

# UUTC UPDATE

DECEMBER 15th, 2017



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF PENNSYLVANIA COUNTY

A WELCOMING CONGREGATION

## WAITING FOR THE LIGHT

by Rev. Ilene Tompkins-Gillispie

Sunday, December 17th at **9:15am** and **11:00am**

Are you skilled at waiting and full of saint-like patience? Or, like most of us, do you often find yourself impatient, fidgeting and frustrated as you wait? In this worship service, we will explore together the theme of waiting, as pagans await the approaching winter solstice and the return of brighter days, as Christians await the coming of the Christ-child, and as children of all ages await Christmas festivities.

*Join us for coffee between services at 10:30am!*

## PLANNING FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Christmas Eve falls on Sunday this year. We will have services at 11:00am, 4:00pm and 6:00pm. The choir will perform at 11 & 6. Our 4:00 Family Service will feature a "Nativity in a Trunk" and all young people, established or here just for the holidays, are welcome to participate. More Info [here](#).

## COMING UP at UUTC

- Santa's Workshop** — Sun. 12/17 @ 1:30pm
- Muffins with the Minister — Mon 12/18 @ 10-12
- Growing Younger — Mon 12/18 @ 11:00am
- Men's Group — Tues 12/19 @ 9:00am
- SMART Recovery — Tues 12/19 @ 6:00pm
- Eclectics — Wed 12/20 @ 9:30am
- Choir Rehearsal — Wed 12/20 @ 4:00pm
- Rainbow Alliance — Thurs 12/21 @ 5:00pm
- Solstice Service — Thurs 12/21 @ 7:00pm

"IT'S ONLY  
TERRIBLE TO  
HAVE NOTHING TO  
WAIT FOR."  
- ERICH MARIA  
REMARQUE



## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Holiday blessings to you all! It is such a joy to get to celebrate this special season with UUTC for the first time. I feel deeply grateful to be your minister and for all of the gifts of time, heart, and spirit that so many of you have shared with me since my arrival. My spouse (Dustin) and I are particularly grateful for all of the concern, prayers, and encouragement shared with us as we've been settling into our new house, which now feels like a home. We enjoyed the magical snow, and are equally enjoying the fact that it has melted much more quickly than we are used to, after having spent so many winters together in Boston.

I am very excited about the three (count them, three!) opportunities for worship on Christmas Eve at UUTC. Since

Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, we will have ONE morning service, at 11am on Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup>, with refreshments served before hand at 10:30. Then, we will have a fabulously fun Nativity in a Trunk service at 4pm, which is a pageant with NO rehearsal—all those young at heart are welcome to join in! And finally, at 6pm, we will have a Contemplative Christmas Service with lessons and carols.

I look forward to worshipping with you this coming week. Please know that, whatever meaning you draw from this season and whatever feelings are evoked for you, you are in my prayers and my heart.

Faithfully yours,

Rev. Ilene

## FIFTH SUNDAY FOR SHARING HOUSE

December is a month with FIVE Sundays, so UUTC will be collecting food for Sharing House at the end of the month. Baskets will be available in the lobby for your donations December 24 and 31. Please take with you a list of most needed items from the basket on the counter.

The non-food items most needed by Sharing House are diapers, (sizes 5 and 6), laundry detergent, tampons (super), toilet paper, and paper

towels. These items cannot be purchased with food stamps.

## Adult Religious Exploration Survey 2018

Name \_\_\_\_\_

ARE has seven broad based themes to guide our focus: Life & Death, Sacred Texts, Existence of Higher Power, Inspiration & Guidance, Spiritual Practices, Social Justice, and Community & Connection. We are looking for more specific program topics that you are interested in exploring. Please share your ideas. (Use the back for more space.)

UUA has curricula developed for the following topics. Please check the ones you are interested in:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> UU History                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Lay Leadership/Facilitating  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Justice History     | <input type="checkbox"/> Building the World We Dream About                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UU Theology                | <input type="checkbox"/> Facing Death with Life   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethics for UU              | <input type="checkbox"/> Hindsight, Humor, Hope – Who, Me, & Elder?                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beyond Partisan            | <input type="checkbox"/> UUA Common Read: Daring Democracy                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Awareness       | <input type="checkbox"/> UUA Common Read: Centering (Navigating Race, Authenticity & Power) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Odyssey Writing for Elders | <input type="checkbox"/> Spirit in Practice   |

Preferences for program sessions (check as many as desired):

day  night  weekend  weekday

Facilitators are necessary to make programming happen. Please let us know if you are willing to facilitate and what topics you can address. (Again, use the back for more space.)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Your ARE team thanks you: Jeanie Bernard, Alex Burroughs, Rabbit Krueger, Jim Null, Earle Rabb, Paula Williamson. Please call any one of us individually or email us at: [areleader@uutc.org](mailto:areleader@uutc.org)

*Drop this survey in the offering plate or place in the Donations box at the front counter!*

## DOING ONLINE SHOPPING?

Shop locally first, of course, but if you must go online, make your holiday purchases at [smile.amazon.com/ch/56-2159071](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/56-2159071) and Amazon will donate a portion of your purchase to Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County. These contributions go into the general operating fund. Thanks for your support!





## COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER: CAN YOU HELP?

Members and Friends of UUTC participate, along with other local church members, each year in assisting Sacred Heart in their Community Christmas Dinner, which feeds all who come through the doors. Come be part of this 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Christmas Dinner

by serving, donating, or enjoying a wonderful dinner with others in our wonderful and diverse community. The dinner is served 12pm-4pm on Christmas Day. There is no charge. All are welcome.

This year our opportunity to be a part of this is to donate a total of 25 gallons of tea (commercial ready-made, in plastic jugs or bottles), sweet or unsweet. (We did a great job of this last year!) Donations of tea may be dropped off at Sacred Heart during office hours or Sunday morning. **Contact Joan Lemire** at [tjbindire@yahoo.com](mailto:tjbindire@yahoo.com) or 231-9259 with amount of sweet or unsweet donated so we don't overwhelm their storage area. PS: Desserts are also always welcome.

There is also a need for volunteers to help during serving hours and with cleanup. Our volunteers from previous years were very much appreciated and enjoyed a great Christmas dinner in true community. If you are able to help in one of the time slots - usually 1 hour or so- with serving, seating, greeting, etc., you may sign up at the Gathering Table at Sacred Heart or contact Sandi Rogers directly at [sandidougrogers@yahoo.com](mailto:sandidougrogers@yahoo.com). For additional information, call Sandi Rogers at 883-2990.

## THE DIGNITY PROJECT — SORTING IN JANUARY

Curious to learn what the Social Justice Task Force has been up to? Plan to join us on **January 3<sup>rd</sup>** at the UUTC monthly Team Night. In keeping with the Hogwarts' tradition of "sorting," you are invited to help sort products to stock Dignity Pantries for six organizations: El Centro, Sharing House, The Haven, Bread of Life, The Family Place, and SAFE. You'll recall we have taken on the task of stocking and delivering items which are NOT eligible for purchase through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – most notably, menstrual hygiene products, diapers, and condoms—items which our neighbors desperately need in order to fully feel their inherent worth and dignity. January will be our first delivery, and what better way to show our commitment to the first principle of "the inherent worth and dignity of every person" than to help others? Lend a hand and the work will go quickly. **Be sure to let the office know if you want to be included for the pizza count!**







## LETTER FROM ERNIE

It's hard to believe that nearly three years have passed since my retirement from active ministry. When I look back on those years I spent serving as your minister I consider them to be the culmination and reward of a life-long struggle to find spiritual freedom.

Words can't describe how much I appreciate the love and support I felt all those years. You were, literally, "the wind beneath my wings." We had our struggles, conflicts

and disappointments along the way, our light journeys and our dark passages. But such is life. We learned together, we laughed and we cried. I was new to Unitarian Universalism and so were/are most of you. Through it all we did more than maintain, we thrived. I won't ever forget hearing one of our new members describing UUTC as an "oasis in a spiritual desert." That oasis is everyone who calls UUTC home. So, once again, I say "thank you" to a wonderful community.

I have had the great privilege of meeting, twice, with Ilene. She was not only the one who initiated the meetings but welcomed me to return to UUTC whenever I felt ready. That, to me, says a lot about her character. I find her presence warm and invigorating. She strikes me as being self-confident, a visionary and one who is deeply cognizant of the tasks and responsibilities of professional ministry. I described to Ilene my experience of the community of UUTCers as being supportive and challenging (in a good way). My recent participation in the last Wonderful Wednesday musical program was a sheer delight and I look forward to participating in other events and programs.

Meanwhile, "back at the fort," Diane and I are experiencing what it means to be grandparents. Our grandson, Ryan, just turned three and provides us with plenty of physical exercise. Diane is still working full time and I'm speaking occasionally at nearby UU congregations- giving them the "Campbell/Jung" treatment.

I hear great things about UUTC and I expect greater things are in store as you journey forward with Ilene as your guide. It is gratifying to know that in these darkest of times there is still a light that shines and will continue to shine. It is the light of justice and compassion. And in every Chalice Lighting, in every UU congregation throughout the globe, that light is recognized and celebrated.

Peace,

Ernie

## NOT A CASUAL COMMITMENT — THE HANDS, FEET & HEARTS OF UUTC

Ponder, for a moment, these events and accomplishments:

- Marches in Washington, Asheville, Raleigh, Brevard
- Clean Out of three Varsity properties; Rehabilitation of two
- A two-year, successful, Search process
- Establishment of the Varsity Oxford House for women
- Renewed commitment to our children, their facility needs and their programming
- Renewed commitment to our Mission, especially through the work of Teams

**None of this happens if no one shows up to do the work.**

Dozens of UUTC Members and Friends participated in marches in our region, state and in DC. Both poster-making and letter writing happened here on campus, as we made space for all to make their voices heard.

More dozens worked to make our new property acquisition a positive help to our community. Their work ensured that two of the properties could be used to fiscally support the purchase we made and to guarantee the ability to stay in place on Varsity Street as long as we choose. Even with paid contractors picking up the load of the necessary licensed work, our short timeline (and the extensive work) could not have been completed without the blisters, bruises and sore backs of so many volunteers. Then, even more volunteers (of time and dollars) stepped in to turn #74 into a missional project—an Oxford House.

In a highly competitive climate, our Search Team put in two heavy-duty years of labor and love to find us a settled minister who would be a match for us and for Brevard. After the Candidating week, 110 of you showed up to vote your faith in that choice—Rev. Ilene Tompkins-Gillispie.

This year we started to really meet the needs of children and their families with a terrific CRE Team and the facility changes necessary to support THIS MANY CHILDREN. Footstools were installed in every bathroom so that small hands can reach each sink; a wall-mounted infant changing station was added to the nursery. We modified the nursery, making it brighter, cleaner and safer. More parents than ever are involved in supporting CRE programming with their own time and talents. Parents dedicated NINETEEN CHILDREN this year. Dozens of children participated in Pre-School Chalice Camp and the Hogwarts School of Magic and Fun. As part of their social justice activities on Sundays, Dumbledore's Army raised \$646.00 for the Naples UU to support migrant workers harmed by hurricane Irma.

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In missional work, Facilities teammates and others worked to remove invasive vegetation from our newly-larger lot; the Adult Religious Exploration team revealed a new and improved Library to support our spiritual journeys, while other ARE outreach like Wonderful Wednesdays and Christians in Exile provided growth opportunities for others in addition to ourselves. Our minister, along with a Social Justice Task Force, established for UUTC our own social justice initiative — The Dignity Project. Our Worship Team, also in support of spiritual journeys, established a “Shared Pulpit” class where classmates have been exploring. The Membership Team has continued to provide a path for those who have searched for a liberal religious community. Loving Hearts, Helping Hands has supported so many of us in trying times, easing the journey as they can.

Finally, it's worth noting the weekly efforts of all those who help us practice generosity with one another through their excellent hospitality—those who bring flowers, serve coffee, setup tables, lead classes, provide music—after all, if we cannot be generous with one another, how can we ever hope to lead others in generous thought and action? This Sunday, let them know you appreciate their gifts.

A year of committed effort, from so, so many. Thank you for your covenantal gifts to each other.

## MEET THE MILLERS

Lem and Marilyn Miller retired to Brevard from Manchester, Connecticut. Brevard, with its small town vibe and mild winters, was simply too enticing.

Lem and Marilyn have been Members of UUTC a good long time, and have a unique claim on our first settled minister—they first experienced Ernie Mills at the English Chapel in Pisgah National Forest, before he became a UU!



Besides being animal lovers and supporters of animal rights (in the picture above are Maxwell (dog) and Marley (cat)), the two enjoy gardening and reading. They also support other environmental and social causes. Marilyn also enjoys hiking. They have volunteered with Transylvania Regional Hospital and with the Job Corp.

Lem and Marilyn have three children, two of whom are married. They have four grandchildren. In addition to the social justice outreach at UUTC, the Millers were inspired to become Members by Rev. Ernie Mills and his support of questioning—the freedom to believe or not believe, as one chooses.



## Inclusive. Intentional. INVOLVED.

*Our Mission, as a welcoming, inclusive community acting from love, compassion and respect is:*

*To support individual spiritual journeys and  
To promote social, economic and environmental justice.*

## KEEP UP WITH US ON FACEBOOK!

Like us on Facebook and keep up with events during the week—get early notification on sermons! Great posts from our Children's Religious Exploration program and more. Click the logo to be taken to the page!



UUA Southern Region Newsletter [HERE!](#)



## SOUTHERN REGION

### KEEP UP WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING!!!

VIEW our "insider" [church calendar](#). For previous issues of the UUTC Update, click [HERE](#).

**SEND news** for this newsletter by 10:00am on Wednesdays.

### CONTACT US

Need Pastoral Care? Call Rev. Ilene at (877) 510-5603.

**Church office hours** are Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until noon and by appointment. The church telephone number is **828-877-6121**. Our mailing address is UUTC, PO Box 918, Brevard, NC 28712. Our website is [www.uutc.org](http://www.uutc.org). Our church is located at the corner of Varsity Street and South Broad Street in Brevard. Our email address is [admin@uutc.org](mailto:admin@uutc.org).