my personal experience with it has for the most part been a positive one. The sharing of 'facts' in the United States in the past few years has been widely disputed, so one must always research a little before even sharing a simple quote or meme. A few days ago, I learned that only fourteen years after the Choctaw were forcibly relocated in the Trail of Tears, the tribe donated \$170.00 (over \$5,000 today), to the victims of the Potato Famine in Ireland. (Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/05/world/coronavirus-ireland-native-american-tribes.html>) Like all the Native American tribes who were marched across this country, the Choctaw had little funds to even call their own. In turn, Ireland created a scholarship for Choctaw youth, saying to them "your act of kindness has never been, and never will be forgotten in Ireland."

This story from history made its mark on me. I was honored and humbled when I was asked to be on the board. I found myself during the past years wanting to listen more than to speak...to learn as opposed to teaching. Being an actual teacher, this process is a continuous lesson and I definitely stumble along the way. Change is uncomfortable, and this change is even downright painful when I am forced to address my own white fragility. These past few months, Elizabeth MacLeod and I have been brainstorming ideas of how we can expose ourselves and the board to add more action to our congregation's statement of Black Lives Matter. With the pandemic ever looming in the background, I asked myself how I could still show my support. So, of course, with our combined efforts, Elizabeth and I found copious amounts of information, but I wanted, for now...to sink my teeth into something I could do NOW, and right here in the Port City. So, online I went again to a trusted source and I made a list of black-owned businesses I could support and promote. I may have suggested this list, but I am not its creator. Other board members have already shared additional businesses, and I hope this list will keep growing. The list will be shared under the BLM statement on our church's website, and if anyone has any suggestions, please feel free to email me. For those not venturing out, many businesses offer take out. We also plan to share opportunities to donate funds or time in distanced actions like phone calls and letter campaigns to promote positive change.

In conclusion, I can only speak for myself. A lot of the time, I have to get out of my own way, and let others show me THEIR way. Thank you for reading, and I look forward to hearing from you.

UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY BY LESLIE O'CONNOR

Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly June 23-27, 2021

Come return to your place in the pews,
And hear our heretical views:
You were not born in sin
So lift up your chin,
You have only your dogmas to lose.

LEONARD MASON, UU MINISTER

I stumbled upon this simple poem while researching something online, and it provided me with hours of thoughtful contemplation on Unitarian Universalism, the faith in which I was raised. My column in last month's Beacon included a list of summer UU camps and pilgrimage destinations. No sooner had I pushed the SEND button than a few more opportunities emerged and I included them in the March 11th edition of the UUDigest. Well, now, here is the MOTHER-OF-ALL UU events, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) General Assembly (GA) coming in as a final addendum to my list.

GA will run virtually this year on June 23-27, 2021 <https://www.uua.org/ga/program>. Programming includes various workshops and worship sessions that will move you to happy, hopeful tears. If you are an artist or service provider, you may find professional networking opportunities directed at a well-defined and enthusiastic audience. There are special events for Young Adults as well as a few programs for Youth at the General Assembly. UU Youth have a chance to experience democracy in action – our fifth UU principle - at the General Assembly. The Youth Caucus will meet 30 minutes prior to the start of each General Session to discuss the topic so that they may then observe the General Session and voting process with understanding and perspective. Synergy Bridging Worship is a multi-generational participatory session in which all generations are called to worship together. You may find details of UU Youth programming for GA here: <https://www.uua.org/youth/events/ga>.

The summer camps and activities that I've shared with you in the past few weeks are all opportunities to move your spiritual life forward into a deeper communion with that which is spiritual. Hiking in the woods or meditating on the beach may do the same for you, but those activities are not springing from the context of Unitarian Universalism and they are primarily done alone. These activities and events that I am sharing with you are framed by Unitarian Universalism and performed with other Unitarian Universalists – they will help you grow closer to your faith and help you envision life in a UU-principled world. And if you can envision it, you can make it become reality.

Shalom,
Leslie O'Connor, Director Lifespan Faith Formation

THE ROAD TO UUCWNC BY JIMMY REEVES...



Hope and me, circa 1973

I've been a member of this congregation for virtually all of the nearly thirty-eight years I've lived here. Like so many of us, I'm a recovering Catholic, a product of the culture where martyrs and Christian soldiers were "all that" and following the rules and confessing when you didn't was all it took to get to heaven. It was so simple back then. You always knew who the bad guys were, swiveling their hips on Ed Sullivan, spouting godless communism, or collecting for UNICEF. And you always knew that you were headed to heaven and they to hell. A mighty fortress was my God.

The first time I had my faith shaken was in eighth grade when "going steady" was all the rage. The Bishop in our diocese proclaimed that exchanging that ring was a mortal sin. For the uninitiated, that meant going straight to hell to suffer fire and brimstone forever with the likes of Hitler and Elvis. By contrast, kids in the next town over, in a different diocese with a different Bishop, only suffered a venial sin, no hell below them. But while contradictions like this led me to abandon the church in college, the simple-mindedness was much harder to shake. As I worked my way through

Northeastern and joined ROTC to escape the draft, the Civil Rights and antiwar protests made me begin to question my fundamental assumptions about my country's role in the world. As I learned more about our penchant for installing dictatorships by overthrowing and killing legitimately elected leaders, and as the killing in Vietnam escalated, I began to believe that the good guys must be the "revolutionaries" and that my country was the enemy. Still good vs evil, but now the devil had switched sides. That belief was in no small part responsible for me joining the Weathermen, a radical and eventually violent branch of SDS. The heart of our belief back then was that the oppressed would rise to overthrow the ruling class and we privileged whites must support the revolution in any way we could. After three months of acting dangerously and a year in jail, the birth of Hope, my first child (shown with me in the picture) grounded me and made me realize that it isn't us vs them, good vs evil, it's all just us humans, the good, the bad, the ugly. It struck me that this simplistic approach was central not just to the Catholicism I grew up with, but to other religions that also proclaimed that they had God on their side. I still bristle when I hear theologians claim they know the mind of God.

So imagine my surprise when I came across a church that was based not on dogma that provided a roadmap to heaven but a forum that discussed ideas about faith and focused on love. Though I never embraced Unitarian Universalism while I lived in Boston or Canada, when I moved to Wilmington with two young kids I learned very quickly that Sunday School was an important part of their assimilation into this southern city, so hello UUFW. In addition to a Sunday School I could embrace, I found a Fellowship of like-minded folk who loved to discuss whatever was on tap that day. We had no minister back then, and I found the atmosphere of learning and discussing all manner of ideas stimulating, instilling in me a deep devotion to this place. It is why I love Quest so much, populated as it is by fellow lovers of dialogue. Over the years I've found my most intimate and loving friends here, experienced inspired Sunday services that moved me to tears, and participated in countless programs, committees, picnics and celebrations. I am so grateful for this place, and all the souls who populate it.

STAYING CONNECTED BY JEANNIE LENNON ...

Acting in concert with the minister, the Caring Committee provides short term support, care and assistance to UUCW members and friends who are experiencing illness, injury or crisis.

It has been a little challenging to keep track of each other during these times when we have not been able to meet in person. We all look forward to the days when we can meet and chat with one another in the vestibule and Dobkin Hall.

Zoom, however, has had one advantage in that we can see the joys and concerns expressed in the chat box . And this provides an opportunity for each of us to be part of the caring team by responding to the chat, sending an email, or mailing a card when our friends share their life events. I think it has actually had advantages over the lighting of silent candles as it helps keep us connected as we learn of each others' joys and sorrows. I was personally touched by how many of you reached out to me after the loss of my cousin. So keep an eye on that chat box during our services. (And if you need help with navigating zoom let us know as many of our church members are very experienced with zoom.)

During the last month several members have had surgeries including Kelly W-R, Kim S, and Bruce M. Also recovering is our church administrator Julie B. We send our best wishes to all for speedy recoveries. Thanks to all of you who provided meals for folks needing a respite from cooking chores during recovery and those who sent messages of support

Please let the Caring committee know if you have any needs during this unusual time. Besides mail, email, and phone calls we can now also participate in socially distanced driveway visits or run an errand if you need supplies. Please reach out to us if we can help you or if you have ideas as to how we can assist another member or friend of the congregation. Your information is kept in strict confidence unless you give us permission to share it.

You may contact any member of the Caring Committee, which includes Toni Aberson, Carol Anne Davis, Joyce Elliott, Diane Halley, Dot Hodder, Jeanette Koshar, Jeannie Lennon, Kami O'Keeffe, Jill Pollock, Betsy Randall- David, and Rev. Cheryl M. Walker.

Diane Halley will be the Caring Coordinator for April and you may contact her directly or via the Caring Comm email at

Caring@uucwnc.org.



A GENEROUS LIFE BY DON WOOD ...

The mission of the Generous Life Team (GLT) is “to promote the growth of a vibrant culture of generosity and giving, one that celebrates the generous spirit in all of us, supports our present and future needs and explores the many ways we can live generously”. This month the GLT recognizes Bev and Ron Cochran who personify our mission through their spirit, words, and deeds.

Ron and Bev moved to Wilmington from Neenah, Wisconsin in 2003 to be closer to their parents. Bev had retired from a career as a medical transcriptionist and Ron as an analytical chemist. Soon after their move Bev bought a long arm quilting machine and started Port City Quilting. She has designed and quilted two stoles for Rev. Cheryl. One for Cheryl’s installation in 2009 and another to commemorate Rev. Cheryl’s ten-year anniversary as UUCWNC’s minister.

Bev and Ron joined UUCWNC in 2004 and over the years have been very generous. Ron has served on the UUCWNC board and Bev on numerous committees and projects. Currently Ron is a member of the worship team and Bev leads the Chalice Quilters. In the larger community they volunteer at Mother Hubbard’s Cupboard, The Good Shephard Center, and The Humanist and Freethinkers.



Both have a strong belief in giving their time, money, and talent to help others. According to Bev, “the satisfaction I get from helping others helps me. I have been truly fortunate and helping those who don’t know where their next meal is coming from is my way of saying thanks.” Ron says, “it’s nice to be doing something useful, other than making money for big corporations. A big hand is not going to come down and fix things. You need to help your neighbor.”

Ron and Bev along with their rescue dog Nash live in the Masonboro Woods subdivision. When they find time to relax Ron likes to play the guitar, read, and engage in computer related activities. Bev enjoys quilting, knitting, and reading.

THE PINK MOON BY JESSICA HOLM ...

The April Full Moon is called the Pink Moon, named after a wildflower native to North America known as pink moss or creeping phlox. The April Full Moon is also referred to as the Egg Moon, Full Sprouting Grass Moon and Full Fish Moon, depending on where you live. They all refer to the spring season, as new flowers start to bloom and the fish begin to spawn. To make the April Full Moon even more special, it will be a super moon, which means the full moon occurs at the moon's perigee (when the moon is closest to the earth).

After a cold and stormy winter, it is time for renewal, joy, warmth and beauty. The Pink Moon is a reminder to us that life is a cycle of hibernation and awakening. It is a time you start to see life in brightened colors, literally and figuratively. The spiritualists believe that this Pink Moon will bring security and hope, and the recent positive changes in your life will bring permanent improvements. (Information from nineplanets.org)

Join us at our April Full Moon Gathering on Tuesday, April 27th at 7:00 pm on Zoom. Barbara D 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.



APRIL CALENDAR

APRIL 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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)	29	30	31	1 2:00 PM CFM	2 9:00 AM Weekly Cleaning	3 4:00 PM Worship Rehearsals (Z2)
4 9:30 AM Worship Rehearsals (Z2) 10:30 AM Sunday Worship (Z2) 11:20 AM UUCWNC Youth Group (Z1) 12:00 PM Quest (Z2)	5 5:00 PM GLT (Z2) 5:00 PM STP Committee Meeting (OZ)	6	7	8	9 9:00 AM Weekly Cleaning	10 4:00 PM Worship Rehearsals (Z2)
11 9:30 AM Worship Rehearsals (Z2) 10:30 AM Sunday Worship (Z2) 11:20 AM UUCWNC Youth Group (Z1) 12:00 PM Quest (Z2)	12	13 1:00 PM MET (Z1) 1:00 PM ROMEO Lunch (Z2) 3:30 PM Caring Committee (Z1)	14 6:00 PM Worship Team Meeting (Z1)	15 2:00 PM Poetry Group (Z1)	16 9:00 AM Weekly Cleaning	17 4:00 PM Worship Rehearsals (Z2)
18 9:30 AM Worship Rehearsals (Z2) 10:30 AM Sunday Worship (Z2) 11:20 AM UUCWNC Youth Group (Z1) 11:30 AM Multi-generational Book Discussion (Z2)	19 5:00 PM GLT (Z2) 7:00 PM Book Group (Z1)	20 4:00 PM Exec Committee Meeting (Z1)	21	22 4:00 PM mUUVie Night Discussion (Z1)	23 9:00 AM Weekly Cleaning	24 4:00 PM Worship Rehearsals (Z2)
25 9:30 AM Worship Rehearsals (Z2) 10:30 AM Sunday Worship (Z2) 11:20 AM UUCWNC Youth Group (Z1) 12:00 PM Quest (Z2)	26 9:00 AM BEACON ITEMS DUE	27 1:00 PM MET (Z1) 1:00 PM ROMEO Lunch (Z2) 5:15 PM BOT (Z1)	28	29	30 9:00 AM Weekly Cleaning 1:00 PM JUULIETs (Z1)	1 4:00 PM Worship Rehearsals (Z2)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES DIRECTORY

PRESIDENT: BETH O'CONNELL
 VICE PRESIDENT: BECKI SCHREIBER
 SECRETARY: CORNELIA MAXTED
 KAMI O'KEEFFE
 JERRY HURWITZ
 TONY BARNEY
 RAINE MORGAN
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