

## **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, Everyone seems tired.

We went straight from the busy holiday season to a busy January.

There were important matters to attend to—matters of mission and vision, matters of Search, matters of membership—and there are always important matters to attend to. The work will always be there; but your families, your friends, your pets: they will not always be there. Always remember what is most important. As we rush from errand to errand, we forget to take time for our own souls. We forget why we came to this place in the first place.

And so, this month, please, give yourself permission to rest, especially if you're one of the seemingly tireless church volunteers who wear many hats. Do one less thing. It's okay if something gets dropped. Sometimes less is more. Or, better yet: ask one of the many new faces if they would like to help.

And, if you are one of those new faces, don't hesitate to leap right in! You won't be stepping on any toes if you help clean up after Coffee Hour; or if you see something around the church that needs fixing and offer to fix it. The Unitarian Coastal Fellowship only exists because the people that make up this Fellowship keep it running, and that's easier when more people pitch in.

And feed your souls! Thoughtful Gatherings are back, finally, and we're trying something a little different that should help people deepen their relationships with one another while also learning something new about themselves. Have lunch or tea with your UCF friends, or go see a movie together, or take a walk on the beach. Attend an evening Vespers service. The work will always be there, and it doesn't all have to get done right now.

Faithfully, ~Rev. Micah C. Ma

#### Rev. Ma is on Vacation!

Rev. Ma is on vacation beginning Friday, Feb. 2 and will return to work on Tuesday, Feb. 13. They will be in California visiting family for Chinese New Year.

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## President's Column

### **February Coastline From the President**

Centered in love, the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship covenants (or promises or agrees) to:

Live compassionately; Grow spiritually, and Advance justice.

This is a revision of the UCF Mission Statement that your Board of Trustees has drafted.

At our Mission Statement meeting, the Board discussed how we liked the content of our current Mission Statement which was adopted in 2013. But we thought it was too long so we have tried to include its intent in a shorter statement. For the curious, here's a link to the current mission statement—https://ucfnc.org/about-us/vision-mission-covenant/

Does this draft statement say why UCF has to exist? Does it describe what UCF does, what it wants to be? I think I can memorize this draft and repeat it if someone asks me to tell them more about UCF and Unitarian Universalism. We couldn't decide whether to use the word "covenants", or "promises" or "agrees". Which word do you like best? Or is there another word that is better than these three?

The Board also reviewed the Vision Statement and is proposing to keep the Vision Statement as is:

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.

If you missed the Coffee with the Board and Search Committee after the January 28 service, or have more to say about the draft Mission Statement, please contact me or another member of the Board of Trustees. We want to hear from you!

Great things are happening at UCF. Here are just a few examples of what is happening in leadership: 1. Mark Hooper is the new Vice President of the Board; 2. A new committee has been hard at work, the Children and Family Ministry Committee, and thanks to Laura Prestwich for chairing it; 3. The Membership Committee has new co-chairs, Penny Hooper and Martha Kenworthy. I am always grateful for the many ways that UCF members and friends serve this congregation. Together, we will live our mission, centered in love!

#### ~ Susan Fetzer, President

# Children & Family Ministries

The Committee is hard at work behind the scenes! We've started two volunteers training on Spirit Play, and we're gearing up to hire a Children & Family Ministries Administrator who will help us keep all our paperwork in order, look after the kids on Sunday morning, and greet families on Sunday mornings.

Oh, and did you notice that we have a new Nursery staff member?! If you haven't said hi to Emily Simons already, please do, and thank her for being so wonderful with the little ones!

And now, for the February events:

- •Sunday, Feb. 4: **First Sunday Funday!** Get ready to make some noise...with a DRUM CIRCLE! We'll have a variety of small drums, shakers, maracas, and other rhythm instruments. All ages can join, and if anyone has sensitive hearing, you might want to bring some earplugs...
- •Friday, Feb. 9: **Game Night!** We'll have a variety of board games and also cake to celebrate February birthdays! Honestly, though, sometimes we just end up sitting around, eating cake, and chatting while the kids play tag (supervised!) in the sanctuary.
- •Sunday, Feb. 11: **The Elephants' Tea Party!** To give our volunteers a break, school-aged children will stay in this service to learn about the history and culture of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship...through stories! Long-time members and friends will share their favorite memories, we'll look at some old photos, and think about what memories we're making together, now, that we want to carry forward into the future with us.
- •Sunday, Feb. 18: **Deeply Rooted, Branching Out!** All ages will take part in this multigenerational worship service about stewardship, where we'll share what is important to us about the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship and reflect on how we're going to help take care of it, whether that's with time, treasure, or talent. Rev. Ma just bought a bunch of post-it notes shaped like leaves...hmm...I wonder what that has to do with this...?

# **Upcoming Services**



# February 4: Seeing the Black Experience in Film, with Rev. Dr. Gaye Morris

The theme of this year's Black History Month is "African Americans and the Arts." It is a rich theme to explore with the increasingly influential cultural contributions of Black Americans; one recent example is the Christmas Day 2023 opening of the new musical version of the film "The Color Purple," which made a near-record \$18 million dollars at the box office. As Black

History Month 2024 begins, Rev. Dr. Gaye Morris invites you into the spiritual practice of film-watching: seeing the Black American experience through film can be a valuable way to open our hearts and steel our resolve to transform our society and our country as the struggle for racial justice continues into 2024.

Prior to this worship service, people may find that viewing the award- nominated movie *One Night in Miami (a fictional account of one incredible night where icons Muhammed Ali, Malcolm X, Sam Cooke, and Jim Brown gathered discussing their roles)* will complement this message. (Watch parties are being organized, so keep an eye out for that!)

**Bio**: The Rev. Dr. Gaye Morris lives in Manteo NC with the Rev. David Morris, their great-grandson Oliver, and three goofy hound dogs. Gaye was ordained in 2013 and served until 2019 as the full-time minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Augusta, GA. She and David are both retired from active ministry. Gaye teaches online courses in Communication as an adjunct instructor with Augusta University, Augusta GA. Her academic interest has always been in theology and film, with two books published on the subject. Her interest in film continues as the Curator of the newly created Outer Banks Film Society.

## February 11: The Elephants' Tea Party: Making UCF Memories

Karen Baggot and Susan Fetzer lead this worship service where stories are told about the history and culture of this congregation. This is a way for both new and old members to become aware of the culture and history of our beloved community. What memories are we, here at UCF, making now that will be told in another few decades?



# **Upcoming Services**

### February 18: Deeply Rooted, Branching Out

As the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship settles into its new building, with a new flagpole, we are beginning to feel deeply rooted! Now that our roots are deeply planted, we can start extending our branches. As we look toward the future, this multigenerational service asks members and friends to share what is important to them, and how they will continue to be good stewards of this community.



# February 24th: Music of the Circle Workshop with Eric Bannan, Guest Musician - 4:00-6:00pm, with potluck afterwards



In this two hour Music Of The Circle workshop, participants will playfully blend voices, body percussion and simple movement in a way that builds community and teaches cooperation. This workshop is for anyone interested in being more confident, connected and opening new creative pathways in their lives. Suggested ages: middle school and above. Based on the work of Bobby McFerrin and Brazil's Música do Circulo collective, this judgment-free workshop welcomes beginners as well as those with experience. Suggested donation at

the door \$15.00, but no one will be turned away! Please bring a guest and your favorite dish for the potluck that follows the workshop!

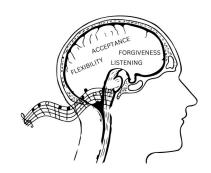
Here is a link to Eric's work: <a href="http://tinyurl.com/CMNCPromo1">http://tinyurl.com/CMNCPromo1</a>

### Feb. 25th: The Art and Practice of Improvisation

Using music as a metaphor for life, guest speaker and musician Eric Bannan will explore improvisation and the adjacent practices of forgiveness, acceptance, flexibility and listening!

#### Bio:

Hailing from Pittsboro, NC, Eric Bannan is a Vocal Explorer, Storyteller and songwriter with over 40 years of performing experience. His mission is to bring joy, heal and build community with story and song. He has traveled far and wide to study with the worlds' greatest improvisers including Bobby McFerrin, Rhiannon and Brazil's Música do Circulo collective.



## Social Justice News

#### **SOCIAL JUSTICE FILM SERIES**

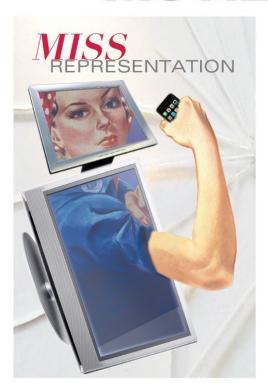
#### FILM CHALLENGES SEXISM IN THE MEDIA AND EMPOWERS WOMEN

The sixth film in the 2023-24 Social Justice Film Series, Miss Representation, will be shown on **Thursday. February 8 at 6:30** in our sanctuary.

Written and directed by Jennifer Siebel Newsom, *Miss Representation* exposes how mainstream media contribute to the under-representation of women in positions of power and influence in America.

Miss Representation includes stories from teenage girls and provocative interviews with politicians, journalists, entertainers, activists, and academics like Lisa Ling, Nancy Pelosi, Condoleezza Rice, Katie Couric, Rachel Maddow, Rosario Dawson, Jackson Katz, Jean Kilbourne, and Gloria Steinem. The film offers startling facts and statistics to leave audiences shaken and armed with a new perspective.

### **MOVIE NIGHT!**



February 8, 2024 at 6:30 PM 2900 Bridges St. Morehead City 6th title in the 2023/2024 Social Justice Film Series Hosted by Unitarian Coastal Fellowship Join Us for a film screening.

Miss Representation explores how the media's oversexualization of girls and women contributes to their underrepresentation in leadership and positions of power.



## **UCF News**

#### FEBRUARY SHARE THE PLATE: FAMILY PROMISE

Each month, the Social Justice Committee selects a charity for our Share the Plate program. All non-pledge donations made during the month, either in the plate, by mail or online are split evenly between UCF and the selected charity.

Our Share the Plate recipient for February will be Family Promise of Carteret County. Family Promise is a program that was started in 2011 to provide help to homeless families in our area. UCF has supported them since their inception, with volunteers, money and household goods,

Family Promise of Carteret County provides innovative solutions for family homelessness including prevention, shelter, and stabilization services, partnering with agencies throughout Carteret County. Families that are accepted into the Family Promise program are provided with housing and food as well as assistance with job searching and applications for housing. In 2021, we became an official Support Church which means we commit to providing money for groceries and other needs for the families four times a year. Many other churches in our area do the same.

Family Promise's funding comes exclusively from donations. The money we collect during February will help us fulfill our commitment as a support

church as well as providing some extra funds for other needs.





#### REPORT ON DECEMBER SHARE THE PLATE

For the month of December, our Share the Plate recipients were local food pantries. This is a month when the pantries tend to run low on food, so our collection of money will allow them to restock. Helene Kelly and Caroline Dominguez head up our Food Pantry team. They decide what to stock in own Little Food Pantry and deliver what's left in our basket to other local pantries. Our congregation has been very generous in keeping our food basket full of healthy non-perishable food.

December's Share the Plate collected \$1015.00. Helene and Caroline decided to split that money evenly between Martha's Mission in Morehead City and the Light House Community Church food pantry in Stacy. Each received \$507.50 and both pantry managers were very grateful for our contribution. Thanks to all in our congregation for their generosity.

## **UCF News**

#### **LOVE ONE ANOTHER**

The Dr. Jesse R. Peel LGBTQ Center hosts LOVE ONE ANOTHER, a half-day symposium created to explore the intersection of faith traditions and LGBTQ identities. The symposium will take place in the Main Campus Student Center from 11 am to 4 pm on Saturday, March 16, 2024. Featured keynote speakers are Rev. Micah C. Ma, Interim Minister, Unitarian Coastal Fellowship in Morehead City and Samuel R. Heath, Doctoral Student in the Medical Family Therapy program at East Carolina University. The event will include workshops facilitated by members of the organizing committee of the event.

For many in the LGBTQ community, the quest for understanding and acceptance is often fraught with rejection and shame in many religious traditions. The vision of the LOVE ONE ANOTHER symposium is to create a space where people from across eastern North Carolina can come together to explore, share, and listen.

Admission (which includes lunch and all sessions in the symposium) is \$15 for adults and \$5 for students (open to all students). Tickets can be purchased online (at <u>tickets.ecu.edu</u>) or by calling (252) 328-4788. The public is invited to attend.

#### **UU101: Introduction to Unitarian Universalism**

UU101 is running in March! Mark your calendars for the first three Sundays, after the service: March 3, 10, and 17. Light refreshments will be served, we will have childcare, and the classes will last approximately one hour each. The first session will be a UU history and theology crash course; the second will be an introduction to UCF and how to get involved; and the third session will be about the Unitarian Universalist Association and how Unitarian Universalism shows up on the national level. **All are welcome to attend, even if you've attended already**. The membership book will be available to sign after the second and third sessions, and a new member ceremony will take place on **Sunday, April 14**.

## UCF News Cont.

#### Do You Like to Lend a Hand?

We're creating a list of **Lend-a-Handers** for those times when someone needs a ride to the doctor, a few casseroles in the freezer, or help moving furniture. Would you like to be on that list? Please indicate so to Rev. Ma at <a href="mailto:mmai

### Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration

On Monday, members and friends of UCF helped prepare the lunch for over 200 people who attended the 31<sup>st</sup> annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration. UCF has been helping with the lunch for at least 25 years, a practice that was initiated through the work of our late members, John Russell and Ann Rivers.

It was a great event this year, with an inspiring keynote address by Tabari Wallace. Rev. Ma also participated, giving the Benediction and Blessing of the food. It was an incredible tribute to the work of Rev. King.









#### RAISING OF THE FLAGS

UCF's Welcoming Congregation Renewal (WCR) Committee started talking about hanging a Progress flag outside our church back in spring of 2022. We felt it was important, in the face of the recent increase in anti-LGBTQ sentiment and legislation, to show our community that we are a safe and welcoming place for people of all gender identities and sexual orientations. We had a meeting to discuss this possibility after church in October of that year. Several people in the congregation felt that if we were going to fly the Progress flag, we should fly the American flag too, so we started looking at flagpoles.

Over the next several months, the members of the committee, Amy Jones, Holly Rogers, Marty Newcomb, Harriet Altman, and Barb Thomas, began to research flagpoles to help us decide what we needed. We came to the conclusion that we wanted a nautical flag pole so that we could hang an American flag at the top and two smaller flags on the yardarms – one being a Progress flag and the other a rotating flag. It was decided that we needed a congregational vote to support the installation of the flagpole and the flying of the Progress flag.

Congregational conversations were held in the weeks before the vote, which occurred during the Annual Meeting in early June, 2023. The congregation approved the flagpole and our next task was to raise the money to buy the flagpole and have it installed. Marty Newcomb and Holly Rogers decided to donate the money for the flagpole itself in the name of Marty's late mother, Gwen Newcomb. Gwen was a member of our congregation and a warm and lovely woman who demonstrated how the power of love can overcome biases and fear. Other members of the WCR committee donated more money to pay for the installation and the order for the flagpole was placed in summer of 2023. Due to supply line difficulties, the flagpole wasn't installed until December of 2023.

On Sunday, January 21 st, after our service, we held a short celebration ceremony followed by the raising of the three flags. Mark Rasdorf, Senior Associate Director for the Jesse R. Peel LGBTQ Center at ECU spoke at the ceremony, along with Rev. Micah Ma, and Marty Newcomb on behalf of the WCR Committee. In spite of the cold, our hearts were warm as we watched the raising of the flags.







## UCF News Cont.

# MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE



If you have not already read UCF's congregational profile, please scan the QR code or use the link below to view this document that describes UCF's history, our current status and our direction for the future. There is also a hard copy on the bulletin board in the Social Hall. This is the document that interested applicants can view on the UUA Ministerial Search site.

We are in the interview phase of search and much of what we are involved in at this point is confidential. Please know the Search Committee members will share everything that we can with you and we want to continue to hear your suggestions and questions.

Members of the Search Committee thank you for your trust, input and guidance.

Search Committee members are Tom Cullison, Miriam Green, Sarah Grenier, Penny Hooper, and Amy Jones.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MYyoL55J2qDl4TJCd08kZtV3 SgLgiR1/edit



# **Upcoming Events**

### Mental Health Family Support Group Fridays at 1:45 (Zoom)

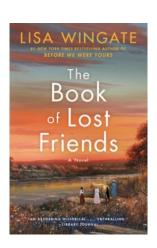
The Mental Health Family Support Group is an opportunity to share experiences and challenges of having family members or friends who live with mental illness. The Mental Health Family Support Group will be meeting on Fridays on Zoom from 1:45 to 3:15. If you would like to join these meetings or would like more information, please contact Susan Roberts at 843-217-1885 or email at



landfall2@mindspring.com

### UCF Book Club February 19 at 4pm. SBW

The UCF Book Club will met on Monday Feb. 19, at 4pm in the Sally B White Center (zoom also, if needed) to discuss the book "The Book Of Lost Friends" by Lisa Wingate. This book is a historical novel of three young women searching for family in the post- Civil War South and a modern day teacher who learns about their story and how it relates to her students.



### Weekly Meditation Mondays 5:30pm-6pm

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.



Coloring Meditation, Monday, February 5: Please plan to join us in the Social Hall at 5:30pm for meditation music, beautiful coloring books and more colored pencils than are actually legal. Contact Holly at 509-607-2055 for more details or Email landfall2@mindspring.com to be sent the Zoom link to join us!

# Upcoming Events Cont.

### Philosophy in the Afternoon

Philosophy in the Afternoon is still waiting for your input and ideas on topics that affect us as individuals as well as a society...join us for discussing the ultimately unknowable. We'll be in the Social Hall at 4:30 pm on Wednesday, February 7; 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? Feb. 7th & 21st



VESPERS....HAVE YOU TRIED IT? Maybe you would like it...

Vespers is a short, contemplative worship service for a mid-week spiritual refresher. Rev. Ma will be lead the VESPER's service on February 21st. Join us in the Sanctuary at 6:00pm. Philosophy in the Afternoon and Vespers is a great combination for balancing the spirit. Hope to see you then!

#### 2nd ANNUAL VALENTINE'S DAY CONCERT



Meganne Smith will be hosting the 2nd Annual Valentine's Day Concert on Valentine's Day, February 14, at UCF at 6:00 PM. This is a free event full of love songs. There will be light refreshments, and there may even be dancing.

### **Artwork On Display**

Marty Newcomb's colorful photographs and encaustic paintings are now on display In our social hall and the Sally B. White center. Marty draws her inspiration from the light and colors of the sea. She would love to share her passion and her process with you. Enjoy!



# February Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 10am Leadership Council	2 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 1:45pm Mental Health Family Group (Zoom)	3
4 9:30am First Sunday Family Fun Day 10:30am Worship Service	5 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 5:30pm Meditation	6	7 <b>4:30pm</b> Philosophy In The Afternoon <b>6pm</b> VESPERS	8 6:30pm Movie Night– Miss Representation	9 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 1:45pm Mental Health Family Group (Zoom) 6:30pm Game Night	10
9am Choir Practice 10:30am Worship Service	12 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 5:30pm Meditation	13	14 9am Rev Ma Office Hours 2pm Finance Committee 6pm 2nd Annual Valentine's Day Concert	15 2pm ASE Committee 5pm Board of Trustees	16 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 1:45pm Mental Health Family Group (Zoom) 6:30pm UCF Goods & Services Auction	17
18 9am Choir Practice 10:30am Worship Service	19 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 4pm Book Club 5:30pm Meditation	20 <b>6pm</b> NAACP Meeting	21 9am Rev Ma Office Hours 6pm VESPERS	22 1pm CC League of Women Voters 5:45 Children & Family Ministries	23 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 1:45pm Mental Health Family Group (Zoom)	24 Deadline for March Coastline
25 9am Choir Practice 10:30am Worship Service 11:45am Social Justice Committee	26 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 5:30pm Meditation	27	28 9am Rev Ma Office Hours 10am Buildings & Grounds 3:30pm Worship Committee	29		
			16			

## The UCF Team

#### **Board of Trustees**

President: Susan Fetzer sgfetzer@gmail.com

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**Green Sanctuary** Lauren Donnachie Isdonnachie1@gmail.com and Linda Rudd Ierudd@ncsu.edu

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Children & Family Ministries Committee Laura Prestwich laura.prestwich@gmail.com



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