



The UUCG beacon

February 2007

The **beacon** is published monthly
by the Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Greenville
252-355-6658
www.uugreenvillenc.org

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Sunday Services -- 10:30 am

February 4

*Who's in Charge of this
Church Anyway?*

Rev Frieda Gillespie

February 11

*What Does Gender Have to
Do with It?*

Rev Frieda Gillespie

February 18

It Matters What We Believe

Rev Frieda Gillespie

February 25

What Do I Believe?

Bill Baker

Children's activities are available
each Sunday.

President's Notes:

Our teens are reviewing our principles. It's taking them longer than anticipated. I find this encouraging, because our principles are much more difficult to live than to say.

"The inherent worth and dignity of every person" – **Every person?** The guy who almost ran us off the road with his crazy driving? The co-workers who just took credit for our work, or got us blamed for their mistakes? The politician we love to hate? The terrorist who blew himself up along with innocent men, women, and children?

"Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations" - Exactly what do these mean? Justice is often cited to support the death penalty. My family has worked hard and sacrificed to reach our present situation. Is it equitable to take from us and give to people who did not work as hard, or squandered their money? Should compassion have limits?

"Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations" – How accepting should we be. Is there a limit to acceptance? Often we try to separate the behavior and the person. How valid is this?

Each of our 7 principles expresses a noble goal. I believe following them will lead to a better life and world. They can become very difficult when one tries to apply them to our daily life. How absolute are these principles? How far do we push ourselves to meet them? How coercive should we be to have our friends, our organizations, and our government live up to these goals?

All I've really done here is raise questions. I don't have satisfactory answers to any of these questions, or the many others that come up while trying to live our principles. I have some partial answers. I find my answers change with reflection and experience. I sometimes envy those who have all the answers clearly spelled out by a book or a leader. Most of the time I don't envy them, though. Being a UU is difficult, but I find it rewarding. I'll always have things to think about.

--Feryl Masters

Reflections

REFLECTIONS . . . of Rev Frieda Gillespie

Notes From the Interim

“We must be willing to let go of the life we planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us.” –Joseph Campbell

Disappointment is one of the hardest emotions I find to go through. It sounds mild enough but when we have our hearts set on a particular outcome that doesn't happen it can be devastating. Depending upon how firmly we believe that what we wanted was our key to happiness, we may really feel for some time like our future is bleak. That is a terrible state to be in. One we try and avoid at all costs using stubbornness, blame or denial to mask our terrible fear of the future.

I've had many disappointments as I suspect you have as well. One that I'm thinking about today as I sit in my office at home in Framingham watching the snowflakes drift gently down was the one that brought me here. I knew I needed to complete a year internship at a UU church in order to complete the requirements for UU ministry. Because I didn't want to move my daughter and because it would mean an extra year of seminary, during which I was sure I would run out of money altogether, I didn't want to move away from Dallas to do it. That meant I needed to be accepted as an Intern at one of the two teaching churches other than my home church. I wasn't accepted at the big church where the female minister knew me and knew my home church minister. At the time this felt like a huge rejection. They

knew I needed this position—why wouldn't they give it to me? And the other church fired their minister before they could give me the position. I really wanted to give up. I hated everyone involved. But there was really no choice for me, so I had to venture out to another state with my daughter, our dog, and her lizard in a car packed to the gills to do my internship in Framingham, MA. I knew no one there at first. But this simple act of going forward brought me more new life than I could have ever imagined or ever achieved in Texas. I found real help for my daughter here; I found love, friendship and family, had a wonderful internship, a terrific job (with you after having been again disappointed in my job search in MA), and have a new home.

Several members this past two weeks are facing severe disappointment. I suspect there is not much that can console them right now. But each of them is courageous and will continue moving ahead because there is no choice, because there is too much that they have to give and too much that they love. But this too is courage: to take the next steps even believing that there is no happiness ahead. And if my life is any example there will be much life ahead for each of them too. It couldn't not be so. The more we can let go of what we expected to have happen, the more we can receive what new gifts there are waiting for us just beyond this strange turn of events.

I look forward to seeing you all again in Greenville from February 3rd – February 18th.

Frieda

On a Personal Note . . .

Matthew Farris has his learner's permit, and is driving very conscientiously. CONGRATULATIONS MATTHEW!

Joanie DeGroot has a new, smaller car (smaller car, smaller target?). She fervently hopes that she will not hit anyone else.

Don English has ridden his bicycle 1800 miles since March! Also, his lotus plant has unexpectedly sprouted a new leaf much earlier than expected. Maybe it is applauding Don's bike riding! Don and Sylvia recently traveled to LA for the third birthday of their grandson, Theo, and had a wonderful time.

Richard Becker reported that his father is in rugged health.

Jim and Louise Pleasant received the gift of a 5th great-grandchild for Christmas.

Terry Shank's son got an e-mail from Sunni Williams in outer space while deep in the ocean in Alvin... from the far reaches to the far reaches.

Susan Foreman's son Patrick (also a member of UUCG) graduated from UNC-W in December. Congratulations!! Susan also reported that her husband Richard had his 8th surgery. Surely he won't try skiing again!

Patrice Alexander shared some terrific news. She is now the Human Resources Director for Greenville Utilities. It means that she will have way more time with Alex. She had been working in Tarboro.

"FUND"ER FROLICS

The UUCG "Fund"er Frolics fundraiser will be held on Saturday night, March 3rd. Proceeds will be used to help meet the \$4000 fundraising budget item for this year. We really need it!

Beginning at 6:00 pm, there will be a spaghetti dinner with salad, bread, wine, and dessert. Tickets are \$7.00 each with only 32 tickets left to sell! Get yours before they are all gone. Call Jackie at 439-8581.

At 7:30 pm, a social hour and perusal of the silent auction items will begin. The service auction will begin at 8:00 pm. Some services already on the list are: computer lessons, a night of Trivial Pursuit for 12, piano music for a special event, a one of a kind fruit arrangement, and mushroom logs!

If you have not completed your donation form, please do so now to let us know what you will be contributing. Give your forms to Jackie. A donation of your special talent for the live service auction or an item for the silent auction is very much needed and wanted!

Your help and support is needed and appreciated!!

--Louise Pleasant & Jackie Wyman



WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH

UU Campus Ministry

The UU Campus Ministry will meet on: Tues. Jan 23rd 6:00-7:00 in Room 247 at Mendenhall Student Center, ECU Campus

If there are folks interested in starting a Young Adult (18-35) UU group, please feel free to attend this meeting. If you can't attend the meeting but you're interested in a UU Young Adult Group, email me at donohuet@ecu.edu. I'm curious to find out if there are enough people interested in a Young Adult Group to get one started.

--Tracy Donohue

--ECU UU Campus Ministry Advisor

Board Tidbits for January

The Board will start meeting the second Monday of each month at 7 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for February 12.

Frieda will be sending letters to the local churches that were damaged by arson. Our show of support will include making space available in our facility to those congregations.

Terry Shank presented her concerns about the lack of space in our building and urged the Board to step up the pace in planning to move to a larger facility. Terry emphasized the need to view this as a long term project starting with increasing the operating income enough to be able to afford a mortgage.

The Board approved the recommendation of the Administrative Assistant Search Committee to offer the position to Jessica Patterson.

--Sue Ferris

Happy February Birthday to . . .

Sondra Haynes	February 5th
Carole Weil	February 8th
Shannon Terry	February 9th

Feb 4th - *"Who's in Charge of this Church Anyway?"* **Rev Frieda Gillespie** - There are several different models of church governance usually based on the size of the church. Your church is a family sized church, but what does that mean really? What is the difference between a family and a church?

Feb 11th - *"What Does Gender Have to Do with It?"* - **Rev Frieda Gillespie** - For Valentine's Day. Love doesn't seem to have the boundaries we might like to put around it. Is love a decision or a feeling we can't control or both?

Feb 18th - *"It Matters What We Believe"* - **Rev Frieda Gillespie** - One of the strongest influences on liberal religious education in the 20th century was Unitarian Sophia Lyon Fahs. Her philosophy of the spiritual development of children changed the way children were taught in many denominations. We will look at religious education through her eyes and consider a vision of spiritual development for this church.

Feb 25th -- *"What Do I Believe?"* -- **Bill Baker** -- Worship Committee member Bill Baker has agreed to revive his controversial service titled, "What Do I Believe?" This is a very enjoyable service he has not given for a couple of years in which members are selected by a drawing of numbers to respond to a series of printed statements from religions of the world.

UUCG Hires New Admin Assist

Please welcome our new Administrative Assistant **Jess Patterson** who will be starting on February 5th. Jess and her husband have recently moved to Greenville from CA where they were members of a UU church. They will be attending UUCG as well. We owe a big debt of gratitude to **Jackie Wyman** for stepping into this position and doing such a good job until a permanent Administrator could be found.

News, Notes and Other Stuff

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NOTES

Believe it or not, I, Patty Gade, am your new RE chair. When Feryl first mentioned the position to me, my first impulse was “No way!” I don’t know anything about teaching children, I have no clue about religious curriculum and I am not qualified. I reconsidered though, because I knew the position had been vacant for a while and I believe that the RE department is the key to the growth of this church. We should all want to grow, because we need more members to contribute to the work of church.

I know in my own case, my family started coming here for the sake of our children. We had been allowing them to go to church with their friends, which seemed harmless. After all, Christians are good people. Suddenly, we found out that co-opting our children’s RE was not a great idea and we were just being lazy. One day Becky came home from church and asked to go to an “Anti-evolution rally.” She quoted something like “those people think we came from slime”. Scott and I both have degrees in science, so she could not have said anything more absurd in our household. We experienced a lot of tense moments, but ultimately through the tears Becky said, “Mommy, I just want to fit in...” Soon after that, my family wound up on the doorstep of this church. Time has passed and now my children are not long from moving on to lives of their own, but for sure Scott and I plan to be contributing members of this congregation for a long time.

My point is our story is not unusual. I think a lot of people decide to find a church when their children reach a crisis age. When new families show up on our doorstep, we must be ready for them with a vital, functioning RE department. We can’t create it when they show up. It must be ready, because we really need them to stay.

Which brings me to my pitch: WE NEED VOLUNTEERS IN RE!

We have come a long way by hiring a professional DRE, but Victoria needs our support.

There are a lot of different ways to volunteer in RE:

- ❖ Storytellers
- ❖ Assistant teachers
- ❖ Nursery rockers
- ❖ Meals during Harry Potter week
- ❖ Most importantly, we need teachers to commit to 1, 2 or 3 months at a time

Right now, we have two classes past the nursery age. Kim Smith leads the Tweens who have just started a unit called “Travel in Time”. They have made a time machine, which they will be using to travel back in time to study UU history, famous UU’s and to find out what it means to be a UU.

The Teens are led by Rich Elkins. They are starting a curriculum called “Living in UUville”. They are just laying the groundwork, but they will soon be creating characters and using them in role-playing situations focused on UUism.

Kim is going to need a break from RE shortly and Rich is soon to be the president of our congregation, so we are trying to prepare for replacements, as well as expand our pool of teachers and helpers.

To teach, you do not need any extravagant qualifications. Like me, you can be determined to “learn as you go” and you will probably find that you have more to offer than you thought. Victoria has lessons already prepared—we just need people who can implement them. And we are trying to be creative. We realize people do not like to miss the sermons. So, if we can get several people to commit to be in a team, we can rotate teachers so there is time to attend services, while still providing consistency in RE.

Please keep in mind, there is nothing more important than laying the foundation of our liberal religion in its youngest members. IT IS A BIG DEAL! So, I hope I hear from you soon.

--Patty Gade

Working Together to Build Community



Stewardship Committee

Just a reminder to keep the night of March 24 open. That's when our annual Pledge Dinner will happen. Food and entertainment are already lined up. We intend to see if there is life in this Congregation. Our goal is 98.6 thousand dollars. As the time approaches, we're going to be doing our best to work ourselves up to a fever pitch. With a little over our goal, we can afford to hire a music director. Imagine a choir every Sunday!! We might hold off on the robes and processional a little longer, but let's get fancy music next year.

--Feryl Masters

Ministerial Search

The search process continues for our new settled minister. Around mid-January the committee was given four names of prospective ministers. At this writing we are in the process of exchanging detailed information about UUCG and these prospects.

By distribution of this Beacon we will have spoken with each one. They all seem very good, and highly qualified to serve us. Now begins the winnowing process as we come to choose the best fit for our Congregation.

--Don English

A Renewal of Vows

Jim and Louise Pleasant will be celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Sunday, March 4th at 2:30 pm at the church. Family and friends are invited to join them on this special occasion. A reception will follow in the sanctuary. The favor of an RSVP would be most appreciated. Please call 321-2649 and leave a message if no one is home to answer.

--Jackie Wyman

FIRST BORN

Join your fellow UUs for the food distribution at First Born on Saturday, February 24th, or meet at the church at 9:00am to carpool, or go directly to First Born in Grimesland. See you there.

AUCTION PLANNING

Many hands and heads are needed to raise \$4000!

Louise is without her e-mail for a while. If you want to contact her, call 321-2649, and please leave a message if she's not there.

Thank you!

--Jackie Wyman

REGIONAL CLUSTER MEETING IN FEBRUARY

Mark your calendars now for the Eastern NC Cluster Meeting of UU congregations. It will be on Saturday, February 24, at Outlaws Bridge Universalist Church, about an hour and a half from Wilmington. This will be a good opportunity to connect with fellow UU's from nearby congregations and network on common problems. In addition, the three candidates for District Trustee to the UUA Board will be there to discuss their candidacies. For more information, contact Charlie West: Westjrc@aol.com.

--Jackie Wyman



February in PREVIEW

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4 9:30 Forum 10:30 <i>Who's In Charge of This Church Anyway?</i>	5	6 8:30 Breakfast@ Court Side Cafe	7 6:00 Eat Out @ Olive Garden	8	9	10 9:00 Bldg Cleanup 9:30-10:30 Social/Political Covenant Group
11 9:30 Forum 10:30 <i>What Does Gender Have to Do with It Anyway?</i>	12 7:30 Board Meeting	13 8:30 Breakfast@ Court Side Cafe	14 6:00 Eat Out @ Thai Kitchen	15	16	17
18 9:30 Forum 10:30 <i>It Matters What We Believe</i> 12:00 Social Action	19	20 8:30 Breakfast@ Court Side Cafe 9:00 pm BEACON Deadline	21 6:00 Eat Out @ Red Lobster	22	23	24 9:00 First Born
25 9:30 Forum 10:30 <i>What I Believe</i>	26 7:00 InterFaith- Prayers for Peace 7:00 Book Club	27 8:30 Breakfast@ Court Side Cafe	28 6:00 Eat Out @ Pancho's & Gringo's			

Dates in gray indicate days that Frieda is in Framingham, MA. To contact her call: 252-367-0103 or email: minister@uugreenvillenc.org

Deadline for next month's **beacon** is Tuesday, Feb 20th, 9:00 pm

UU Wednesday Dining Out Menu*



Let's Eat!

February 4 -- Olive Garden -- 520 SE Greenville Blvd -- 321-7498

February 7th -- Thai Kitchen - 2400 S Memorial Dr - 252-551-1351

February 21 -- Red Lobster -- 3501 S. Memorial Drive 756-4000

February 28 -- Pancho's & Gringo's -- On Greenville Blvd near Convention Center

* Wednesday dining out starts at 6:00 pm & is Dutch treat. Please let Sylvia English 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
131 Oakmont Drive
Greenville, NC 27858
355-6658**

Minister, Rev Frieda Gillespie
Religious Education Dir, Victoria Brown
Admin Assist: Jess Patterson
President, Feryl Masters
Vice President, Rich Elkins
Secretary, Sue Ferris
Treasurer, Brenda Stewart

Committee Chairs
Building and Grounds: Lee Wyman
Communications: Don English
Endowment: Bill Paulson
Hospitality: Gail Butler & Marcia Sobel
Membership: Ruel Tyer
Religious Education: Patty Gade
Social Action: Ray Sobel
Worship: Bruce Maxwell

