



OUR COASTLINE

Official Newsletter of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship
Morehead City, NC

January, 2024

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.

Dear Beloveds,

A new year is upon us!

It may be foolish to tie resolutions and change to an arbitrary turn of the calendar page, but that's part of what it means to be human: we make meaning. We choose what matters, and when those things matter.

We tell ourselves stories about who we are and why the world is the way it is. And this is one of the stories that we tell ourselves: that with a new year comes new beginnings. It's time to leave the old behind and look forward to the new.

And this year, the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship enters a new chapter: one with a new minister, who will hopefully stay with you for years and years to come. The Search Committee is all ready to interview candidates! I will depart at the beginning of July, and the new minister is set to begin in August 2024. We don't know who that is yet, but we are certainly dreaming.

In the meantime, we must begin preparations! What has been put off "until the new minister gets here?" Best to start things in motion now. Look around: what will the new minister need to know? What will be in the new minister's job description? Do we know all the things the minister does? The new minister won't know, unless you tell them!

Your tireless Board President Susan Fetzer has some important news in her column, so be sure to read that on the next page. To her list of accomplishments I would certainly add the Social Justice Film Series, the many new faces (and new families!) we've seen in the sanctuary since opening, Share the Plate, and the many new things that we are trying together. And of course there are the old favorite traditions as well, such as the Cookie Exchange and Thanksgiving and Christmas potlucks.

I'm not gone yet, and so I myself have hopes and dreams for UCF in the next six months. We'll be restarting the Thoughtful Gatherings small group ministry, UCF will be participating in ChoirFest at Eno River UU in April, and we'll be kickstarting Spirit Play to introduce some structure in the children's programming. We'll have to pace ourselves! But it's hard not to be enthusiastic when there's so much to be hopeful about.

~Blessings,
Rev. Micah C. Ma

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President's Column

January Coastline From the President

When a new year starts, I often look back at the past year, listing a few of the major events. I follow this with making a list of some things I want to accomplish in the new year. I'm sharing my lists of three 2023 achievements of UCF and three hopes for 2024. Add your list of three achievements of 2023 and three hopes for 2024 and let's see how many we can list, how many we have in common, and identify the gifts that we are willing to share to make our hopes come true! How did UCF encourage you to live more fully in 2023? How can UCF engage in what is most needed for you and your community in 2024?

My list of three achievements of UCF I'm proud of in 2023:

- UCF's Search Committee progress
- The process used to decide to fly the Progress Flag
- Progress made toward becoming a Safer Congregation—Building safety and fire safety procedures are in development

Three of my hopes for UCF for 2024:

- Successful search for a full-time contract minister who will begin in August, 2024, at the end of Rev. Ma's interim ministry
- Continued growth in programs and activities that will reach people who will be come active members inspired and in support of UCF's mission and vision
- Continued growth and development of the Family Ministry program

Join me in thanking Tom Wentworth for his dedication and service to UCF as Vice President, as member of the Worship Committee and Audiovisual Team, nature walk leader, and landscaping expert. Tom has been having health problems since having COVID in August, and has submitted his resignation as Vice President. He and Linda have been at their Raleigh home. We miss Tom, but know that he needs to care for himself for now.

Thank you, Mark Hooper, for stepping forward to serve the remainder of Tom Wentworth's term on the Board as Vice President and for being willing to be nominated to be the next President of the Board at the Annual Meeting in June. Mark is a long-time member and has been President of the Board.

Happy New Year! May this new year be full of adventure and growth for UCF!

~ **Susan Fetzner, President**

Children & Family Ministries

Children and Family Ministries

December was a blast! We had a super chaotic and super fun Solstice Pageant, a yummy cookie exchange (big ups to Janet and Drew for bringing cookies to decorate!), a pizza-filled Project Christmas Cheer day, and a sweet and helpful First Sunday Funday where a dozen of us helped assemble gift bags for the staff and residents of Beach House. In fact, we were so busy having fun that we might have forgotten to take pictures...?!

Starting in January, there will be some changes in our children's programming. Don't panic! We're going to be introducing **more structure**. Starting in January, we are going to practice having the students enter the classroom **calmly**, light a chalice, and read a story together before having free play.

Then, in March or April we will introduce a new curriculum called **Spirit Play**, which is a Montessori-style curriculum used by Unitarian Universalist churches all over the country. Each class begins with storytelling (the students choose the story!), with time for creative expression afterward. As we get closer, we will be asking the congregation for help getting the classroom ready for Spirit Play.

And now: January events!

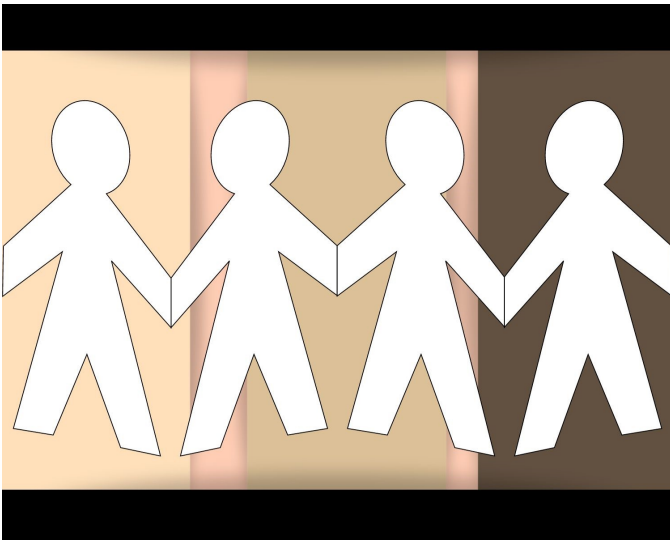
- Jan 7: **First Sunday Funday!** Everyone is invited to help us with a no sew blanket tying project! Once tied, these will become rugs that the children will sit and lie on for Spirit Play. We will have all kinds of patterns: unicorns, dinosaurs, dogs, butterflies...
- Jan 21: **Yo, Who Put Dragons in the Church?!** January's multigenerational service is Dungeons & Dragons themed! (Don't worry, we'll make sure it's not too scary, in case your little one has nightmares.) We're going to work together to use our shared values of interdependence, generosity, and justice to battle a villain of bigotry, greed, and inequity. All are welcome to bring a D&D character, if they have one!
- Jan. 28: **If I Had a Hammer** Activist and musician, Pete Seeger, will be celebrated in this service. Barb Thomas and Karen Baggott will bring back words and songs from a look at his life that was presented at UCF in 2015, one year after his passing. Through his music, he inspired many to do more for the environment and for social justice. School-aged children will be staying for this service, while children 4 and below will be sung out to the Nursery as usual.

If you have a hammer, come sing along!

Upcoming Services

January 7: The Magnificent Seven

The Principles have been part of Unitarian Universalism for what feels like forever. Now, it seems as if our living tradition may evolve to replace the Principles with Shared Values. Today, we explore those Values and how they're similar and different from the Principles--through music!



January 14: When Whiteness Is The Norm

When Whiteness is the Norm
When whiteness is the "default" in society, people of color become relegated to the margins--unless they assimilate into whiteness. This is what's called "white cultural supremacy" or "white supremacy culture."

On this Racial Justice Sunday, the day before our Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, we explore in what ways white cultural supremacy is part of our society and has been internalized in ourselves.

Upcoming Services

January 21: Who Put Dragons In The Church?!



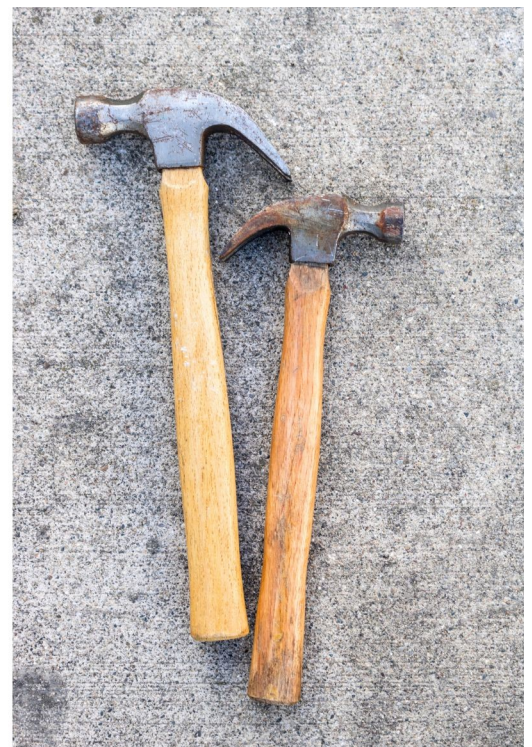
Dungeons & Dragons is more than just a game. It's an exercise in collaborative storytelling, in which every participant plays a role in moving the story forward. All are welcome to a fun, suspenseful multigenerational worship service in

which our creativity and the luck of the dice determine whether or not the forces of Unitarian Universalist love, interdependence, and generosity overcome the forces of greed, individualism, and injustice.

January 28: If I Had A Hammer

Activist and musician, Pete Seeger, will be celebrated in our service on January 28th. Barb Thomas and Karen Baggott will bring back words and songs from a look at his life that was presented at UCF in 2015, one year after his passing. Through his music, he inspired many to do more for the environment and for social justice.

If you have a hammer, come sing along!



Social Justice News

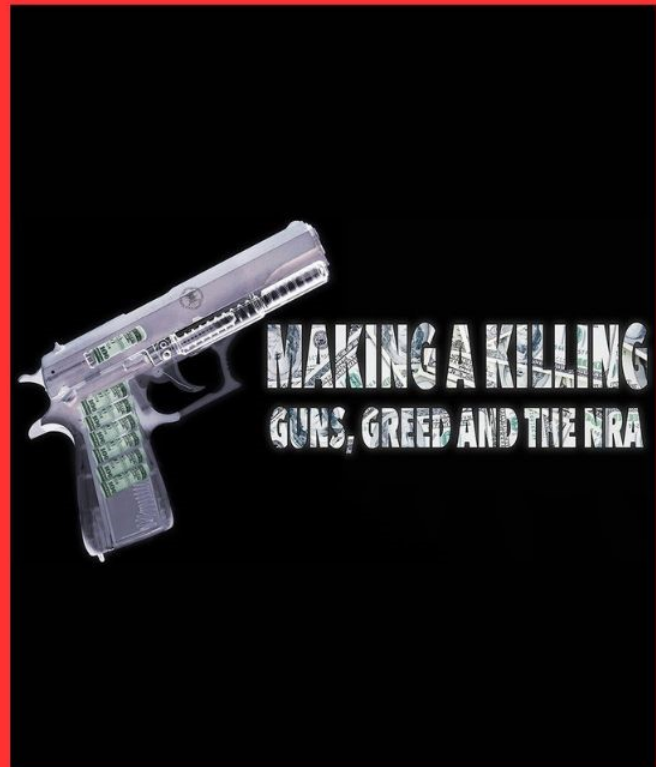
SOCIAL JUSTICE FILM SERIES

The fifth film in the 2023 Social Justice Film Series will be shown on Thursday, January 11 at 6:30 in our sanctuary.

MOVIE NIGHT AT UCF

Making a Killing: Guns, Greed, and The NRA tells the stories of how guns, and the billions made off of them, affect the lives of everyday Americans.

It features personal stories from people across the country who have been affected by gun violence, including survivors and victims' families. The film exposes how the powerful gun companies and the NRA are resisting responsible legislation for the sake of profit - and thereby putting people in danger.



January 11, 2024 at 6:30 PM

2900 Bridges St. Morehead City

5th title in the 2023 Social Justice Film Series

Hosted by Unitarian Coastal Fellowship

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

At the December 21 Board of Trustees meeting, your Board discussed:

- Expanding door locking to other UCF meetings and continuing door locking during services,
- Sending a team of 5 to a webinar series on digital security for congregations,
- Leadership Development,
- Coffee with the Board and the Search Committee on January 28
- The next Board meeting will be Thursday, January 18, at 5 pm

SHARE THE PLATE FOR JANUARY NAACP Scholarship Fund

For the month of January, our Share the Plate collection will go to the NAACP Scholarship fund. The fund will receive half of all offerings collected that are not designated as a pledge payment. The other half goes to UCF.

The NAACP of Carteret County has been giving three to four \$500 scholarships for many years to deserving Carteret County graduating senior students. UCF has been supporting this scholarship fund by participating in the NAACP Gospel Festival, which is a fundraiser for the fund. This year, because the Gospel Festival was virtual, UCF was unable to donate as we have in the past. Since the application process begins in January, we have decided to raise money this month to make up the difference.

The NAACP will send applications to the three CC public high schools in January. They will also be sent out to churches and shared with other organizations that work with senior students.

The six member Scholarship Committee uses a selection process that considers need, but academic excellence, leadership, and public service are very important considerations in the process. The Committee's purpose is: higher education for all students. We hope that when we lift up a few students, we lift up many people—their families and friends, and their communities.

Please give as you can during the month of January to help deserving students in our county achieve their academic goals through the NAACP scholarships.

Caroling Party at Empower



On December 12th UCF members and friends went to Empower, our neighbors down Church Street to bring them our annual Caroling Party. Empower is a program for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. As always, we had a



wonderful time. We sang Christmas Carols and then served lemonade, ice tea and lots of cookies and snacks to the clients and staff. Finally, we gave everyone at Empower a gift bag from UCF, with a knitted or crocheted item from Twisted Sisters, toiletry items and a holiday card. We all agree that this is a joyful event for everyone involved and hope we can continue this tradition into the future.

Volunteers Needed for Martin Luther King Jr Birthday Celebration

As we have been doing for many years, UCF members and friends will be setting up the lunch plates for the Martin Luther King Jr Birthday Celebration at the Carteret County Civic Center on MLK Day, January 15th, 2024. We need lots of volunteers to help as we will be serving up to 300 people at this event. There will be a ceremony to start the celebration with music and a keynote speaker, and with our own Rev. Micah Ma doing the Benediction and blessing of the food. Then the lunch plates and drinks we have prepared will be served to the attendees by the Boys and Girls club. We need the volunteers to arrive between 9:30 and 10:00 AM and the event should be over by about 1:00 or 1:30 PM.

Fill out the volunteer form if you are interested in helping, by clicking [HERE](#).



UCF News Cont.

Holiday Gift Bags

A big thank you to everyone who helped us with our Holiday Gift Bag project this year. We couldn't have done it without your generosity and our many helpers. Bag filling began early this year as we teamed up with the Twisted Sisters knitting, crocheting and sewing group to fill over 50 bags for the Hope Mission Recovery Homes. The Twisted Sisters provided beautiful stockings, stocking stuffers galore and knit scarf and hat sets. UCF donated \$25 Walmart gift cards and greeting cards and bag stuffing power.

On December 3 before the worship service our children and families filled bags (many of which were knit or crocheted by the Twisted Sisters) for Beach House which provides services for adults with severe and persistent mental illness. Each bag contained a hand-made item from the Twisted Sisters, a \$25 Walmart gift card and oral hygiene items or socks.

And finally, after the December 3 service, with lots of help from everyone, we filled over 40 bags for the clients and staff of Empower, the organization close to UCF on Church Street providing services for adults with developmental disabilities. These bags were delivered and passed out at the Christmas Caroling party we held at Empower on December 12. Everyone there was so appreciative. We were also able to provide some Walmart gift cards and hand-made items to the Carteret Long Term Recovery Alliance which helps families recover from disasters.

With everyone helping, we have made the holidays a better time for over 110 individuals and families.

Right: Filling stockings for Hope Mission



Right: Children filling bags for Beach House



Left: Christine delivering handmade items from Twisted Sisters



Left: Filling gift bags for Empower Caroling Party

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE



The Search Committee has posted UCF's congregational profile on UUA's ministerial search system for ministerial applicants to review and hopefully apply for our fulltime contract minister position. We have developed interview questions and even had a "practice interview" session with Rev. Ma.

Thanks to each of you for sharing your suggestions and ideas throughout this process. **We are thrilled to let you know that we have our very first candidate and we will keep you updated when we receive additional applicants!**

The Search Committee plans to begin interviews in early 2024 and we are on track to have a fulltime contract minister on board at UCF in August, 2024.

As always, please feel free to ask questions and offer feedback to any of the Search Committee members. Members are Tom Cullison, Miriam Green, Sarah Grenier, Penny Hooper, and Amy Jones. You can also email the committee at search@ucfnc.org

Thank you for your trust.

It was raining hard but look who showed up for our "Return Of The Sun" service!



Upcoming Events

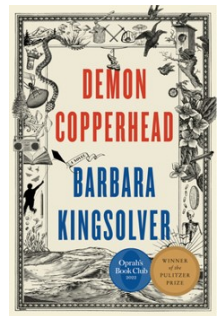
Mental Health Family Support Group Mondays 3:30pm-5:00pm

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. The Mental Health Family Support Group will be meeting on Mondays on Zoom from 3:30 to 5:00. If you would like to join these meetings or would like more information, please contact Susan Roberts at 843-217-1885 or email at: landfall2@mindspring.com.



UCF Book Club January 15 at 4pm. SBW

The UCF Book Club will meet on Monday Jan. 15 @4PM in the SBW Center to discuss the book "Demon Copperhead" by Barbara Kingsolver. Set in the Appalachian mountains, Demon Copperhead is the story of a boy born to a teenage mother in a double-wide trailer, with no assets beyond his father's good looks, caustic wit and a talent for survival.



Weekly Meditation Mondays 5:30pm-6pm

Coloring Meditation on New Year's Day: If you haven't already attended a Coloring Meditation session in the UCF's Social Hall, please plan on joining us for meditation music, beautiful coloring books and more colored pencils than are actually legal, on New Year's Day at 5:30pm.

What a peaceful way to start the year! Please text Sandra Shelp at 303-482-6334 by Sunday, December 31 if you plan to attend. Tea is always served.



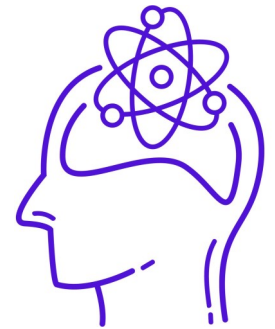
Come meditate with us on Zoom on Monday afternoons. You can sign on between 5:30 and 5:40 and meditation will be from 5:40 to 6:00. The first Monday of each month we will meet at UCF for a coloring meditation led by Sandra Shelp. The Zoom sessions will be guided by either Holly Rogers, Daryl Walker, Virginia Woodhead, or Susan Roberts. We enjoy experiencing a variety of meditation styles.

Contact Susan Roberts at landfall2@mindspring.com to be sent the Zoom link to join us!

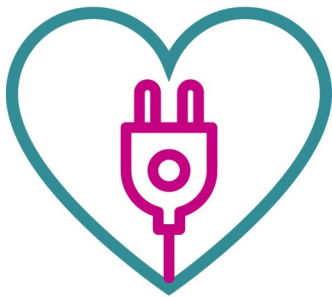
Upcoming Events Cont.

Philosophy in the Afternoon

Have you attended **Philosophy in the Afternoon**? If not, join us for answering questions with too many possible answers! We'll be in the Social Hall at **4:30 on December 6**; please come and join us! Questions of not a philosophical nature? Contact Holly: 509-607-2055 or hollyer54@yahoo.com



VESPERS....Just What Is It?



Vespers is a short, contemplative worship service for a mid-week spiritual refresher. Rev. Ma conducts Vespers on the first Wednesday of every month, and Caroline Dominguez has graciously consented to conduct the third-Wednesday Vespers! Join us in the Sanctuary at 6:00pm on January 3 and January 17. Come and see what a mid-week spiritual lift can do for you!

Meatless Monday January 29 at 6:00 pm.

Please join Adult Spiritual Enrichment and Green Sanctuary for our first Meatless Monday get-together in 2024, at UCF. We will be decorating the Social Hall with red and gold for the Chinese New Year, which is the year of the Dragon!!!! As always, please bring a meatless dish to share. Contact Holly Rogers at 509-607-2055 or Lauren Donnachie at 703-772-0003 to RSVP, or for questions.

Thoughtful Gatherings Are Returning!

Thoughtful Gatherings are small groups who meet in members' homes, usually, for three or four sessions. Members who have been with UCF since before the pandemic will remember, we hope fondly, the low-key but intentional discussions that allowed us to get to know each other in a deeper way. Let's do that again! Get ready to sign up to know more about each other, about UCF and about Unitarian Universalism.

To sign up, use the following form. <https://forms.gle/nAAbHHmGqRNfiUzdA> More information to come soon! For more information sooner than soon, contact Holly Rogers at 509-607-2055.

January Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 5:30pm Meditation	2	3 9am Rev Ma Office Hours	4 10am Leadership Council	5 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours	6
7 9:30am First Sunday Family Fun Day 10:30am Worship Service	8 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 3:30pm MHFS Group 5:30pm Meditation	9	10 9am Rev Ma Office Hours 2pm Finance Committee 5:45pm Children and Family Ministries	11 6:30pm Movie Night– Making A Killing	12 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 6:30pm Game Night	13
14 9am Choir Practice 10:30am Worship Service	15 9:30am Prepare for MLK Celebration 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 3:30pm MHFS Group 4pm Book Club 5:30pm Meditation	16 6pm NAACP Meeting	17 9am Rev Ma Office Hours	18 2pm ASE Committee 5pm Board OF Trustees	19 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours	20
21 9am Choir Practice 10:30am Worship Service	22 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 3:30pm MHFS Group 5:30pm Meditation	23	24 9am Rev Ma Office Hours 3:30pm Worship Committee	25	26 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours	27
28 10:30am Worship Service 11:45am Coffee with Search Committee & Board	29 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 3:30pm MHFS Group 5:30pm Meditation	30	31 9am Rev Ma Office Hours			
			15			

The UCF Team

Board of Trustees

President: Susan Fetzter sgfetzer@gmail.com

Vice President: Tom Wentworth tom_wentworth@ncsu.edu

Secretaries: Miriam Green mwgreen15@gmail.com and
Susan Roberts landfall2@mindspring.com

Treasurer: Joan Burton ucfwelcomenc@gmail.com

Leadership Trustee: Linda Rudd lerudd@ncsu.edu

Minister Rev. Micah C. Ma mma@ucfnc.org

Choir Director Tom Cullison tcullison@ucfnc.org

Pianist Meganne Smith meganne.lott@gmail.com

Office Assistant Rebecka Keeter rkeeter@ucfnc.org

Facilities Sandra Shelp shelpsk@yahoo.com

Worship Marilyn Cullison mscullison@gmail.com

Finance Jo Ellen Essex jolnsx@yahoo.com

Membership Nan Reed nanreed5@gmail.com and
Mary Anna Newman manewman47@gmail.com

Social Justice Harriet Altman harrietalman@icloud.com and
Barb Thomas bsthomas2@gmail.com

Green Sanctuary Lauren Donnachie lsdonnachie1@gmail.com and
Linda Rudd lerudd@ncsu.edu

Committee on Ministry Louise Hughes lhughes2@ec.rr.com

Adult Spiritual Enrichment Holly Rogers hollyer54@yahoo.com



Contact Us!

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