OUR COASTLINE

Official Newsletter of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship Morehead City, NC





DECEMBER 2022

Dear Beloveds,

We have entered the cold season.

Rates of respiratory illness are spiking—not just COVID—and we're entering into the holiday season. While the holidays can be and are a source of joy for many, they can and are also a source of stress and sorrow, especially for those who have lost loved ones recently. Added to that is a steady stream of tragic news: mass shootings, war, sudden and senseless deaths, political bickering, climate change.

Board President Susan Fetzer writes beautifully in her letter about how these are anxious times. We thought it would be over when we got into our beautiful new building, once the pandemic was over, that things would go "back to normal." Ah, but it turns out this is the new normal: deep divisions remain between us not only in this country but in the world; the pandemic is not quite over (and other illnesses have returned); fire and floods rage across the world as a result of climate change.

What are you doing to care for your soul in these times? And: what can Unitarian Coastal Fellowship do to care for your soul in these times? After all, the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship is where we go to see that another world is possible. It's a world where we solve conflicts with words, not wounds; a world where we are actively dismantling oppression; a world where all people have a voice in its future.

There is only so much any of us can do, individually, to alleviate our anxiety. There are only so many walks in the woods, only so many times that you can turn off the news, only so many times you can look for what is right with the world. Systemic problems are not solved by individual solutions. The Unitarian Coastal Fellowship may not be able to solve all of the world's problems; but it can show a new world how it's done.

The cold will not last forever. A new year is coming. Another world is possible. Let's show 'em how it's done.

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 and 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.

Blessings, ~Rev. Micah C. Ma

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WORSHIP SERVICES

Sundays at 10:30AM on Zoom AND in-person.

Zoom link is provided in each Friday edition of *The Wave*.

December 4: Having Faith

If a Unitarian Universalism doesn't require people to believe in God or any sort of higher power, then why are we still called a "faith tradition?" What might faith mean to an agnostic or atheist? Join us in exploring ideas of faith on this second Sunday of Advent.

December 11: Seeking Safety

Many of the stories that come out of this time of year are about people seeking safe harbor in deeply dangerous times, from the Maccabees to Mother Mary to people simply trying to survive the long, cold winter. Even today, these are still deeply dangerous times for many. What can Unitarian Universalism offer those seeking safety?

SPECIAL NOTE: Please bring unisex socks and **small** oral care items like toothpaste, toothbrushes and flossers to this service. After the service, all are invited to stay and help fill gift bags in the Social Hall.

December 18: The Rebirth of the Sun

It's a multigenerational holiday pageant! Join us for an interactive worship service featuring Starhawk's Rebirth of the Sun, as we celebrate the upcoming Winter Solstice and the return of longer days.

December 24: Christmas Eve, 5pm

We return to our Christian roots on Christmas Eve, with passages from the Bible about Jesus' birth accompanied by traditional Christmas carols.

Joy to the World—the Lord is come!

December 25: NO SERVICE...but watch this space!

We will not be having a Christmas Day worship service, but maybe there will be something else?? Pay attention to The Wave and to announcements!

President's

Thank you for sharing your thoughts about the future of professional ministry at UCF during the Coffee with the Board and the Listening Circles. The Board is developing a survey to get more information and to be sure that everyone has had a chance to be heard.

Please look for the survey and take the time to respond.

The new UUA Salary Guidelines have been published and the Board, the Staffing Committee and the Finance Committee are committed to paying staff fairly.

I recently attended the Presidents Gathering, an online meeting of Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Southern Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association. The topic for the meeting was Anxiety and Adaptive Leadership. Our Southern Regional Staff cautioned the congregational leaders that our congregations are still suffering the effects of the trauma of the pandemic and meeting virtually. UCF can also add the trauma of building a new building, losing our minister of 18 years to retirement (even though we are happy that Rev. Sally could retire), and the adjustments that have followed selling 1300 Evans, settling into 2900 Bridges, and the work that accompanies having an interim minister to get ready for the next steps.

Then, there is all the anxiety and traumatic events in our world, including the recent shooting in Colorado Springs, the tragic death at the Raleigh Christmas Parade to name only two.

How do we function in trauma? How do we keep from withdrawing, freezing, and being numb in the face of all the anxiety?

I turn to the basics, the water and food of my soul, and much of that soul food and water I find at UCF. I can find love, joy, comfort there. We covenant to live in right relationship with each other and to begin again and again in love. I identify with the values of Unitarian Universalism and want others to know about it. UCF feeds my spirit and encourages generosity with myself, my church, and my world. Together, we will find how to reduce our anxiety and to emerge from this traumatic time as we create the future of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship.

UCF Board of Trustees Profiles — Jo Ellen Essex, Secretary

I have been a member of UCF for about nine years, after retiring from teaching high school Business at the Robeson CC Early College HS in Lumberton, NC. The first time I walked in the door at 1300 Evans, I just knew that UCF was my spiritual home. It was such a relief to not have to pretend to believe all that was being preached, and to find people who could question and seek different truths. I grew up in Pittsburgh, and I was a preacher's kid, but never felt that I identified with what my Dad believed. My Mom (Janine Brobst), on the other hand, was a creative free thinker, and after their divorce, she soon found a UU church. I watched her life become happier and happier, and she met John Brobst while she (and we four kids) were camping on Ocracoke one summer. It was my 'fault', as I was the stubborn teenager who HAD to go to the beach!

I went off to Thiel College, a small Lutheran liberal arts school, met my husband and we raised three wonderful children near Butler, PA. Life seemed idyllic, but after 20+ years, we had become toxic to each other, and for my own

mental health, I found myself divorced and moving to NC.
Slowly I healed, and found tremendous support from Dan Phillips, a divorced dad of two, who loved sailing as I did. We fell in love, and he bought a boat in New Bern to live on and eventually moved to Beaufort.

I visited him often while I was teaching in Lumberton NC. When I retired, we moved into our home in Newport and had the late Ann Rivers finally marry us on the dock in Beaufort at 9:10 on 11/12/13. We pinch ourselves all the time for how lucky we are to live in this beautiful area. Between us we have eight highly intelligent and good-looking grandchildren who look forward to seeing us and coming to the beach in the summer.

I have found it rewarding being on the Finance Committee, past Treasurer, and now Secretary of the Board of Trustees. It is wonderful to rotate through positions of service to our congregation, and to get to know all of you better. It is also hard to say no to UCF, since there are so many worthy (and fun) committees to work with. Most of all, my time here has shown me how incredibly generous you all are with your time, talents, and treasures. Whenever a need arises, members kindly step up to help each other out.

We truly are a family at UCF, and I am so blessed to be part of this one.

Wecember Holiday Events

Holiday Caroling Party at Empower



On Friday, December 9th, the Social Justice Committee and the UCF Choir will bring a Christmas Caroling party to Empower, our neighbor on Church Street. Empower provides pre-vocational training and other services to children and adults with developmental disabilities. They are currently serving about 25 clients. The party will start at 12:45 PM and last an hour or a little more. We will sing carols along with the Empower clients and staff, and will bring snacks and lemonade to enjoy after the singing. Anyone in the congregation who would like to come, whether to sing or just help, is welcome. We would love to get donations of homemade or store-bought cookies and snacks (chips, pretzels, etc.) If you can't attend the party, you can leave snacks in the Social Hall before-hand with "Caroling Party" on them.

We will gather at UCF at about noon, so we can head down to Empower and get the snacks set up before the party starts.

Please contact Barb Thomas, <u>bsthomas2@gmail.com</u> or 252-422-1354 if you are coming so we know approximately how many to plan for.



The Cookie Party is moving! The Hoopers are unable to host this year, and they have graciously agreed to let UCF host their traditional cookie exchange. On Dec. 18th, bring either a batch of your most famous cookies (decorated or undecorated) OR a charcuterie-board type savory snack if your baking is not so famous. After the service, we'll enjoy coffee and milk, swap cookies, and everyone goes home with a container of cookies different from the ones they came with! (And there'll be cookie decorating for the young and young at heart, too!)

Holiday Gift Bags

This year we will continue our tradition of giving gift bags to clients of Beach House, a program for adults with severe and persistent mental illness, and to residents of Hope Mission's Homeless Shelters and Recovery Programs. The bags will contain a Walmart gift card, a handmade (knitted or crocheted) item from the Twisted Sisters, a holiday card, and personal items. This year we are planning to put socks and small oral care items (no large bottles of mouthwash please) in the bags.

On Sunday, December 11th, please bring in unisex socks and oral care items like toothpaste, toothbrushes and flossers to the service. They will be placed in bags at the front of the Sanctuary during the service. After the service, all are invited to stay and help fill the gift bags in the Social Hall. Miriam Green and Susan Roberts will organize the bag stuffing.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

After a gap during COVID, UCF is resuming its annual participation in the Martin Luther King Birthday
Celebration at the Civic Center on January 6th. As we have for many years, we will help to prepare the lunch for approximately 300 guests who attend. There is no cooking involved – just arranging the food on the plates. After the plates are done and served (serving is done by the Boys and Girls club), we will be able to attend the ceremony and hear the speakers. Sharon Harker, Mayor of Beaufort is the keynote speaker this year. Both the lunch preparations and the celebration itself are fun and rewarding. The event starts at 11:00 AM but we will probably arrive about 10:15 and it is usually over a little after 1:00 PM.



If you would like to help, sign up by clicking here.

Volunteer Opportunities for MEALS ON WHEELS!

The Meals on Wheels organizations are always seeking volunteers! Even substitutes are welcome! If you are interested, here are the phone numbers for different areas served:

Beaufort: Sandra Howarth—252-499-6689

Cape Carteret/Emerald Isle: Mr. Bob—910-352-8511

Havelock: Craven County Senior Services, Melanie Reed—252-499-6091

Morehead City/Atlantic Beach: Sandra Morrow—252-241-1087

Newport: Suzanne Plisko—252-223-4231

Leon Mann, Jr. Senior Center: Debbie Griffin—252-241-1087

Down East Communities: Lillie Miller—252-728-4566

Marshallberg, Smyrna, Williston, Davis: Beth Piner—252-528-0038

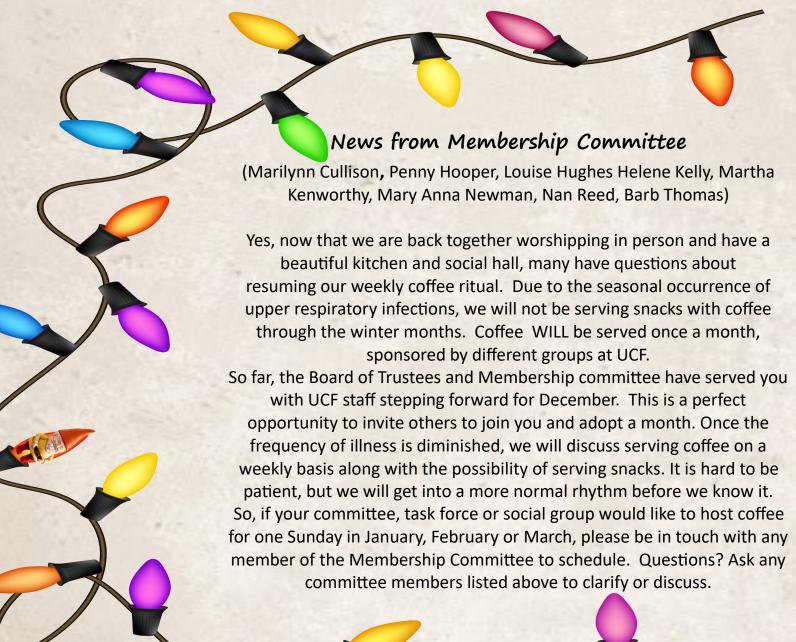
Stacy, Sea Level, Atlantic, Cedar Island: LuAnn Taylor—252-225-2491

Board News

At our November meeting, the Board met with Christine Purcell, Transitions Program Manager, Unitarian Universalist Association. Two members of the Board of the New Bern Fellowship also attended and both congregations were able to ask questions about ministerial search for full-time or part-time (contract) ministers. We learned more about how some ministers contract to serve more than one congregation. Christine described many possibilities for ministry and the ways that the Transitions Office can help.



The Board plans to hold several Coffees with the Board in the new year to continue our discussions and to get information from members and friends as we plan the future at UCF.





The step counter on your smartphone could improve your chances of avoiding dementia. Walking 9,800 steps a day reduces your risk of cognitive impairment by as much as half. 3,800 steps a day improves your chances of avoiding dementia by 25%. Researchers in Australia and Denmark monitored the daily steps of 78,000 adults. After 7 years, these adults were found to have had a lowered risk to their cognition.

Source: JAMA Neurology

Let's start 2023 right, gathering with family and friends for a stroll on the beach! UCF's Green Sanctuary and Adult SE Committees are pleased to announce a New Year's Day ceremony and hike at Fort Macon State Park. We will meet promptly at 2 PM on Sunday, January 1, 2023, in the Beach Access area, which is reached by taking the first right off the main park road immediately after entering the park (do not drive to the fort). A short access road takes you to the Beach Access parking area; once there, turn left immediately and drive past the concessions/bathhouse building (it will be to your right) to the far northeast corner of the parking area. There are numerous picnic shelters in that area with plenty of parking, and we will meet at one of these shelters.

Before our short hike, we will hold a special New Year's Day ceremony. Our goals will be to banish those negative things from 2022 that may be holding us back and to plan for the positive things we wish to accomplish in the year ahead. Details of how you can participate in the ceremony and hike will be provided in The Wave as we get a little closer to the date. For now, please mark your 2023 calendars!



TEAM

Rev. Micah C. Ma (mma@ucfnc.org)

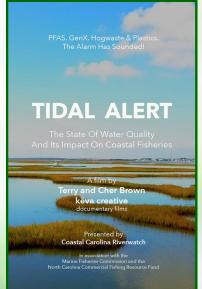
Joan Burton (Idybg223@aol.com)

Miriam Green (mwgreen15@gmail.com)

Helene Kelly (helenekelly1@gmail.com)

Susan Roberts
(landfall2@mindspring.com)





Movie—Tidal Alert

Save the date on Saturday January 28, 2023, from 11:30 to 2:00 for our first Green Sanctuary movie showing of the year! We'll view the documentary *Tidal Alert*, which presents the status of our coastal waters from several perspectives and offers suggestions for ensuring clean water going forward. The event will include a seafood lunch and a panel discussion with local stakeholders. Please join us for what promises to be an enjoyable and informative gathering!



Green Tip:

Commercially available cleaning products can be pretty harsh on our environment and sometimes on our family's health. There are other options, though, that can still give you a clean, yet green, home. In many cases, that involves returning to some of the products our grandparents used to clean – baking soda, vinegar, and lemon juice, for



example. It's not really necessary to disinfect every surface in our homes – in fact, exposure to household microbes can help our immune systems stay strong! Books and websites on green cleaning abound; a comprehensive book I've found is *Green Cleaning* by Mary Findley and Linda Formichelli.

A nice website is https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/non-toxic-home-cleaning/.



Please remember
that if you are the last one
to leave the Sanctuary or the
SBW Center, be sure all doors
are securely locked.
Dan Phillips has offered to
instruct anyone who needs help
learning the lockup procedure
after the service
on Sundays.

Buildings & Grounds

Task Force Notes



All facilities manuals and building plans have now been filed in the office.



The Building and
Grounds committee is
recruiting additional volunteers
to help maintain and oversee our
facility. If you would like to find
out more about what our
committee does, please join us for
ice cream in the Social Hall after
the service on December 4th.



World Aids Day was started in 1988 and takes place annually on December 1. This helps to highlight the opportunity to unite in the fight against HIV, support those living with HIV, and remember those who died from AIDS-related illnesses.

Over 35 million people have died from HIV/AIDS since it was identified in 1984. Globally, it is estimated that over 38 million people are currently living with the virus. According to the CDC, approximately 1.2 million people in the United States have HIV and about 13 percent of them do not know it and need testing.

Although there have been significant advances in treatment and testing, HIV is still here and the stigma and discrimination associated with this virus remain a harsh reality for many living with the condition. Additionally, the intersectionality with marginalized populations cannot be ignored.

"The Black Community & AIDS" is a newly released documentary by The National AIDS Memorial that features Black activists and advocates who share their personal stories about why HIV/AIDS disproportionately impacts Black communities. This 17-minute documentary is highlighted on the hiv.gov website and can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SokuRWJsG74

To learn more about HIV/AIDS and World AIDS Day, check out https://www.hiv.gov/events/awareness-days/world-aids-day and https://www.hiv.gov/events/awareness-days/world-aids-day and https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/awareness/wad.html

Racial Justice Group

The Racial Justice Group will meet via Zoom at 7PM on December 15. We will be setting our calendar of events for the New Year as we approach the possible adoption of the 8th Principle at our Annual Meeting in June 2023. Contact Penny Hooper or checkout the Wave for the Zoom Link.



Women's Discussion Group & UCF Book Club

The Women's Discussion Group will be meeting on Monday, December 12 at 2 PM at Joan Burton's house. Our topic for December should be a lot of fun: If you could change your name, what would you change it to and why?

All in the Women's Discussion Group are invited to stay for the UCF Book Club's first annual Christmas Tea from 3 to 4:30. There will be no book discussion this month, but bring a wrapped gift (around \$15) to exchange and a small snack for the tea table.

RSVP - Text or call Joan at 201-669-1519.

Weekly Meditation

Mondays at 6:15PM

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. Meetings are being held on Zoom on Wednesday afternoons from 2:00 to 3:30. 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

Aut Spiritual Enrichment

Introducing: Wednesday Night Vespers!

Join us every first and third Wednesday of the month at 6pm for a worshipful breather in the middle of your week. We will join together in a short 30-minute worship service of song, candlelight, and meditation before scheduled programming at 6:30pm.

Socrates Café after vespers on December 7.

Do you enjoy discussing topics for which there is no "right answer?" Socrates' Café may be for you. Each session will begin with a "leading question" and we will see where it takes us. We don't expect to "answer the question," but hopefully we will come away from each meeting saying, "I hadn't thought of 'it' that way before." For the first session, we will start with the question, "Why do you attend church?

What do you expect to "get out of it"?

Landon Elswick will moderate.

Family Games Night Friday, December 9 at 6:30 PM

Sweet treats after vespers on December 21



Energy is the engine that powers life and fuels the evolution of human civilization. To better put into perspective the various issues surrounding energy in the 21st century, we need to understand the essential science behind how energy works. Award-winning professor and expert geophysicist Michael E. Wysession of Washington University in St. Louis has developed The Science of Energy: Resources and Power Explained, which presents an unbiased investigation into the energy sources that power our world. Vividly illustrated with animations, 3-D graphics, graphs, in-studio demonstrations, and other visuals that make scientific and mathematical concepts approachable and understandable, The Science of Energy is a marvelous window into the inner workings of energy that will keep you constantly engaged. Landon Elswick will present this program for UCF starting on January 4, 2023; the series will be offered every two weeks following Vespers. This 6-session program is a continuation of the presentation he began prior to the COVID pandemic.

Children's Spiritual Education

We have been very busy with our Faith in Action projects this fall.

Here are two upcoming events for December and check out our October and November reports and pictures.

Upcoming Events:

Saturday, December 10th Christmas Angel Tree Project



Our children and youth will be buying gifts for some needy children in Morehead City on December 10th. This is an annual event that brings the meaning of giving to those less fortunate than us a brighter Christmas holiday season. We will meet at 10:00 a.m. in the Walmart store inside the Pharmacy entrance. After we purchase all the gifts, we will then head back to the church for pizza lunch and Christmas cookies in the Social Hall. After lunch we will be wrapping the gifts and delivering them to the Sports Center where the parents will pick up their children's gifts at a later time. Please let Sarah Sutherland know if your family will be coming, ssutherland@ucfnc.org or 603-254-5559 so plans can be made for the lunch.



Sunday, December 18th Winter Solstice Pageant

"Rebirth of the Sun"



This year we will be having a multigenerational service honoring the winter solstice.

The pageant was written by our Rev. Micah C. Ma, so please come and enjoy our pageant!



What we did in October and November:

TRUUNK OR TREAT on OCTOBER 31ST went off without a hitch. Thank you, Jo Ellen and Dan, for heading this event up and Mary Anna, Ti, and Rev. Micah for being there on the 31st and all the other helping hands that made over 100 bags of candy (and, of course, some of the candy was consumed as well).

To those who donated candy from the fellowship and those that were at the event that night, thank you.











"Blankets of Love" were made by the children and adults of the Fellowship after church Sunday, November 20th.

We had lots of people helping and producing beautiful blankets for the Carteret Cancer Center here in Morehead City for children and teens battling cancer. It was so much fun that others want to make some blankets when we do it again or at home with their grandchild. The blankets will be delivered in December. Next year's "Blankets of Love" will find us making blankets for the Greenville Hospital Cancer Center for children and youth that are battling cancer.

Nursery Volunteers Needed

I am looking for volunteers to play with the little ones in the nursery on Sundays. If you like to be a kid again just let Sarah know. You can email me at ssutherland@ucfnc.org, or talk to me on Sunday's.



Board of Trustees:

President: Susan Fetzer <u>sgfetzer@gmail.com</u>

Vice President: Tom Wentworth tom wentworth@ncsu.edu

Secretary: Joe Ellen Essex jolnsx@yahoo.com

Treasurer: David Hughes <u>ucfwelcomenc@gmail.com</u>

Leadership Trustee: Linda Rudd lerudd@ncsu.edu

Minister: Micah Ma mma@ucfnc.org

Choir Director: Tom Cullison tcullison@ucfnc.org

Office Assistant: Jamie DeRose jderose@ucfnc.org

Facilities: Sandra Shelp shelpsk@yahoo.com

Worship: Marilynn Cullison mscullison@gmail.com

Finance: Jo Ellen Essex ucfwelcomenc@gmail.com

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Social Justice: Harriet Altman harrietaltman@icloud.com

And Barb Thomas bsthomas2@gmail.com

Green Sanctuary: Lauren Donnachie <u>Isdonnachie@twc.com</u>

And Linda Rudd <u>lerudd@ncsu.edu</u>

Committee on Ministry: Holly Rogers hollyer54@yahoo.com

Children Spiritual Exploration: Sarah Sutherland ssutherland@ucfnc.org

Adult Spiritual Enrichment: Sally Davis sdavis8772@gmail.com

And Holly Rogers hollyer54@yahoo.com

Music Committee: Tom Cullison tcullison@ucfnc.org

Care Circle Coordinator: Martha Kenworthy <u>martha.kenworthy@gmail.com</u>

Newsletter: Jamie DeRose jderose@ucfnc.org

Contact us!

252-240-2283

UNITARIAN COASTAL FELLOWSHIP

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