



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY

A WELCOMING CONGREGATION

## Recent Social Action Committee Initiatives

At the Social Action Committee (SAC) meeting on September 28, 2009, members voted on the allocation of our \$7,300 budget for this fiscal year (ending June 30, 2010). The meeting was attended by nine SAC members and seven guests who are UUTC members.

Following is the distribution to which members agreed:

Bread of Life	\$ 1,000
The Children's Center	500
El Centro	500
The Family Place	100
The Free Clinic	1,000
The Homeless Shelter	1,500
Koinonia	200
Living Wage Coalition	500
Rise and Shine Freedom School	500
SAFE	300
Sharing House	1,000
Youth Outright	100
Held in reserve	100
Total	\$ 7,300

Here is a brief summary about each of these organizations.

### **Bread of Life**

... a volunteer organization that prepares hundreds of hot, nutritious lunches every weekday for all in need. Many UUTC members participate both as board members and volunteers. They engage in food preparation, meal delivery, and work on "maintenance workdays" to keep the kitchen and building spruced up. Quantities of leftover food from restaurants, private parties, and grocery stores, as well as garden produce, are utilized for meals. And what meals! They are fabulously delicious and nutritious!

### **The Children's Center**

... staff and volunteers offer emergency and educational assistance to families of young children. They provide a safe and friendly place for police and social workers to interview children who are wards of the court system. They advocate for the rights of children in our community, run a "diaper drive", and have an active "welcome baby" program that supports new mothers. Several UUTC members volunteer at the Center and for their major fundraiser, Festival of Trees.

### **El Centro**

... is an organization interested in helping immigrant families adjust to life here. UUTC members serve as language tutors to adults and provide after-school assistance to school children. Advice is offered regarding obtaining proper documentation for adults and their children, who are often U.S. citizens. These families give back to the community through their hard work, and bring a wealth of cultural diversity to our county.

### **The Family Place**

... promotes and nurtures the growth and development of healthy families in Transylvania County by offering education, resources and community support to build positive parenting and communication skills and strengthen families for the benefit of every child.

### **The Free Clinic**

...provides free medical care and prescription drugs to those who have no medical insurance and are below a certain level of income. Referrals are made to specialists who offer free treatment. Counseling is given to those who have chronic health issues such as diabetes. A number of UUTC members helped to found the Free Clinic (then called Transylvania County Volunteers in Medicine), and many are currently active volunteers with the clinic.

### **The Homeless Shelter**

...has been a critical need in this community for a long time. There are homeless families and individuals sleeping in the forest, in cars, and in makeshift arrangements throughout the county. A shelter is now well along in the planning stages under the leadership of two UUTC members. Our donation will be made in support of the Homeless Shelter capital fund drive to procure land and construct a building. The shelter now has a name - THE HAVEN.

### **Koinonia**

...is a monthly gathering of people of faith who share information on events and needs of common interest. They finance a "decent furniture" fund administered by Sharing House that assists low-income families in the purchase of used furniture at local thrift stores. Donated funds help both families and thrift stores, whose profits are used to subsidize worthy causes in our community.

### Living Wage Coalition

... is a volunteer effort spearheaded by UUTC members and friends. In 2008, the group aligned with *Just Economics of Western North Carolina*, a regional organization based in Asheville, whose mission is to educate, advocate, and organize for a strong and sustainable economy in Western North Carolina. In September, the Living Wage Coalition recognized 18 Transylvania County businesses that pay their employees a living wage.

### Rise and Shine Freedom School

...is a comprehensive academic mentoring program that empowers children and their parents, works for equal opportunity, and strives to build a community of racial justice and reconciliation. UUTC members and friends volunteer in their after school tutoring program, and offer other forms of support. Rise and Shine activities and services set high expectations that strengthen a sense of self worth and dignity.

### SAFE

...provides programs and services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The acronym means Shelter Available for Family Emergencies. SAFE is dedicated to ending domestic violence and sexual assault in Transylvania County. It offers shelter, court assistance, and free counseling services and workshops for anyone affected by domestic violence or sexual assault.

### Sharing House

...is a combined effort of churches and others in the community to provide emergency assistance to the poor in the form of food, clothing, household goods, and assistance in paying utility and rent bills. Clients are interviewed for their needs, and records kept of their effort to become more self-sufficient. Case management is provided to help find community services and educational opportunities. Through the years, many UUTC members and friends have served as volunteers in multiple capacities.

### Youth Outright

... is a youth advocacy and leadership program dedicated to providing affirmation, information, support and resources for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth between the ages of 14 and 23 in Asheville, NC and the surrounding areas. Their vision is to empower LGBTQ youth to be confident and vital members of our diverse community.

**All of these organizations can use help. If you are able to volunteer time to any of them, please contact a Social Action Committee member. See [www.uutc.org/Committees/sac.pdf](http://www.uutc.org/Committees/sac.pdf) .**

**Please let us know YOUR thoughts about organizations worthy of support. Our meetings are all open (third Monday of each month at 3:30 pm at UUTC), and we always seek new members. JOIN US!**