



Unitarian Universalist Church of Spartanburg

April 2011
Number 802

The Unitarian Universalist
Church of Spartanburg
is a
Welcoming
Congregation

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UNISON

PASSIN' THRU

As most of you know by now, I'm a big fan of mission and vision statements as the "glowing coal" of congregational life—a list of ends and values that guide decisions come good times and bad.

A congregation I once served in New England had had enough of the flowery kind of statements that were wordy and nearly useless come time to make concrete plans. I took their leadership through an exercise, asking them to describe the "perfect" UU congregation: ultimate ends, leadership (lay and ordained), governance style, stewardship, worship, behavioral covenant, lifespan faith development, caring, justice work.

The next step was to "cherry pick" the thinking and practices that make vital congregations vital. The result was a clear mission, vision, and 10-12 priorities for short- and long-term planning. When the plan was ready to take to leadership and the Annual Meeting, one wonderfully wacky board member offered up his short version of the proposed mission: to be the best damn congregation in the UUA!

That may not be the measureable mission statement I've come across, but it's food for thought.

But I've since come to believe in mini-missions and congregations within congregations. Here, I'm thinking of the many and unique needs within every UU church and fellowship, some of which are met by connection with those who share a more defined common belief system.

In response to last month's sermon series on theology in the liberal religious tradition, there has been strong interest in UU Christianity, mysticism, and humanism. This suggests that it might be time to add to, restore, or raise awareness about your theological programming for youth and adults. Let me put some resources in play:

- Humanism (www.huumanists.org) as well as the monthly meeting of UUCS humanists, the third Wednesday of the month
- Christianity (Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship (uuchristian.org))
- Mysticism (uumystics.org)
- Paganism (cuups.org)
- Buddhism (www25.uua.org/uubf)
- Judaism (uuja.org)

If you're wanting to go deeper with a particular spiritual expression, the next step would be to check out denominational and other resources, schedule and advertise an organizational meeting. LFD Director Kathleen Anderson or Church Administrator Kelly Staton can point you toward the logistics involved. (Skip these steps if you're interested in humanism—the wheel's already been invented on that one.)

There is, of course, no such thing as the best congregation in our denomination. But there is among us that storied tradition of affirming, living, and sharing the rock-solid belief that folks can and must develop their own theology. And that's one mighty fine mission.

Blessings on your journey, whatever its shape and wherever it leads, Don

A Month of Sundays

3 *Train to Somewhere: Mission, Music, and Money*

The Rev. Don Rollins

As the Annual Fund campaign nears a close, Keith, Don, and a cast of thousands will lead us in a look at life and stewardship as journey. Think real, live trains. Don't miss yet another unique service!

10 *And Here They Come Down the Stretch*

The Rev. Don Rollins

It's time to begin assessing one interim period and preparing for another. Where is UUCS, spiritually as well as organizationally? And what do the answers to that question have to do with what comes next?

17 *Intergenerational Service Led by Youth*

Join us for a vibrant youth-led intergenerational service. Planned and led by the junior-and-senior-high church youth, this service includes skits, music, and more.

24 *Halleluiah!*

The Rev. Don Rollins

Easter, whatever else it may be, is all about affirmation—a spiritual high-five to the life force within, among, and beyond. Come join in the music and a hearty yes to life, just as it is.

Letter from the President

This isn't the column I sat down to write. I had something specific in mind, but for some reason, very different words are showing up on the page. This month I've decided to go all theological on you. I'm not normally one to discuss theology, mainly because I'm still relatively new to even thinking about it, let alone trying to articulate it. I remember the New Member Sunday when I joined UUCS. During the Recognition Ceremony, the new member who spoke right before me mentioned that she'd been raised Roman Catholic and how strongly that had influenced her. When it was my turn to speak, I said that I had been raised a godless heathen and got a nice laugh from the congregation. (Thank you, I'll be here all week!) It was true, though. Neither religion nor spirituality in any sense was a part of my life before coming to UUCS.

So over the past few years, I've been traveling my spiritual path, as we Unitarian Universalists like to say. Thanks mainly to the wonderful adult classes on Sunday mornings at 10:00 (including *Building Your Own Theology*, *Articulating Your UU Faith*, and *Spirit in Practice*), I actually feel pretty confident about my current theological beliefs. I've even given them a catchy, easy-to-remember name: "The Theology of Me."

The Theology of Me is pretty simple: I work very hard to understand myself and then I work very hard to be the very best me I can be. Despite its simplicity, it's not particularly easy to practice. Truly understanding oneself requires honest introspection and discipline and diligence and hard work, along with accepting the very real possibility of uncovering unpleasant things. Working to be the best P.K. I can be ain't that easy, either. I've had to embrace some very foreign concepts, things like patience, anger management, and forgiveness.

Is there a God? I don't know and don't care. Is there life after death? I don't know and don't care. Are we all part of something bigger? I don't know and—you guessed it—I don't care. I am working too hard on mastering The Theology of Me to grapple with these bigger questions. Besides, I'm confident that if I practice The Theology of Me to very best of my ability, those bigger questions will take care of themselves.

So that's The Theology of Me. What about you? Do you have a Theology of You?

With love, P.K.

Looking for a Unique Experience This Summer?

Come join our youth for a trip to West Virginia to see firsthand what mountaintop removal is like. The trip will be from June 6th to the 8th and will include time with folks who have been fighting for the abolition of this mining practice. We will participate in a part of a march alongside these leaders.

We will also be visiting an underground exhibition mine from the 1950s, along with a stop at Tamarack, which is a large marketplace for WV-made products. They will also have artisans working on their crafts while we are there.

We need to know approximately how many people will be going with us so we can make reservations and ensure that we have enough transportation. The approximate cost is \$150, which includes lodging, activities, and transportation. You will be responsible for lunch and dinner each day. Breakfast will be at the hotel before we start our daily activities.

If you would like to join us, please let Alice S. know as soon as possible but no later than April 21. The Social Justice Committee and youth are looking forward to a great intergenerational trip. Please join us if you can. This will be a great way to end our year of activism against mountaintop removal!



Annual Fund 2011/2012: Progress to Date

Fifty-six members and friends attended our eight Station Parties during February and March, and the Annual Fund Team is pleased to report that, as of March 30, \$153,061 has been pledged to help get UUCS “Back on Track” in 2011/2012. A complete list of all those who generously made a financial commitment to UUCS for next fiscal year will be included in the May *Unison*.

Meanwhile, we thank so much those individuals who served as Hosts—providing food, beverages and (except for two of the events) space in their homes for attendees—and the two “Conductors.” Much appreciation goes to Abby and Steve Fowler, Susan and Jim Brown, Cindy Howe and Dan McBride, Charlie Mierek, Alice Sutton and Mike Rainey, Susan Griswold and John Morton, Brian and Katie Ramsey, and, on March 20, members of the Annual Fund Team.

Canvassers are currently following up with those unable to participate in a Party or who preferred not to, and we ask that members and friends respond in a courteous and timely manner when contacted by a canvasser. We need to get our Annual Fund “wrapped up” no later than April 10 so that those preparing the budget will know how much pledge income to expect.

As a reminder, there has been a new approach to the Annual Fund this spring with the goal of enabling the church to stretch its giving profile in order to support in a more sustainable way the services, programming, and mission of our religious community. Mel Fritsche has agreed to do a detailed analysis of the results to share with the congregation—after all the results are in.

Be sure to follow the updates of our Annual Fund through the train chart in the foyer outside the sanctuary as well as through notices in the Sunday bulletin and weekly Happenings. And please show your appreciation to Grace Jerome, who created our artistic and most appropriate way of “tracking” our progress!

UUCS Board Establishes Special Funds

At the February 10th meeting of your UUCS Board, two special funds were approved:

- 1) Mortgage Retirement Fund
- 2) Lower Level Fund

Members and friends who would like to donate money to the church—above and beyond their pledges—for these specific areas of need are invited to do so. Checks should be made payable to UUCS, with either “mortgage retirement fund” or “lower level fund” written in the memo line.

Monies designated for the mortgage retirement fund will go specifically toward retiring the \$250,000-plus in mortgage debt we currently owe. Monies designated for the lower level fund will go toward finishing the lower level to make that space available for programming, events, and meetings. One definite need we have for the lower level is air conditioning, which will cost approximately \$4,000.

At UUCS, we rely on the generosity of our members and friends to fund our important mission of religious freedom, caring community, and social justice here in the Upstate, and we gratefully accept any financial assistance you can offer.

Planned Giving

Do you have the UU Church mentioned in your will? That was the question we asked of you last month. One (1)—that is the number that said yes. We know of three other folks who have written a note mentioning giving something to the church. They have this note with their will, but they never got it legally attached. With that result it looks like we all need some more information.

Did you know that about 70% of all Americans die without a will? What does that mean for their family and their own wishes? It means that it will be more difficult for the executor—the person named by the deceased to figure things out (it is a legal responsibility)—to take care of the details of a will. It means you do not get to decide what happens. If you have a will, you get to decide.

The Planned Giving Group is a subgroup of the Stewardship Committee. Look for more information about this subject in the coming months.

The Interim Task Force continues to put together the required packet of information about our church. The document, which is 95% complete, utilizes the latest technology and the group (thanks to Michael Wray’s creative genius) has produced a document which will rival any professional product. The next step will be receiving the names of potential candidates in late April. The task force will continue to keep the congregation informed.





APRIL 3 —PLAY BALL!

Come join us on the ballfield of Park Hills Elementary School on Sunday, April 3, for a fun game of softball. (This game was originally scheduled for March 27 but was rained out.) Please be at the field about 1:15 so we can randomly choose teams for the game that starts around 1:30 (you can come to the field as early as noon to practice). To support UUCS, packaged snacks and drinks, along with a 50-50 raffle, will be sold at the game. We will need a few volunteers to sell refreshments, to bring some coolers (for the drinks), and for cleanup (cheerleaders are also welcome). Please contact Mitch or Palma in care of fundraising@uucs.org if you are interested and if you have gloves and/or a bat to bring (they will bring some softballs). Anyone over the age of fourteen can participate, regardless of gender, experience, or skill. This should be a lot of fun, so please plan to join other UUCS's on the field!

Invitation

To all TJD congregations, presidents, ministers, and Denominational Affairs chairpersons, and those who attended the January 2010 kick-off meeting in Charlotte: You are cordially invited to meet with the GA Planning Committee at the Westin Hotel, 601 South College Street, Charlotte, NC (704-375-2600) from 3:30 to 5:00 on Thursday, April 7, for a reception and discussion of GA2011.

(From the Rev. Glenn D. Johnson, Sr. (district administrator, Thomas Jefferson District, UUA, 9704 Mallard Creek Road, Charlotte, NC 28262)

Do you remember the first time you came through these doors?

Were you greeted with a smile and a warm handshake? Did it make you feel welcome here? We are in need of more people to do this very important job on Sunday mornings. If you are able to help one Sunday a month or serve as a replacement greeter, please let Deb know at membership@uucs.org. First impressions last a long time, help us continue this tradition at our Church.

Just a Reminder

The membership committee would like you to remember that we have visitors that may be a little shy. Please leave the seats open in the back rows near the door.

Neighborhood Clean-Up Day, April 2

The South Converse Neighborhood Association has scheduled the next trash pick-up day for Saturday, April 2, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. We will gather in the parking lot of Majority Baptist Church at 8:00 and then spread out through the neighborhood and pick up trash. Please bring gloves and plastic trash bags.

Majority Baptist Church is located at 400 Hudson L. Barksdale Blvd. Come out and enjoy the beautiful spring weather, get some exercise, meet our church neighbors, and help make the world a better place! If you have questions, please contact P.K. at president@uucs.org.

Park Hills Family Fun Day in May

THANK YOU to everyone who has so generously brought in new and gently used books for children of all ages. We have collected well over 100 books so far. The event, however, has been postponed from the previously-scheduled date of April 9 to an as-yet-undetermined date in May. Please keep an eye out for that date, as we will need volunteers to assist in making this a success. In the meantime, P.K. will continue to collect books.

Quit-Smoking Group

Dr. Melissa F. would like to sponsor a Quit-Smoking group. She has great information and supports to share. No pressure! If you might be interested, please email Kathleen at dre@uucs.org. We want to know if this group would be feasible and helpful for folks in our congregation.

April Espresso Yourself Coffeehouse

Come ready to play, sing, or tell a story . . . and bring a friend. Date: Friday, April 29. Time: 7:00 p.m. A \$2.00 donation and canned good are requested, but not required. (No charge for performers!)

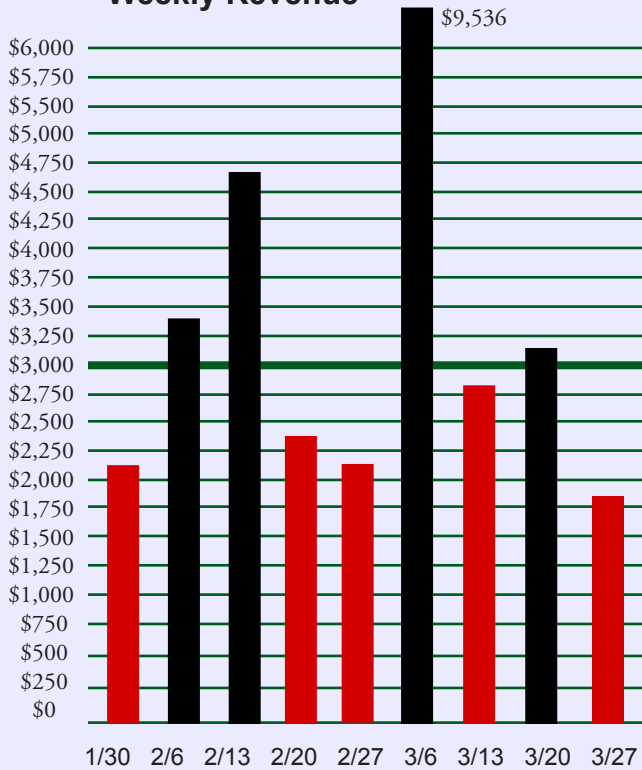
UPSTATE PRIDE NEWS

Save the Date! The Third Annual Upstate Pride March and Festival will take place on Saturday, June 4, 2011, at Barnet Park in Spartanburg. This year's theme is PRIDE: Promoting Respect, Individuality, Diversity, and Equality. There are 2011 T-shirts available for \$15 each, so let P.K. know if you'd like to order one.

Wheelchairs Available

The Care Committee and the pastoral care associates have obtained a wheelchair for use as needed by those attending services. It is currently stored in the closet in the kitchen foyer with the walker. All greeters and ushers need to be aware of this adaptive equipment and offer it as needed.

Weekly Revenue



Interpretation:

A black bar for a given Sunday indicates that we met our pledge for that Sunday. A red bar for a given Sunday indicates that we did not meet our pledge for that Sunday. We need \$3000 each week to break even. As we used our savings to burn the bank mortgage last year, the continued lack of pledge payment results in a cash-flow problem. Please remain up to date on your pledge payment.

Eating Out with Your UU Friends

Midweek Lunch Bunch

Friday, April 8, at 11:45

II Samuels on East Henry Street

Friday, April 22, at 11:45

Yannis on East Main

Newcomers are especially welcome. This a great way to get to know your new community.

BiLo Boosters Plus

You can still register for the 2010-2011 BiLo Boosters program. Purchases will be credited to the church only if members have completed the new registration process. This is a potential source of up to \$3000 for our budget. This amount would be a big help!

To register you will need to take the BiLo bar code for our church to the store:

- You can print it out now by [clicking here](#).
- It is usually in the *Weekly UUpdate*.
- There is a link to it in *Happenings*.
- There is a link on our website.
- You can get a copy of the code from the bulletin board display.

It will be easy to access the code and sign up. Everyone has to shop to eat, so let's use this opportunity for the benefit of our church!

Magic Formula for Church Budget

**Church Website + Amazon.com = MONEY FOR
www.uucs.org Purchases UUCS BUDGET**

Here's How:

Access Amazon.com on home page of our church website (www.uucs.org). Search for desired item. Place your order at no additional cost to you.

Our church is receiving over 7% of the money from your orders.

In November/December the church earned \$340; in 2011 over \$240.

Lifespan Faith Development April Schedule

Adults and High School 10:00 a.m. — Children and Youth 11:20-12:15

Childcare is provided every Sunday from 9:30 to 12:15.

Sunday, April 3

9:30-10:45

Living the Questions: Discussions on Progressive Christianity with the Rev. Roy Cole

10:00-10:45

Coffee and Conversation, **Bread and Board**, in the Fellowship Hall

Senior High Discussion Group

Activities for young children and youth in nursery and Room 6

11:00 Intergenerational Worship Service

No Children's RE Classes

1:00-2:30 Facilitators' Covenant Group

(Led by Marilyn C.)

Sunday, April 10

10:00-10:45

Spirit in Practice: Lessons on Personal Spirituality from the UUA's *Tapestry of Faith* series, led by Jennifer E.

Coffee and Conversation in the Fellowship Hall

Senior High Discussion Group

Activities/Snacks for young children and youth available in the nursery and Room 6

11:00 Worship

11:15-11:35

Children's Chapel

(after children and youth leave the regular worship service)

11:35-12:10

Religious Education Classes for Children and Youth

Children 0-4 with childcare workers in the nursery

Spirit Play for Children in K5-2nd grade. A Montessori-based story and activity curriculum based on UU principles found in traditions around the world.

UU Kids and Mystery Stars for children in grades 3-5. Children learn about UU principles from the lives of famous Unitarian Universalists through history.

Riddle and Mystery Discussion and Activities for middle schoolers (grades 6-8). Middle schoolers take a look at some of life's great questions through the lens of these challenging lessons from the UUA's *Tapestry of Faith* Series.

1:00-5:00

UUCS Field Trip to Connemara—Home of Carl Sandburg, in Flat Rock, NC.

Hiking trails, beautiful flowers, friendly goats, tour of Sandburg's home—what could be finer? If you'd like to go please contact Kathleen at dre@uucs.org. (Plan to bring a sack lunch or take-out to enjoy picnic style in the Fellowship Hall between 12:00 and 1:00 before leaving.)

Sunday, April 17

9:30-10:45

Living the Questions: Lessons in Progressive Christianity, with the Rev. Roy Cole

10:00-10:45

Coffee and Conversation in the Fellowship Hall

Senior High Discussion Group

Activities for young children and youth in nursery and Room 6

11:00 Intergenerational Worship Service

1:00-2:30 Lifespan Faith Development Committee

Sunday, April 24

10:00-10:45

Don Rollins's Pamphlet Series on UU Beliefs and Principles

Coffee and Conversation in the Fellowship Hall

Senior High Discussion Group

Easter Activities for Young Children and Youth

Join us for the Easter "Eggtravaganza"! Games and crafts for all ages at 10:00 a.m. and the giant, colossal, "LOOK AT ALL THIS CANDY!" Easter Egg Hunt for the kids at 11:15 a.m. following the children's time in the service.

In unrelated news, we will be accepting donations of candy through Sunday, April 17.

Wonderful Wednesdays

Wednesday, April 6

5:45-6:30: Potluck Supper

Friendship and Fellowship and Fine Food! Bring some to share, or pay \$4 per person, or \$8 per family.

6:30-6:45: Vespers

A Short Worship led by Don Rollins, in the Sanctuary.

6:30-8:00: Book Club

6:45-8:15: Living the Questions, Lessons in Progressive Christianity

Session 1:

Invitation to Journey, led by Kathleen A.

Tic Tacs for Teens in Grades 6-12

Earth Scouts for Children in Grades K5-5

Wednesday, April 13

5:45-6:30: Shared Supper

Friendship and Fellowship and Fine Food! Bring some to share, or pay \$4 per person, or \$8 per family.

6:30-6:45: Vespers

A Short Worship led by Don Rollins, in the Sanctuary.

6:45-8:30

Workshop in Natural Death and Burial

K. A. Covenant Group

Tic Tacs for Teens in Grades 6-12, Fellowship Hall

Earth Scouts for Children in Grades K5-5, Nursery

Wednesday, April 20

2:00-4:00 Telling Our Stories Writers Group

5:45-6:30: Shared Supper

Friendship and Fellowship and Fine Food! Bring some to share, or pay \$4 per person, or \$8 per family.

6:30-6:45: Vespers

A Short Worship led by Don Rollins, in the Sanctuary.

6:30-8:00: Humanist Discussion Group

6:45-8:15: Love, Knit, and Crochet

Coltrane Covenant Group

Tic Tacs for Teens in Grades 6-12

Earth Scouts for Children in Grades K5-5

Wednesday, April 27

5:45-6:30: Shared Supper

Friendship and Fellowship and Fine Food! Bring some to share, or pay \$4 per person, or \$8 per family.

6:30-6:45: Vespers

A Short Worship led by Don Rollins, in the Sanctuary.

6:45-8:30

Adult OWL

Tic Tacs for Teens in Grades 6-12

Earth Scouts for Children in Grades K5-5

LFD—Coming Up

Living the Questions Is Coming to Wednesday Nights! (This is an add-on program—Roy Cole's Sunday morning discussions will continue!)

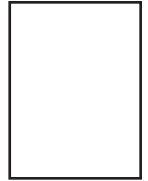
An additional version of our popular series on Progressive Christianity, led on Sunday mornings by the Rev. Roy Cole, will now be available on the first Wednesday of each month, from 6:45 to 8:15, led by Kathleen A.. Kathleen will use resources and support materials from the Living the Questions website and will lead inspirational and thought-provoking discussions about how we may rethink and reclaim many of the important ideas of Christianity. Discussion topics are based on commentary from over thirty of today's most provocative and thoughtful religious voices. The series will begin with Session 1, *Invitation to Journey*, on Wednesday, April 6, at 6:45 p.m. Please plan to join us!

Workshop: New Alternatives for Death and Burial, presented by Merike T.

On Wednesday, April 13, Merike will lead a follow-up workshop to our recent well-attended *Five Wishes* workshops in which she will present information about the natural-death movement that is changing how funerals and burials are conducted in this country. Bodies are being buried in backyards and at sea, ashes are becoming part of Memorial Reefs, caskets are being made of cardboard and bamboo. The first and best Conservation Burial Site is in South Carolina! So come and learn about green burial alternatives, and how to arrange for them for yourselves and loved ones.

The RE staff is still in need of a couple of good 4-drawer file cabinets. If you know of one that needs to be donated, please contact Kathleen at dre@uucs.org.

Unitarian Universalist
Church of Spartanburg
210 Henry Place
P.O. Box 1942
Spartanburg, SC 29304



Return Service Requested

Mission Statement

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Spartanburg is a congregation grounded in the liberal religious tradition. We embody and promote religious freedom, caring community and social justice. We do these things in the service of love.

WEBSITE AND E-MAIL LINKS

[UUCS Website](#)

[Unitarian Universalist Association](#)

[Thomas Jefferson District](#)

Don Rollins
minister@uucs.org

DRE
dre@uucs.org

Church Office
office@uucs.org

Publications, Calendar
communication@uucs.org

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Unitarian Universalist Church of Spartanburg

210 Henry Place—P.O. Box 1942—
Spartanburg, SC 29304

The Rev. Don Rollins, Interim Minister
Office hours Tuesday through Thursday,
10:00 to 1:00

Worship Service: 11:00 a.m. Sundays

Church Phone (864) 585-9230
Off South Converse Street by way of
Hudson Barksdale

Hatcher House on Wheeler Court
Office hours, Monday through Friday mornings

Website www.uucs.org

Regular e-mail: office@uucs.org

Announcement for weekly e-mail and publications—
communication@uucs.org
with name of publication in the subject line