



The UUCG beacon

January 2006

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

January 1

*The New Year: Backward &
Forward*
Ed Day

January 8

*God, Souls, Spiritual Ma-
chines & Living Forever in
the 21st Century*
Calvin Mercer

January 15

*Martin Luther King: In His
Own Words*
Ed Day

January 22

Simplicity In Theology
Sean Stayton

January 29

Science & Theology III
Roger Robins

Children's activities are available
each Sunday.

President's Notes:

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

For many of us, this is a time of new beginnings. A time to make resolutions, a time to review the previous year and plan to do better. A new beginning is always nice. Often I've wished I could go back and start something over – and this time, do it right. Traditionally, this has been a good time for reflection. The crops were in; the weather was too cold and uncertain to travel (especially before heated cars and airplanes). Sitting at home and reflecting was a good use of time. Note – if you are in the southern hemisphere, this does not apply to you.

Our culture is less dependent on the weather – usually- so we don't always get that time to slow down and reflect. Looking back on last year, we accomplished a lot; far too much to list here. I will be posting a partial list in the Sanctuary this month. Please add any accomplishments you know of to it. I don't think anyone is aware of all the things we accomplished. This list will help us become aware of what we did.

If you don't have time to reflect and prepare for the new year right now, don't worry. For many Pagans, New Years is Samhein, October 31. Jews celebrate New Years Day (Rosh Hashanah) in the Fall in the month of Nisan, but will start the new year next Spring, in the month of Tishri. The Muslims don't make a big deal about a new year, but observe it in Muharram, which was in February in 2005, and moves 11 days earlier each year of the Gregorian (Christian) calendar. The Chinese will celebrate the Year of the Dog beginning January 29th. The Hindus celebrate New Years on at least 4 different dates around the world.

Fortunately, in our country, the New Year always starts January 1st, unless you are the US Government which starts it's fiscal year October 1st. Oh yes, the UUA, UUCG, and many other organizations start their year July 1st. So we are exactly half way through our Congregation's year. Being Unitarian Universalists, we embrace other cultures and lifestyles, so pick the New Years Day that fits your life. But whenever you do it, find some time to think over the past year, and get excited about the New Year.

--Feryl Masters

Reflections

REFLECTIONS . . . of Ed Day

It's winter time and that means cold weather. Scientists say that there is no such thing as cold – it's just the absence of heat, but to anyone who has been really cold that is nonsense. Cold is indeed real. Not only that it can be scary too.

It's not just the weather that can be frigid. Karl Marx wrote In "The Communist Manifesto" Under capitalism every good feeling "is drowned in the icy waters of egotistical calculation." The world soon learned that communism had its share of icy water as well.

That phrase has always fascinated me. It is so obviously true in so many ways. It is not just capitalism that is to blame but something in the human psyche. It is a few days before Christmas as I write this and of course the life and teaching of Jesus come to mind. What noble thoughts and ideals he expressed and taught, but how soon those ideals were co-opted by a bureaucracy whose icy fingers froze them solid and hid them behind a rigid framework of "logic".

It will be January when you read this and that is the birthday of Martin Luther King. He too was a man of high ideals who captured the hearts of many Americans, but as he progressed from defend-

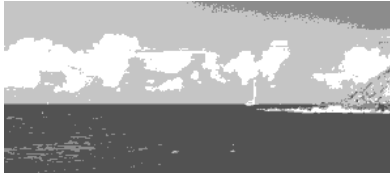
ing the rights of black folks to opposing a war the power structure supported, the cold began to really descend. And when he tried to bring his message to big city neighborhoods he lost many of his followers. The icy waters began to pour over him even before his tragic assassination in Memphis.

In our everyday lives we encounter the icy waters as well. Political leaders who ignore the needs of the poor while voting themselves hefty raises, televangelists who swagger around in luxury while telling the gullible to send them more money, corporation executives who claim more and more money while their companies send jobs overseas, businessmen who feel that 5.15 an hour is a living wage. They all exhibit the icy waters of egotistical calculation.

Nor can we evade responsibility either. We are sometimes calculating too, and if we tried hard enough perhaps as we warm up we could help others do likewise.

After all, there is always hope; everything is cold now, but spring is coming in March.

--Ed Day



On The Horizon

Sunday Morning Fare

... by Ed Day & Roger Robbins

Worship Services for January

January 1 - *The New Year: Backward & Forward* - Ed Day

January 8 - *God, Spiritual Machines & Living Forever in the 21st Century* - Calvin Mercer

January 19 - *Martin Luther King: In His Own Words* - Ed Day

January 22 - *Simplicity in Theology* - Sean Stayton - Working from a variety of sources showing how our interactions with the divinity affect our interactions with others.

January 29 - *Science & Theology III; From Intelligent Design to Desired Intelligence* - Roger Robbins

How an alternative interpretation might bring fruitful interactions between scientific and religious thought.



From the Grounds...

B& G workday Sat. Jan. 7th 9am. Many projects to do including de-Christmasing the church. Please help if you can! Happy New Year!

--Lisa Brenner

Information Request from the Board

Several of our members and friends are not on the Yahoo e-mail list for announcements and information. If you have an e-mail address, and want to be "in the loop," please send your e-address to Rich Elkins. His email address is: richerichnc@yahoo.com. If you do not have e-mail, or you don't want to be on the list, please make sure Jackie Wyman has your preferred means of contact. Also, please let Jackie know if you want your Beacon electronically instead of printed.

--Rich Elkin

Covenant Groups Meeting Schedule

Social/Political Group: January 7th from 9:30 to 10:30am at the UUCG

Meditation Group: January 8th from 7:00 to 8:00pm at the Greenville Yoga Center, 2504 Charles Blvd.

Sacred Texts Group: January 15th from 7:00 to 8:00 at the UUCG.

News, Notes and Other Stuff

RE CHAIR RESIGNS

I hope this finds all of you well and enjoying the holiday season.

I am writing to inform you that as of November 29th, I have officially resigned as the Religious Education Chairperson.

I have multiple reasons for submitting my resignation, and I feel that in the spirit of direct communication I should share some of them with you.

I took on the role of RE Chairperson with the hope that I could put everything I have into it and help to make the program the best it could be. I feel like I have done a lot of work, and with all of your help, the program is running better than ever.

I began taking classes this past semester, and I have decided to continue to pursue my education, taking an additional two classes this semester. My husband is also taking classes, which gives us even less time together. And finally, I have had to take on another part time job, so my time with my family will be stretched even thinner. My family has, and always will, come first. Because of this, I feel like I cannot give the RE committee my full effort and attention. The program, along with the children and the church, would suffer if I remained in the position without being able to fully commit to it.

I love the UUCG, the members and the sense of community that I feel here. Unfortunately, as most of you know, there are also some politics involved with this particular position. Although I had hoped that it would not, the reality is that dealing with them has drained me and taken away some of the passion I had felt so strongly. I joined this committee with the hope that I would not be affected by what happened to past RE Chairpersons, but I feel like the problems have persisted. I have voiced my concerns to the Board members involved with me, and I am willing to work with them to help make the next chairperson's job easier. I am also willing to help whoever is chosen as chairperson and Victoria Brown, the DRE, transition into their positions.

I have truly enjoyed working with each and every one of you. Your energy and commitment helps to inspire the children of the UUCG, and I know that you will all continue to do so.

Thank you all for your effort and your caring.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I hope to see you at church soon.

Regards,
Shareen Berkowitz



January in Preview

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1 10:30 <i>The New Year: Backward & Forward</i> - Ed Day	2	3 8:30 Breakfast@ Cracker Barrel	4 6:00 No Eat Out	5	6	7 9:00 Bldg Cleanup 9:30-10:30 Social/Political Covenant Group
8 10:30 <i>God, Souls, Spiritual Machines</i> - Calvin Mercer 7:00 RE Committee Mtg	9	10 8:30 Breakfast@ Cracker Barrel 6:00 Committee on Ministry	11 6:00 Eat Out @ China 10	12	13	14 Teen Movie: see Victoria Brown
15 10:30 <i>Martin Luther King Day</i> -- Ed Day 12:00 Sacred Text Covenant 7:00 Earth-Based Covenant 7:00 Meditation Covenant - GYC	16	17 8:30 Breakfast@ Cracker Barrel	18 6:00 Soup & Sharing @ UUCG	19	20	21
22 10:30 <i>Simplicity in Theology</i> -- Sean Stayton 7:00 Sacred Text Covenant Group	23 7:30 Board Meeting	24 8:30 Breakfast@ Cracker Barrel	25 6:00 Eat Out @ Chili's	26	27	28 9:00 First Born
29 10:30 <i>Science & Technology III</i> -- Roger Robbins 5:00 New Member Dinner --Invitation only	30 7:00 Interfaith Prayers for Peace	31 8:30 Breakfast@ Cracker Barrel				

Hospitality

I forgot to request volunteers for January refreshments. Will have a sign up sheet beginning Christmas day and am sure we will have refreshments for the first month of 2006.

Soup and Sharing will be January 18th, 6:00pm. This will give us an opportunity to do this without Karen and it will be what it will be. I will enlist soup makers and we will enjoy being together.

Dinner for Eight will occur on Feb 18th and we may have another Dinner and Movie in Feb.

Thank you all for your help.

--Janet Doig

January Happy Birthday Wishes

Judy Hepler	January 1
Rich Elkins	January 11
Kelly Kurz	January 15
Susan Boutilier	January 17
Patrick Rumley	January 23
Sue Daughtry	January 24
Hooker Horton	January 30

--Janet Doig

From the RE DIRECTOR

December was quite a busy month with a few changes in the Religious Education Department. Shareen Berkowitz resigned as RE Chair. We all miss her great organization and communication skills. We wish to thank her for dedication and hard work she gave our committee. We are now looking for a new RE Chair. Please contact Feryl Master if you are interested.

Because the regularly scheduled RE Committee meeting falls on January 1, we are moving it this month to the next Sunday, January 8 at 7:00. All interested people are welcome to attend. We are in need of teachers for both the Teens and the Tweens for January. Also if you are interested in reading for Story Time please let me know. The teens are studying Earth Based Spirituality. The Tweens have begun their unit on Partners with Nature.

Teen Movie night will start up again on January 14. We hope to make this a regular monthly Teen gathering on the second Saturday of every month with supper before the movie. So teens please let us know some of the movies you would like to see.

--Victoria Brown

THE UNSEEN POWER by Rumi

We are the flute, our music is all Thine;
We are the mountains echoing only Thee;
And movest to defeat or victory;
Lions emblazoned high on flags unfurled-
The wind invisible sweeps us through the world.

R. A. Nicholson
'Persian Poems', an Anthology of verse translations
edited by A.J.Arberry, Everyman's Library, 1972

UU TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

ALASKA

Soon we will mail your congregation the 2006 brochure with information about our 2006 UU summer programs in Alaska sponsored by 5 Alaskan UU Fellowships and coordinated by wUUrld. You can find more information on our website, www.wuurld.org We'd appreciate it if you would put the notice below in your next newsletter so your members will know about it in time to make reservations.

Rev. Dick Weston-Jones, Wuurld



wUUrld's 2006 WhaleCoast Alaska

Five Alaskan UU fellowships invite other UUs to our eco-cultural programs in June, July and August 2006. See the *REAL* Alaska! Alaskan UU's provide B & B accommodations in their homes in Anchorage, Seward, Fairbanks, Juneau and Sitka, lead tours and hikes and host parties. Visit with Tlingit, Inupiat and other Native Alaskans. See whales, sea otters, sea lions, seals, bears, moose, caribou, wolves, puffins, eagles and other birds in the wild from the Arctic Ocean to the Inside Passage in the south, and visit Denali and other national parks. Rev. Dick & Mary Weston-Jones, leaders. Visit website www.wuurld.org, e-mail dick@wuurld.org, or phone toll-free 1-888, 998-8753 for a brochure. Taking reservations now.

UUre HOME -- UU B & B DIRECTORY

Do you dream of inexpensive vacation travel to interesting destinations where you can stay in the homes of friendly people who share your ideals and are happy to provide directions and advice for their area?

The UU bed and breakfast directory *UU're Home* (formerly *Homecomings*) can fulfill your dream. For 27 years, we've provided a network of hosts in the United States (and a few abroad) who enjoy meeting new friends and who are happy to open their home to like-minded people.

Check out our website at www.UUreHome.com, where entries are updated whenever changes are made or new hosts are added and you can charge! a membership to your credit card. The 2006 edition of the annual paper directory will be available in April and can be ordered by sending a check for \$18 (or \$23, along with your e-mail address, for both the directory and a year's access to the website) to UU're Home, 43 Vermont Court, Asheville, NC 28806.

You can also become a host and be listed in the directory. Contact us at 828-281-3253 or at info@uurehome.com, and we will gladly send you information about listing your accommodations

On a Personal Note . . .

Duncan Masters, who has a long pedigree in this congregation, has returned from some two years' service with the Peace Corps in Cape Verde followed by a tour of Africa. We hope to hear more soon.

Sienie Postma has moved to Red Oak Manor where her old telephone number followed her. **Janet Doig** reports that she's doing well.

We've heard lots of praise for the concerts of the choral groups of which alto **Rebecca Powers** is the president and **Terry Shank** a founding member. There is more music to come, we hear.

The **Social Action Committee** organized gifts for the children at **Little Willie**. There were lots of pretty packages!

Diane Mackinroth is going home for Christmas, the first time in six years. May it be worth having waited for.

Kelly Kurz has been spending Sundays (and other days) recently with her father who has been in the hospital in Chapel Hill.

Ruth Leggett has a new grandson, **Daniel**, since **Shannon Terry** and **Theresa Swallow** have given **Taylor** a baby brother, **Daniel**.

And this from **Victoria Brown**: "Please welcome **David Gregory Brown II** to your congregation. He arrived at 12:18 am on December 13, 2005."

--Edith Webber

Board Highlights

At the December meeting, the Trustees decided on the Disruptive Behavior Policy to present to the Congregation for discussion at the January Town Hall meeting. The proposed policy will be available at our website, and copies will be available at church for members without access otherwise.

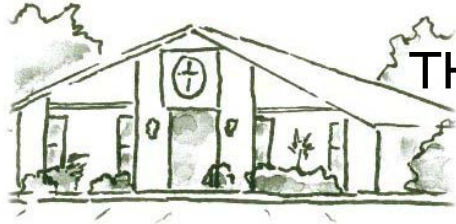
It's time to be looking at the budget for 2006-2007 (wow!). The Board started discussing items that we might like to get into the next budget (like a ramp for the front door). Committee chairs need to get their requests to Brenda ASAP.

Please let Victoria Brown (DRE) know if you can help RE in any way. We are without an RE Chairperson again. Contact Victoria at hemlocmoon@aol.com or 252-757-2981

UUCG is going to host a Cluster Meeting on February 25, 2006. Our cluster includes the Congregations east of I-95. The Denominational Affairs Committee is in charge and will be asking for your assistance.

The Welcoming Congregation program was discussed. The major part of the program is the education of our Congregation. A decision of participation follows many small group educational sessions. Feryl and Rich are looking for people who would like to help with the sessions. Please contact one of them if you can help.

Until next month...



THE MONTH in PREVIEW

SUNDAY PREVIEWS for JANUARY

Personalizing Your Theology

On January 22nd, Sean Stayton will speak about Simplicity in Theology

Simplicity in Theology: During the development of my religious view (an ongoing process) I have tried to blend elements from a large variety of sources, including, but not limited to, Christianity, Taoism, Native American, and several European Earth based religions (Druidism, Heathenism, and a variety of Wiccan religions). All of this has been heavily influenced by Thoreau's view of simplicity in life. During my talk, I will try to explain my views on Deity and how our interactions with Divinity affect our interactions with the people and world around us.

Science & Religion

On January 29th Roger Robbins, our Worship Chair, will speak on Science and Theology III: From Intelligent Design to Desired Intelligence.

The challenges that the last 300 years of scientific progress has presented to traditional religious thought, especially in the Western traditions, are very real. That the response to these challenges should be one of perceived conflict, however, is merely one of several possible initial assumptions. Another possibility, at the other pole, is that there can, and should, be an interaction between these two basic human activities. Recently, several scientists-turned-clergy and scientifically-informed clergy have shown how fruitful such interactions can be, even within the Christian tradition. Now, if there were only a religious tradition that "draws from many sources" ...

MORE ABOUT OUR SPEAKERS

On January 1st Ed Day's topic will be New Year: Backward and Forward. Ed Day is our Interim Minister.

Calvin Mercer is the Co-Director of the Religious Studies Program at ECU. His topic on January 8th will be God, Souls, Spiritual Machines and Living Forever in the 21st Century.

Celebrating Martin Luther King Day, Ed Day will bring the great civil rights leader's inspirational words to us.

Roger Robbins is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Biology at ECU and our Worship Committee Chair. Roger will speak on the 29th.

Deadline for next month's **beacon** is Tuesday 12 noon, January 17th

UU Wednesday Dining Out Menu*



January 4 -- No Dine Out

January 11 -- **China 10** -- 2516 E. 5th Street -- 830-2238

January 18 -- **Soup & Sharing** -- UUCG

January 25 -- **Chili's Bar & Grill** -- 3050 S. Evans Street -- 355-7449

Let's Eat!

* Wednesday dining out starts at 6:00 pm & is Dutch treat. Please let Ed Day (355-0652) know if you plan to come so that an appropriate number of places can be made available at the restaurant.

**The Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Greenville
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355-6658**

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