

OUR COASTLINE

Official Newsletter of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship
Morehead City, NC



Dear beloveds,

I am writing this but a few days before I go on vacation, and by the time you read this I will have been on vacation for a week. I shall be thinking of you all—I am quite certain!—all the way in California, where I will be spending time with friends and relatives I haven't seen in two years.

I am—as everyone is at this point, I imagine—trying to plan for the future while simultaneously aware that planning for the future remains impossible. I feel as if I live my life month to month, the pandemic a constantly shifting ground underneath me, like trying to walk across windy sand dunes in ill-fitting sandals. It's not comfortable, and it's often frustrating.

As we grow closer to building completion and the long-awaited reopening, I find myself wrestling with the many questions Melva details so excellently in her letter. I care, of course, about the physical health of the members and friends of this congregation; I also care about everyone's spiritual health, and I know that people have felt lonely and isolated and inadequately fed during the pandemic. And yet, physical health and spiritual health seem like mutually exclusive zones, as we're battling a contagion that thrives on hugs and shared air. Will we be having Coffee Hour? Will we be holding hands during the benediction? Will we sing? We want everyone to be happy, and yet we also know these may be questions of life or death or long-term disability.

But I take comfort in the fact that I am not struggling with these questions alone. I struggle with these questions in the company of my colleagues, who were doing this hard, complicated work in parishes while I was doing much more straightforward work (in some ways) in a hospital. I struggle with these questions alongside the leaders of this congregation, the Board of Trustees and the Leadership Council. I struggle with these questions together with UCF staff. I struggle with these questions in the presence of the holy.

Make no mistake: these are holy questions. *What do I do?* and *How do I live?* are the biggest questions that we human beings have asked for as long as we've existed; they are the questions that religion has always sought to answer. Unitarian Universalism has always made it clear that we come up with our own answers to these questions—and that those answers can always be found in community as well. We have the Principles to guide us, and we have the wisdom and solidarity to be found in community to guide us. None of us do the work of life alone.

Blessings,
~Rev. Michelle Ma

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.

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

Sundays at 10:30AM on Zoom

Zoom link is provided in each Friday version of The Wave

February 6: Are Love and Honesty Enough? – Heather Malkawi

As a Unitarian Universalist, I take solace in the statement and our motto, “Standing on the side of Love.” In recent times the world has become so divided for one reason or another, making our journey to Justice very arduous. It makes me wonder, are love and honesty enough?

BIO—Heather Malkawi is a second-year student at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Before going to seminary, she worked as an insurance underwriter at Cigna Health Companies and as a social worker in the non-profit sector. Heather was raised in Flint, Michigan, and has lived in Chicago and now Austin, Texas. She is the parent of two teenagers, Waleed 17, and Jayna 15. Heather interns at Texas Impact, an Interfaith group in Texas that helps educate faith communities and engage with lawmakers on pressing issues. Currently, her focus is working in health justice with a concentration on Covid emphasizing the importance of vaccination. She also teamed up with AARP and Feeding Texas, showing Texans who are 65+ how to receive SNAP benefits using a shorter application.

February 13: Crossing Bridges—Rev. Ma

First, we were Building Bridges: building this fantastic new facility at 2900 Bridges St. Now, we’re Crossing Bridges: getting ready to actually move into the building and start using it. How will this new building serve our vision and mission? What else do we need to make all our hopes and dreams for this community come true?

February 20: A Festival of Lanterns—Rev. Ma

The Lantern Festival (which occurs on February 15th this year) marks the end of two weeks of Lunar New Year festivities in East Asia. In this service, we will lift up what we want to remember, let go of what needs to be let go, and turn toward a new self and a new future.

February 27: Balance—Worship Committee Members

Life depends on balance. It is the principle of yin and yang. Dark and light, hot and cold, wet and dry. Sometimes balance is easy, like being on a seesaw. At other times, it is a high-wire act with all the risk that entails when things have gone dangerously out of balance. Repair of the world sometimes involves the work to restore balance, especially when dis-ease is rampant.

Hello Friends! Happy February!

For a long time, I've been dreaming about the day our congregation first enters the new sanctuary building to attend services. This whole pandemic business is over and we're able to meet together, our smiles no longer hidden by masks and hugs abounding. Singing fills the air and, at the end of the service, we all join hands, so grateful to be together in-person again. After that, we fill the Social Hall with laughter and conversation as we share that fabulous coffee. I imagine many of you have enjoyed the same dream, just before you started speculating about what it will *really* be like. The Board is currently focusing on a policy to make this transition to in-person services safely.

As I look around the county, there are no real norms for COVID safety. Other churches meet, with masks being optional. Even safety protocols for doctor's offices have little consistency. Some don't require masks and others require both masks and checking in from the car. Kids attending school aren't required to wear masks. In fact, I went to a middle-school band concert, where the theater was standing room only and only half the audience wore masks. I can even feel the frustration from people who are pro-vaccination and pro-mask. My hairdresser lamented having to wear a mask, show her vaccination record, and have her son tested prior to attending a symphony. She seriously considered not attending, and enumerated the benefits of becoming a hermit until this was all over.

All this confusion, along with just plain pandemic fatigue, means that the Board's safety decisions may be unpopular, or even worse, may not be enough. In the end, though, we know that making realistic policy to keep our congregation safe must be of primary importance. We do have basic guidelines for indoor gatherings from the UUA that help: good ventilation; well-fitted masks, social distancing, reduced occupancy; no singing; no food or drink; and outside meetings for children. After that, it's up to us.

To begin, the Board will have to maneuver the ins and outs of reduced occupancy. A hybrid service will be engineered to offer the same content to those who can attend in-person and those who can't. Next, based on reduced occupancy, we will have to figure out an equitable way to give anyone who wants to attend in-person a chance to do so, at least once in a while.



COLUMN

We don't want anyone to be left out. Then there's another issue to consider. Once we begin occupying the building, it's likely that visitors may pop in to attend services. How will we make room for visitors *and* for regular congregants while still maintaining reduced capacity? We'll have to figure it out.

Other Board decisions could be quite controversial. For example, mandatory masks. Board members wear masks in public, even though we're all fully vaccinated and boosted. We think mask-wearing should be required during in-person services. This will not prevent people who want to skip the masks from attending Zoom services though. But will everyone agree?

Some UU fellowships require full vaccination records. At present, your Board wonders if doing the same would be a logistical nightmare. Some people are likely to be partially-vaccinated and some may lack boosters. What line would the Board have to draw? How could we turn a congregant or a visitor away who wasn't fully vaccinated?

Your Board will make every effort to invite as many congregants as possible to attend in-person services, as we monitor the COVID threat levels in our county. We share your frustration in restrictions that must become part of the safety policy. Who ever said that being a Board member would be easy?

All the best!

-Melva

SOCIAL ACTION IN ACTION!

UCF Members Show Up for Democracy, Voting Rights and Racial Justice

Eugene Goodman Appreciation – January 6th Event

Members of our congregation were scattered through the crowd at the Eugene Goodman Appreciation Event at Grayden Paul Park in Beaufort on Thursday, January 6th. The event honored Mr. Goodman, the Capitol Police Officer who bravely led rioters away from the place where Senators were evacuating, as well as all police officers. Penny and Mark Hooper brought our UCF banners to the event and hung them with other banners on a fence in the park.

Speakers at the event included our own John Brobst, as well as Beaufort's ex-mayor Rhett Newton, and event organizers Charles Llewellyn and Doug Miron. They expressed their dismay at seeing a Confederate flag in the Capitol building as well as seeing American flags being used in an effort to overturn an American election and our democracy.

All expressed their patriotism and their hopes that we will never again see such an attempt to overturn our democracy.



Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration

On Monday, January 17th, many UCF members and friends joined about 100 people in celebrating the life of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr at the MLK Park in Morehead City. The weather was cold and breezy, but those in attendance fully enjoyed many excellent speeches about the meaning of this day and hopes for the future of racial justice and voter rights.

Among the speakers was our own Jo Ellen Essex, who talked about the work of the group "Citizens for Diversity in Education". Rev. Michelle Ma gave the benediction. Participants in the planning of the non-partisan event included the Carteret County Democratic Party, the Carteret County League of Women Voters, the Carteret County NAACP, Crystal Coast Proud, and the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship.



FINANCE UPDATE

It is that time of year when all our Committees decide upon the funding they will need in the upcoming fiscal year. This helps us determine our budget, as does your annual pledge. Please consider what you can do to support us in paying all our bills and continuing all our ministries as we move into our new space. Watch your snail mail for your 2021 donation tax letter and pledge card from the Finance Committee this week.

We hope to conclude our annual campaign as we are moving in!

Thank you for your love and support.

-The Finance Committee



IN LOVING MEMORY:



Gwendolyn Lee Mayhew Newcomb



July 18, 1929 - December 16, 2021

Gwen was born in California and lived there until she and her husband moved to Washington State where her youngest child, Margaret Ann, was born. After 31 years of Navy life and many interesting moves, they chose Point Magu, California, as Jim's last duty station and moved "home" to help aging parents during their last years. After Jim's retirement, Gwen worked for the Adult Education Department of Ventura Unified School District, where she made so many friends. With her coworker and dear friend, she was very active in her church in Ventura. In 2010, Gwen and Jim chose to move East to be closer to their children, Alan, Randy, Laura, and Margaret. Her loving husband, Jim, passed away in 2016 and in 2019, Gwen moved to North Carolina to live with Margaret and Holly. She became a member of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship, where she was greatly loved by all and where a dedicated seat was purchased in her memory. No words can express what a beautiful and loving woman Gwen was. As wife, mother, and friend, she was the kindest, most compassionate, and generous woman to all that had the good fortune to know her. This beautiful, loving woman will be greatly missed by all.

Children's Religious Education

Hi everyone,

As February is upon us, we are all eager that spring is around the corner, flowers will be coming up in a month, the Sunday School building is more organized, rooms are being set up and painted – the nursery room will have a 'Beach' theme and I am looking for some artists and painters (no matter your age) to help paint the sailboat, fishes in the water, pebbles, and sea shells on the focus wall. If you would like to help paint, please email Sarah at ucf.re.sarah@gmail.com as we will be painting in February.

I will be sending out a packet in February for parents to fill out and register your children/youth for our programs.

We know that our UU church has the 7 Principles that guide us in our spirituality as Unitarian Universalists. The children also have the same 7 Principles in simpler words. Over the next few month's I will be focusing on the Kids' Seven Principles from the book Everybody Is Important by Jennifer Dant.

The 7 Principles are promises that we make to each other and to ourselves that help us to be the best people we can be. The Principles are about how we should treat each other, what we love, and what we hope for ourselves and for all living things.

KIDS' PRINCIPLES #1 **EVERY SINGLE PERSON IS IMPORTANT**



Story #1

Today there's a stranger sitting next to Carla in math class. Carla's teacher, Mrs. Jackson, says the new girl's name is Patty. Mrs. Jackson asks the whole class to say "Welcome Patty!" together, but Patty just stares at her desk. Carla remembers her own first day at this school. It was so hard to find her way around, and everyone else seemed to know each other. When the bell rings for recess, everyone puts on their jackets to go to the playground. Mia, Carla's best friend, walks past the new girl and grabs Carla's arm, "Let's race to the swings!" she says.

Q: How do you think Patty feels about her first recess in a new school?

Q: What could Carla do next to make Patty feel welcome?

Story #2

Jacob is standing in a long line of kids to buy apple juice in the school cafeteria. There's only one cash register open. The woman at the cash register is wearing a nametag that says "Rosie." Some of the kids are rolling their eyes and muttering about how slowly the line is moving. Rosie smiles at each kid and says "Have a good day" when she gives them their change, but most of them walk away without answering her or smiling back. When Jacob gets to the front of the line, Rosie sighs and rubs her eyes. "Have a good day," she says.

Q: Are the other kids treating Rosie like she's important?

Q: What could Jacob do differently than the other kids?



Every person is important in our lives, the people we have known for years or the person we meet in the grocery or on a hike. My granddaughters always say to me, Nana, "why do you talk to everyone you see?" I say, "why not, I might be the only person that says hi to them that day and it might make their day. They are as important as you and me."

In Spirit and Love,
-Sarah

Board Business

A BIG THANK YOU to the NEW BUILDING TEAM! The ESTIMATED completion date for 2900 Bridges is mid-March! We are hopeful that there will be no further delays, but will keep everyone updated!

In keeping with the Safety Ministry's vision to identify needs, to develop policies, and to communicate the policies to maintain the security of the congregation and staff, the Board is working on a COVID policy for in-person gatherings, including masking, social distancing, and even closing the building when the risk is severe.

The Board has completed a Severe Weather Policy and a Pandemic Policy.

The Board is assessing and prioritizing other safety policy needs for the building, personal safety, financial safety, safety of children and youth, and social media/communications. Please let any Board member know your priorities for this assessment.

The next Board of Trustees meeting is at **7 pm on Thursday, February 10**, via Zoom. All are welcome to attend—contact Susan Fetzer at sgfetzer@gmail.com for a link to the February meeting.

February News from your New Building Team

I expect that a lot of UCFers may think I'm a weather man, forecasting that our contractors will complete this or that project. I'm happy to report that this holds true for January.

Some of what we all expected to be accomplished in January was accomplished – some items not! February is going to be different. The "New Building Team" has been given a printed schedule that states by the end of February the building and grounds will be almost completed. (That's ironclad.)

Thanks to every one of you for allowing me to produce these monthly newsletters with a little of my dry humor mixed in. We did actually complete all the work expected in January except for some of the exterior siding. The vinyl siding company is in Canada and they will be shipping our siding for arrival here in early February. Canadian weather, with COVID thrown into the mix, has caused delays in manufacturing and truck deliveries.



The building did have a broom and mop cleaning so the kitchen cabinets and all the plumbing fixtures could be installed along with the electrical devices (switches / receptacles / etc) at the end of January.

Our new schedule looks very promising for an end of month completion. We have final trim and paint, and our wonderful high tech acoustical accordion partition and audio/visual equipment are ready to be installed. The parking lot comes next, partially asphalt and the rest EcoRaster.

The grand piano will be moved into the sanctuary after Duke Electric has the building power hooked up, which will be around the 16th. As always, timing is tight – we have Spectrum scheduled to install the internet, which includes the phone, on the 17th. We may need to reschedule Spectrum for the following week.

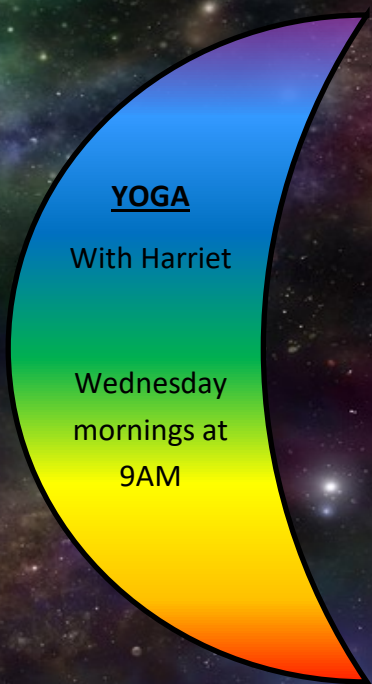
Meanwhile the FFC has been working in the annex to sort supplies and get them staged for moving into the sanctuary. You may not be aware that there is a lot of 'hands on' work to be done (call Miriam Green to volunteer) besides previous work with the decorator to develop a color scheme to tie all the parts of the sanctuary and fellowship areas together.

The landscaping will follow the Duke Electric work and our Landscape committee all have a big smile now that they can start growing their magic. Around this time the Morehead City building inspector will check the building and annex for our final Certificate of Occupancy.

We will still have items to unbox and find a home for. We'll be learning how to control the HVAC, which light switch is for which light, and how to get those pretty new chairs in a nice line.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Phillips





Vicki Barrett will continue her Chakra study in February as part of her monthly meditation session. She's focusing on one of the 7 main Chakras each month, and she will send out written information prior to each session about the Chakra to be emphasized that session, then spend the first 15 minutes discussing the reading. That session would then be a meditation specifically for that chakra.

Mondays—6:15PM

Interested? Please contact Vicki at brigidshammer@gmail.com for details.



Women's Discussion Group

The Women's Discussion Group will be meeting on Monday, February 14 at 12:30 on Zoom. Although COVID has put a damper on travel for now, we will be heading to other countries in our minds as we discuss languages and travel.

Here are some questions to consider:

Do you speak any languages besides English? Have you had the opportunity to travel abroad and use other languages?

Or, have you lived abroad?

If you would like more information about the Women's Discussion Group or would like to be added to our email list, contact Susan Roberts at landfall2@mindspring.com or 843-217-1885.



UCF Book Club

The UCF Bookclub will be meeting on Feb. 22 @ 7PM by zoom to discuss "Salt Houses" by Hala Alyan. This historical fiction is a multi-generational story about a family from Palestine as they endure war, loss, and displacement. The story focuses on migration and the struggle between staying connected with one's traditions and still finding a home in a new country.

Please join us for an interesting discussion about this story and the themes it presents. We are meeting by zoom this month but in the nice weather we meet outside.

To learn more contact Joan Burton Ldybg223@aol.com or 201-669-1519)



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.

Meetings are being held on Zoom on Wednesday afternoons from 2:30 to 4:00.

If you would like to join these meetings or would like more information, please contact Susan Roberts at 843-217-1885 or at landfall2@mindspring.com



February Green Tip:

Drive down your street on trash or recycling collection day, and you're likely to see huge bins overflowing with refuse in plastic bags. It's a complex problem. Part of the solution could be to adopt a near-zero-waste lifestyle – and it truly is a lifestyle change! Recycling, while a good thing, is not really the answer. From reducing the trash you generate to composting degradable household trash to finding creative ways to reuse items, zero waste can be a rewarding process, and it's easier than you might think. Want to learn more, including tips and techniques? UCF will sponsor a Zero Waste Seminar later this spring when we can meet in person – watch for information in a future *Coastline*.



Four months' trash from a zero-waste household.

February Pastoral Care Tip

Having a sense of purpose in life can contribute to healthy aging.



People who scored high on a purpose-in-life assessment given by Chicago's Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center, were about 2.4 times more likely to remain Alzheimers-free than those who scored lower.

Embracing new opportunities, especially if you are retired and/or finished child rearing, can be the time to explore a new passion project, get a pet, volunteer or travel.

This sense of accomplishment will boost your brain to age with a better cognitive outcome.

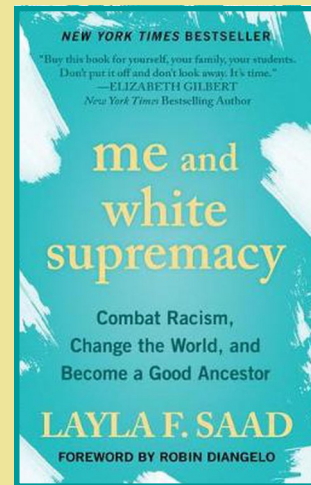
The Anti-Racist Reading Group next book discussion will be on March 17 at 7 p.m. The book is Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor by Layla F. Saad. This book was introduced during our January 16, Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday service, and includes daily prompts to guide the reader in keeping a 28-day journal of personal reflections.

Your reflections should prove helpful to you as the congregation will discuss the proposed 8th Principle throughout the spring.

All congregation members and friends are invited to participate.

The discussion will be led by Reverend Ma and Liz Morningstar.

Copies of the book are available at The Bookshop in the K-Mart Shopping Center. You may want to call 252-240-1163 to be sure they still have copies before driving to pick up. The total cost is \$25.14, which includes our discount and sales tax. They will be on the shelf directly behind the check-out counter, reserved for the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship.



You probably want to get your book early to give you enough time to complete the journal.

Racial Justice Group Meeting – All are Invited

As was mentioned during our Martin Luther King Day service, some of us at UCF have formed a group to study and pursue racial justice.

We would love to have you join us. We will be meeting on Wednesday, February 9 at 7 p.m. on Zoom. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Penny Hooper (pjhooper@ec.rr.com or 252-729-2521) or Susan Roberts (landfall2@mindspring.com or 843-217-1885).

Click [here](#) for the Zoom link.

Pet Meet & Greet:

Some of us have had the chance to introduce our pets to the Fellowship during Zoom meetings, mainly when our fur babies want a moment in the limelight! Let's give them a chance to shine in a more formal setting.

Adult RE is sponsoring a Pet Meet & Greet by Zoom on February 23 at 7 pm. Join the fun by contacting linda_rudd@ncsu.edu to receive the Zoom link.

Roxy Altman



Annie Wentworth



Harper Altman



Pi Davis

HELLO February

2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Worship Committee 12PM 	2 Yoga 9AM Mental Health Family Support Group 2:30PM 	3 Leadership Council 10AM	4	5
6 Worship Service 10:30AM	7 Meditation 6:15PM	8	9 Yoga 9AM Mental Health Family Support Group 2:30PM Racial Justice Group 7PM	10	11	12
13 Worship Service 10:30AM	14 Women's Discussion Group 12:30PM Meditation 6:15PM 	15	16 Yoga 9AM Mental Health Family Support Group 2:30PM	17	18 ARE Committee 3PM	19
20 Worship Service 10:30AM	21 Meditation 6:15PM 	22	23 Yoga 9AM Mental Health Family Support Group 2:30PM Pet Meet & Greet 7PM	24	25	26
27 Worship Service 10:30AM	28 Meditation 6:15PM					

Board of Trustees:

President: Melva Kearney melva.kearney@gmail.com

Vice President: Susan Fetzter sgfetzer@gmail.com

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Choir Director: Tom Cullison trcullison@gmail.com

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Worship: Marilyn Cullison mscullison@gmail.com

Finance: Jo Ellen Essex ucfwelcomenc@gmail.com

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And Barb Thomas bsthomas2@gmail.com

Green Sanctuary: Lauren Donnachie lsdonnachie@twc.com

And Linda Rudd lerudd@ncsu.edu

Committee on Ministry: Holly Rogers hollyer54@yahoo.com

RE, Children: Sarah Sutherland UCF.RE.Sarah@gmail.com

RE, Adults: Sally Davis sdavis8772@gmail.com

Music Committee: Tom Cullison trcullison@gmail.com

Care Circle Coordinator: Pam Holliday pamelalaholliday@gmail.com

Newsletter: Jamie DeRose ucfofficeassistant@gmail.com



Contact us!

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UNITARIAN COASTAL FELLOWSHIP

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