

OUR COASTLINE



May 2020

OUR VISION STATEMENT

Our congregation's vision is to be a visible presence in the community, growing a just world through spiritual enrichment, compassionate action, and free religious inquiry.

A WELCOMING CONGREGATION

We are an intentionally diverse community welcoming of an enriched by people of varying cultures, economic and ethnic backgrounds; by people of varying sexual orientations, gender identities and family compositions; by people of all races, ages and beliefs.

Staying informed

Website gurus Barb Thomas and Hilary Schultz have created a new page on the UCF website to keep all the information you need to know about UCF in this time of the Corona Virus in one place. The "portal page" is at <https://www.ucfnc.org/ucf-ministry-in-the-time-of-the-corona-virus/>. There, you will find a link to information on services, cancellations, and how we are communicating. The information there includes Updates (the all-congregation emails we have sent out), as well as UCF Community and Connections, and links to useful information.

On the portal page, you will also find a link to Rev. Sally's Reflections. From time to time, Rev. Sally will post a poem or a short message that she hopes might bring you hope, comfort, inspiration or courage in these difficult days. You can read these reflections, or find a link to video-recordings of Rev. Sally reading them, at <https://ucfnc.org/reflections-from-rev-sally/>

May Reflections from Sally

As some around us are agitating and demonstrating to hurry along the process of “opening up” businesses, gathering spaces, sports events, schools – America’s ways of production and consumption and distraction and enculturation – I confess that something in me is saying “not yet...”

As Margaret (Marty) Newcomb said in the poem which she read in our service on April 26, “I’m not done thinking of you yet.”

I’m not done thinking of what I’m learning from producing less and consuming less; what I’m learning from living with fewer distractions. I’m not done thinking of how I will learn differently; how I can live differently. I’m not done thinking through this change that has been thrust upon me; upon all of us, upon the whole world. I’m not quite ready to think about going back to living and working and thinking the way I used to – just two months ago.

In truth, we cannot go back to what was before. We – all of us, and all of life – are changed with every day that passes. And so, we will emerge changed. We will open up to something new.

And if we move forward thoughtfully, we – ourselves, our society, our Unitarian Coastal Fellowship – we may open up wiser, stronger, freer, clearer.

Or, as Margaret wrote, “As if thinking of you long enough / Will solve some great mystery... / Perhaps I’ll ride my bike.

Blessings on you in this time of Corona Virus.

Sally

(Marty’s poem is titled “Listening.” With permission of the poets, you can find the texts of this poem and the others that were shared in the service, at <https://ucfnc.org/reflections-from-rev-sally/> under the title “Poetry of Our People.”



President's Column

When can we be together again?

We are a gregarious group. Seeing your faces during Zoom services keeps me going, knowing that sometime, someday we will once again gather as a Fellowship. Virtual meetings serve an important purpose, but are just not the same as physical presence.

As much as we may wish to join each other's company we remain apart to protect the health of all. We are living our vision "to be a visible presence in the community...." by not being seen. It's difficult, but it's the right thing to do.

So, when can we be together again?

There is not a certain answer. Social distancing has succeeded in "flattening the curve" of COVID-19 infection throughout the population. Here on the coast our health systems have not been overwhelmed as people mostly followed the advice of national and local public health experts. Although there have been deaths in every nearby county, intensive care units are not full. In comparison to the rest of the country Crystal Coast counties have a much lower known infection rate. This is good.

But much remains unknown. Predictions are that the North Carolina infection peak is some weeks away. Until a sustained downturn in new cases and deaths occurs a rapid return to normal activities drastically increases the risk of quickly spreading this viral disease that has known prevention or cure.

Governor Cooper recently extended North Carolina's stay at home order through May 8. He outlined a three-phase plan to resume activity which begins slowly and advances only when certain conditions are met including a continued slow disease spread and the capability to meet the demand in treatment and testing for those who are affected. This plan will only work if all follow it.

In the Phase 1 some restrictions are lifted; but gatherings are limited to 10 people, face coverings and social distancing continues and teleworking continues to be recommended. If things go well Phase 2 would begin 2-3 weeks later allowing, among other things, "*gathering at places such as houses of worship.....at reduced capacity*". Phase 3 would begin 4-6 weeks after that allowing "*increased capacity at....houses of worships (sic)*" and entertainment venues.

So, when can we be together again?

UCF should NOT be among the first to resume normal activities. Following Governor Cooper's recommendations, which I believe are very appropriate, we will not meet as a congregation for *at least* another month. However, we must look at ourselves realistically. Many in our congregation are in high risk categories – age 65 or more and/or with underlying health conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma or other chronic ailments which puts them much higher risk of severe symptoms or death from COVID-19. Our return to normal services, committee meetings and choir rehearsals must result from a deliberate, realistic decision based on our specific population in the context of the pandemic in our local community.

This has been a trying time, but our Fellowship remains strong. We keep each other going. Someday we will be together again, but only when it's safe.

Tom Cullison, President, Board of Trustees

UCF Annual Meeting Will Take Place

Our Fellowship's strength is demonstrated as we come together to in times of crisis. We have adapted and overcome during hurricanes, and now yet again as COVID changes our way of life. We will continue as normally as possible with the important business of supporting and caring for each other through congregational polity.

UCF Bylaws state that "the Annual Congregational Business Meeting shall be held each year during the weekend in June that begins with the second Friday in June, at a time and place fixed by the Board of Trustees." This year the dates are 12-14 June. The meeting is normally held in the sanctuary following the Sunday service.

It is highly unlikely we will be able to meet in person. Your Board of Trustees plans to convene a virtual meeting to include election of officers, budget presentation, committee and officer reports, and consideration of a Bylaws change. Voting will be by secret ballot, as required in our Bylaws. An agenda call was published in late March. Members who desire to have an issue included in the agenda should contact Tom Cullison (trcullison@gmail.com) prior to 25 May.

A formal announcement of the annual meeting time, vehicle and final agenda will be sent to all members and friends by email on 28 May. Details on voting, how discussions will be conducted and guidelines for committee reports will be included in this communication. Members without email addresses will be contacted by mail.

Although friends are welcome to attend the meeting, voting is limited to members of 30 days or more prior to the meeting.

Tom Cullison

President, Board of Trustees

Worship Services

10:30am Sunday mornings by Zoom

Log-in information is in each week's Saturday UCF Update

Or email Rev. Sally at sb.white@earthlink.net

May 3: **Paddling As Fast As I Can: The Parable of the Duck.** Even in this time of corona virus, many of us present a calm appearance to the world. But like the duck, gliding smoothly over the water, it may feel like under the surface we are paddling as fast as we can just to stay afloat. For a time this morning, let's honor both the outer and the inner truths, and let us share spiritual practices that might help us foster serenity.



May 10: **Mothering.** Perhaps you've had or been a surrogate mother or teacher? Or there was someone who had listened to or guided you along your life's journey? We have all been mothered, sometime by someone, and we may have mothered others. Our message will be in several voices as members of the Worship Committee bring us together to reflect on stories of mothering we have done and/or having been mothered by others, and of how our views of mothering have changed over our life spans. Together we'll explore these ideas and hope to inspire in you reflections of mothers and mothering.

May 17: **Be Gentle With Yourself.** When you first started "sheltering at home," did you think you might finally get to all those projects / chores / hobbies you'd been putting off? Some of us are finding we're not as productive as we thought we might be. Can we honor the difficult spiritual work we are doing, whether we realize it or not? And, knowing this, can we be gentle with ourselves?

May 24: **Memorial Day.** On this Memorial Day weekend, who are the service members and who are the heroes that we remember and we celebrate? Let us invite their memories and their legacies into our circle.

May 31: **Living the Questions Now.** As we work out ways to *reopen* our economy and our society, how do we build on what we are learning from these weeks and months of living differently? Can we *reimagine* our daily lives and our church community, for the near term and for the long term? Poet Rainer Maria Rilke wrote, "Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer." We begin, then, with the questions.

In addition, Rev. Sally and others are writing occasional short reflections, which are posted on the UCF website at <https://ucfnc.org/reflections-from-rev-sally/>. Some of the reflections are also video-recorded. If you'd like to watch, links to the videos can be found on the same web page.

REFLECTIONS

In this time of physical separation, the UCF community has demonstrated how much each person is valued. Our creativity is limited only by the tools available to us. We started with our Care Circles; then we added a Round Robin email. Then we figured out how to use Zoom for meetings and this enabled the committees to meet. In fact, some of the Thoughtful Gatherings groups are using this tool to take advantage of the bonds of community that come from Small Group Ministry. Now, for the past 3 Sundays and for the unforeseen future, the Worship Committee and the Board of Trustees have worked together to conduct online Sunday services via Zoom. These services add a special venue in which to find the community we treasure and to feel the value each person



has to that community. Despite being physically separated, I can open the Zoom portal and step into a space of familiar faces and familiar voices, and especially familiar smiles. There is a flurry of waves and obvious excitement. So many of us have stepped into this space to find community that the faces never fit on a single page. I find myself flipping between the pages so I don't miss seeing a single soul. At the same time, I take note of the people I don't see and wish they were there. Their absence leaves a hole they alone can fill. When the service begins and we hear Reverend Sally's welcoming words, our chalice is lit. We all sit together as a community separated only by physical distance listening to the message for a time and feeding our spirits. A beloved hymn or two fills the space and I can see lips moving as some sing along. Others simply sway in time to the music. There is a closing message from Reverend Sally and the chalice is extinguished. After that, every attendee has the opportunity to share something they found especially uplifting during the week. In these sharings, I can see how each person seeks to help the others feel valued and forward-thinking. Goodbyes are said and people anticipate seeing each other next time. These Sunday services, along with our other endeavors, are good and valuable to the soul. They show us that our church is its people and their desire to maintain their beloved community.

I'll see you next Sunday.

All the best!

Melva Kearney

New Building Team.

The annex building is waiting for the fire alarm system to be installed, along with a few 'exit' signs. Restroom partitions are in the building and waiting for a contractor to install. Morehead City offices are closed to the public and our contacts are working part-time, if at all, due to the virus. We hope they will be available to finish inspecting the building after the fire alarm installation is completed.

We have been working with three design/build companies for the last several months and are coming close to having a building plan. We are working toward picking two of the companies to continue the design phase. Our progress so far has been amazing, considering building codes, site limitations, working with contractors and doing our best to fit all the needs and wants we were made aware of when this project started, a little more than a year ago.

We are forging ahead slowly but surely, onward 'To infinity and beyond'.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Phillips



Membership Committee

Staying close in this time of social distancing has challenged many of us to reconsider our relationship with technology. Thanks to Reverend Sally, many of us have been enjoying "seeing" our UCF family and friends for a modified service these last few Sunday mornings by holding a Zoom meeting.

In addition to enjoying these services, Guery Willis and I were inspired to consider trying to resume our Thoughtful Gathering group using Zoom. Admittedly, we missed the shared repast and gathering physically under one roof, but we were able to enjoy a lively and thought-provoking exchange of ideas generated by the discussion guide developed by Rev. Sally and a few members of the membership committee.

Understandably, not every group will be able to make this work. Based on our Thoughtful Gathering Group's experience, I encourage you to consider the possibility. Shared ministry is one of the goals of UCF's membership committee. You can contact Reverend Sally at sb.white@earthlink.net to help set up your Thoughtful Gathering on Zoom. This is a great way to help our community stay connected as we experience Coronavirus together, yet separately, this spring.

The membership committee will next meet on Tuesday May 19 at 2pm. As it is likely the meeting will take place via Zoom, please contact nanreed5@gmail.com if you wish to join in; all are welcome.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Your pledge payments and offerings: If you have a pledge payment or an offering to make, please contact treasurer David Hughes at ucfwelcomenc@gmail.com to arrange for electronic payment, or write a check to UCF, and mail it to our secure post office box: **P.O. Box 425, Morehead City, NC, 28557**. If you are sending contributions for both the Capital and annual pledge, please use separate checks. It is difficult to split a single check between two accounts.



Finance Committee: Dave Hughes, Jo Ellen Essex, Lauren Donnachie, Mary Anna Newman, Sally Davis, Scott Travers, and Rev. Sally White

SOCIAL ACTION

5th Sunday Collection for May The Lighthouse Food Pantries

As is our UCF tradition, whenever there is a 5th Sunday in the month all non-pledge offerings are donated to a charity or cause. During these uncertain and challenging times with COVID-19, food insecurity and hunger are affecting the most vulnerable people across our country and our community.

Resources in our county's food banks are stretched due to the historic job disruptions and school closures. Daryl Walker serves on the Food and Waste Program of Carteret Food and Health Council and identified two food pantries in great need of financial assistance. These are the Storehouse Food Pantry at 3114 Bridges St. in Morehead City and the Lighthouse Community Church at 2015 Hwy 70 E in Stacy.

If your personal situation allows, please give generously and we will divide the May 31 non-pledge offerings between these two organizations that are literally feeding hundreds of people in our county. You can contact David Hughes at ucfwelcomenc@gmail.com to arrange an electronic donation, or checks can be mailed to Unitarian Coastal Fellowship, P.O. Box 425, Morehead City, NC 28557. Please note 5th Sunday in the memo line.

Thank you for your generosity and please contact Barb Thomas at bsthomas2@gmail.com and Amy Jones at amjones0912@gmail.com if you have ideas and suggestions for social action outreach during this time of social distancing.



Carteret County Food Resources: If you and/or someone you know is in need of food during the COVID-19 pandemic, here is a list of local Carteret County food resources. Please share this information widely through your contacts.

Carteret County **FOOD RESOURCES**

local information

To locate near-by food sites
Text "FOODNC" to 877-877
(for Spanish text "COMIDA")

For other local resources
Dial 2-1-1 or Call (888) 892-1162

Food Pantries

SALVATION ARMY

Mon - Fri 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
2800 Bridges St., Morehead City, NC
(252) 726-7147
Call upon arrival

MARTHAS MISSION

Mon, Wed & Fri 10:30 AM - 3:00 PM
901 Bay St., Morehead City, NC
(252) 726-7177
May Need Voucher

THE STOREHOUSE

Mon- Fri 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
3114 Bridges St., Morehead City, NC
(443) 956-4633

LOAVES & FISHES

Mondays Only 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
1700 Live Oak St., Beaufort, NC
(252) 504-0123

WILDWOOD PRESBYTERIAN

Thursdays Only 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM
276 Wildwood Rd., Newport, NC
(252) 726-9118

HARKERS ISLAND UMC

Thursdays Only 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
603 Cape Lookout Dr., Harkers Island, NC
(252) 728-7015
or call for an appointment

Grab & Go **MEALS**

HOPE MISSION

Daily 11:30 AM - 12:00 PM
1410 Bridges St., Morehead City, NC
(252) 240-2359

FIRST UMC

Saturdays 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
900 Arendell St., Morehead City, NC
(252) 726-7102

HARLOWE UMC

Saturdays 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
4261 NC Hwy 101, Newport, NC
(252) 447-1779



government services

SNAP/EBT

Department of Social Services
(252) 728-3181

Call for phone/virtual appointment
Application Online @epass.nc.gov

WIC

Carteret WIC Office
(252) 728-8550

Now doing re-certifications and
sign ups via phone

gift cards

FOOD FOR FRIENDS OF CARTERET COUNTY

(252) 241-7823 | www.Foodforfriendsnc.com
Gift cards available for those unemployed due to COVID-19

Children's Religious Education Worship Programs and Activities

Children's Religious Education News— I am going to write to all the children and youth this month.

Hi everyone,

I miss seeing you every week and hope a little bit of silliness will make you laugh today.

As I was thinking about what to write this month it came to me that I wanted to send this message. I have been writing quite a bit lately and getting some old journals and poems out that I wrote a long time ago.

So, I was thinking that I would like to give you a silly poem written by Jeff Foxworthy from his book, Dirt on My Shirt.

STARING CONTEST

I'm staring at my cat,

He doesn't bat an eye,

Watching me, watching him, the seconds passing by,

Tears come to my eyes.

I'm going to have to blink,

He smiles a silly cat smile,

And then gives me a wink.



Do you think you could write a funny poem or a few lines about your cat, bunny, gerbil, parrot, dog, or maybe your pet snake or chicken? I would love to post them next month.

Take care and be silly this week,

Sarah

It takes a village to raise a child, it takes a congregation to raise the children and youth of our Fellowship.

UCF Women's Group



Our next Women's Discussion Group will be Wednesday, May 6 from 12:30 to 1:30 via Zoom. Get your lunch ready and your computer fired up and join us for an interesting discussion. Our topic for May is: **If you could invite one to three people to dine with you (living or deceased) who would you choose?** If you would like to join us, but are not on the

Women's Discussion Group email list, contact Susan Roberts at landfall2@mindspring.com or 843-217-1885.

The Meditation Group

While the Meditation Group is not getting together to meditate, we continue to meditate . We are meditating each in our own homes at the same time. We just changed the time to 6:30 PM on Monday evenings.

Meditation is a practice of aligning your mind, body and spirit by going deep within to access the power of your beliefs to create what you truly desire. It improves brain function and actually lights up your mind and brings you back to being heart centered. For information contact Vicki Barrett vlbarrett42@gmail.com



Mental Health Family Support Group



The **Mental Health Family Support Group** is an opportunity to share experiences and challenges of having family members or friends who live with mental illness. This group meets online (using the video conferencing platform Zoom) on Wednesday mornings from 10:30am to noon. If you would like to join these virtual meetings or would like more information, please contact Rev. Sally at 252-622-1978.



Green Tip May 2020

When you have errands try to combine them into one trip. Reflect daily on how the environment has changed for the better during our COVID19 restrictions.

How lucky I
am to have
something
that makes
saying goodbye
so hard.



Contact Us
Unitarian Coastal Fellowship
252-240-2283

UNITARIAN COASTAL FELLOWSHIP

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Morehead City, NC 28557

Choir Director: Tom Cullison trcullison@gmail.com
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Music Committee: Tom Cullison trcullison@gmail.com
Care Circle Coordinator: Pam Holliday pamelalaholliday@gmail.com
Newsletter: Vicki Barrett ucfofficeassistant@gmail.com

Recipient Name

Street Address

City, State Zip Code