



OUR COASTLINE

Official Newsletter of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship
Morehead City, NC

March, 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,

The time of my departure grows nearer and nearer. Somehow it's already March, when it seems like just yesterday we were celebrating a new year. After March will come April (softshell crab season!), then May...then before you know it, summer will be here and I will be gone.

Then will come a new minister, who we don't know much about yet...

There's been some buzz, in the last few weeks, about how much the church has grown and changed over the last two years, ever since we reopened in the new building. There have been many new faces, and almost more children than we can handle! A brand new band made its debut one Sunday in February, and we are starting to become known among activists, pagans, the community college, and more. Change is coming, and change is already here. Who and what is the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship that will face the future? A future of climate change, a new interstate highway, and who knows what else.

People come and people go, and what remains? The church. And the church is more than its people. Many people have come and gone in the past few years: some have died, some have moved away, and some simply never returned to the new building. And yet, the church remains, carrying on with its mission and vision. A vision to be a "visible presence in the community." A mission to live compassionately, grow spiritually, and advance justice.

Remember: a church (or fellowship, congregation, faith community) exists to serve the mission. That way, though people may come and people may go (and that includes ministers!), the congregation is always on the same page and pointed in the same direction. It is that mission that compels people to visit, to stay, to get involved. It is that mission that remains long after everyone else has gone. It is that mission that breathes life into the congregation.

We are grateful to the generations that came before us and lay the foundation upon which this congregation is now built. We don't know if they ever dreamed that we would be where we are today, with a flagpole that proudly proclaims our values and an annual Samhain service and a full-time minister. We don't know what UCF will look like in another forty years, either. But we know that they will carry on the mission, living Unitarian Universalism into being, here on the Crystal Coast.

~Blessings,
Rev. Micah C. Ma

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President's Column

March Coastline From the President

What is a Mission Statement and why does UCF need a Mission Statement? The Mission Statement not only describes UCF and why it must exist, but guides the Board of Trustees, the Minister, and the Leadership Council. When programs and projects are proposed, the Board, Leadership Council, and the Minister evaluate whether these programs or projects are in alignment with the fellowship's mission statement. Are these decisions going to advance the mission of the congregation? It's not just something to frame and hang on the wall or put on the website, it should be a useful statement that describes the fellowship and directs its activities.

After a discussion last spring, the Board met in January to draft a revision of UCF's mission statement. This draft was presented at the January Coffee with the Board and Search Committee.

Centered in love, the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship covenants/promises/agrees to:

- Live compassionately;
- Grow spiritually; and
- Advance justice.

I received several suggestions for a verb to use in the introduction phrase instead of covenant or promises or agrees—"vows" and "avows" among them. Another suggestion was "Centered in love, the mission of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship is to:" But the one I'm liking the best is

Centered in love, the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship takes actions to:

- Live compassionately;
- Grow spiritually; and
- Advance justice.

At the March Coffee with the Board after the service on March 24, there will be another discussion of the draft UCF Mission Statement. Please join in the discussion so that we can make a statement that is meaningful and useful. Let the Board know which statement you like best so that a Mission Statement can be chosen that will let everyone know why UCF **must** be here and that will guide the direction for future activities and programs.

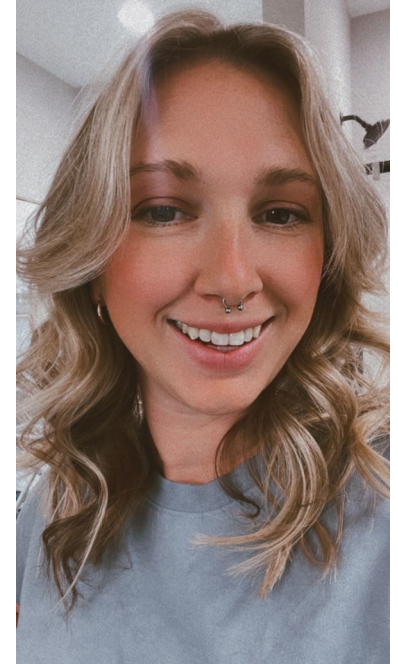
~ **Susan Fetzner, President**

Children & Family Ministries

We're so excited and grateful to announce that we finally have a new Children & Family Ministries Administrator: one of our very own, Sarah Grenier!

Sarah attended Appalachian State University earning a degree in dietetics. She joined the Army and attended Baylor University for a master's in nutrition. After serving six years in the military as a dietitian, she wanted to focus on her two kids and moved home to Carteret County. She is a member at the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship and is Cubmaster for Pack 446. Sarah is also a local artist and teaches preschool at the Camp Albemarle Nature School.

Please welcome Sarah as she learns her new role and gets to know everyone! We're confident she'll do a fantastic job and help pull our Children & Family Ministries program together.



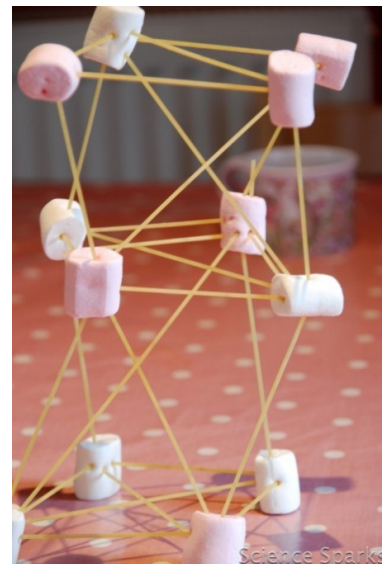
And now, for March events:

- **Sunday, March 3, 9:30AM:** First Sunday Funday! This one is all about giving families and children time with Rev. Micah, who is leaving UCF this summer. Children need time to understand big changes that are coming up, and they may not have heard or internalized the same messages that the adults have. A quiet activity gives us the space and opportunity to gather for conversation, ask questions, and generally prepare ourselves for Rev. Micah's eventual departure. This activity will be followed by a worship service in which **school-aged children will stay in the sanctuary**. Children 4 and under will progress to the Nursery as usual.
- **Friday, March 8, 6:00PM:** Game Night! Bring your favorite board game or play one of ours. We will celebrate all March birthdays with a cake!
- **Sunday, March 31, 10:30AM:** Flower Communion! This multigenerational service will see everyone of all ages staying in the sanctuary to celebrate this uniquely Unitarian Universalist tradition. Bring a bouquet of flowers from the supermarket or your own garden, and take a flower with you when you leave.

Upcoming Services

March 3: A Tower of Spaghetti and Marshmallow

Almost 20 years ago, product designer Peter Skillman delivered a TED Talk about his "Design Challenge" using spaghetti and marshmallow to construct a tower. In the many years since then running this challenge with various groups, he realized that kindergarteners outperformed all the other groups, including business students. What can we learn from kindergarteners on cooperation and problem-solving?



March 10: Decolonizing Ourselves

When the colonists first arrived in North America, Africa, and Asia, they brought with them colonial ideas about hierarchy, consumption, and scarcity. These ideas have now spread all over the world and hinder our abilities to solve problems such as climate change, poverty, and oppression. In order to be the change we want to see in the world, we first must turn inward: we must decolonize ourselves.



March 20, 6pm: Spring Equinox



All are welcome to celebrate Ostara here! We welcome in spring and new beginnings with Wiccan ritual and fellowship.

Upcoming Services

March 17: Whose Job Is It?

Rev. Ma ponders a personal experience (involving a spilled beer!) and the implications for wider society. Whose responsibility is it to clean up messes? Make amends? Restore relationships? Build Beloved Community?



March 24: Music to awaken the spirit



Choir Director Tom Cullison leads this service that's all about chants, rounds, and that mysterious thing that happens when we sing together. Even if you claim you "can't sing," use the gift of your voice to become part of something bigger than yourself.

March 31: Bring a Flower, Take a Flower

Over a hundred years ago, Rev. Norbert Capek devised the Flower Communion, a ritual that is now celebrated by Unitarian Universalists all over the world. Whether or not you bring a bouquet from your garden to share or you only bring yourself, everyone is welcome to take a piece of beauty with them at the end of this multigenerational celebration service.



Social Justice News

UCF Social Justice Film Series

Presents:

Following Their Lead: Youth In Action

In 14 short segments, this film spotlights young leaders across the country who are creating positive change on critical social and political issues.



**Thursday,
March 14th 6:30 PM
2900 Bridges St.
Morehead City**

**All ages
are welcome.**

**Free
to the public!**



SHARE THE PLATE: January Share the Plate Update

For the month of January, our Share the Plate recipient was the NAACP Scholarship fund. The Scholarship Fund was awarded **\$843.80**, which was half of the non-pledge plate donations for the month.

The NAACP of Carteret County has been giving three to four \$500 scholarships for many years to deserving Carteret County graduating senior students. 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. We are thrilled that we could contribute to this excellent cause.

March Share the Plate

For the month March, we will be "Sharing the Plate" with Misplaced Mutts.

Misplaced Mutts is a 501(c)3 non-profit, volunteer-based organization, dedicated to rescuing dogs and cats in shelters, and less than ideal home situations, throughout North Carolina. They are based out of Carteret County, North Carolina, and operate through a network of foster homes. They rescue dogs and cats who are suffering on the streets and in shelters. They created Misplaced Mutts to help animals who suffer and die every year because of negligence and abuse. Harriet Altman has had personal experience adopting pets from them and knows firsthand how dedicated they are!

UCF Annual Pledge Drive Is On!

Pledge cards are in the mail to you. Those who get pledges in before March 31st are eligible for a special gift card drawing! We have extra blank cards in the Social Hall if needed.

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 tickets.ecu.edu) 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, and a new member ceremony will take place on Sunday, April 14.

UCF News Cont.

UCF Flagpole – Third Flag

We are so proud of our flagpole and how it demonstrates our values. Along with the American flag at the top, we are displaying the Progress Flag continuously and have a third flag that can be changed to reinforce different values that we embrace.

In January, we displayed the North Carolina flag and then in February, at the request of the Racial Justice Committee and in honor of Black History Month, we raised the Black Lives Matter flag.

Any individual, group or committee can request that a specific 3rd flag be raised for a month in 2024. In order to do that, the flag must represent a principle that UCF/UU's believe in and that principle must be something that UCF is actively working to promote. Click [HERE](#) to access our 3rd flag request form. Fill it out and submit it and we will follow up with you. If you have any questions, ask any member of the Welcoming Congregation Renewal team: Amy Jones, Marty Newcomb, Harriet Altman, Holly Rogers or Barb Thomas.



The person or group requesting the flag is responsible for acquiring it. Please check with us before ordering as the flag has to be a certain size and we may have recommendations about the material and construction.

Upcoming Events



March 1—Zero Discrimination Day— A Call to Action **"To protect everyone's health, protect everyone's rights"**

UNAIDS leads the global effort to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030 and March 1, 2024 marks the 10th anniversary of Zero Discrimination Day.

According to the UNAIDS site, 78 million people have become infected with HIV and 35 million have died from AIDS-related illnesses since the first cases of HIV were reported more than 35 years ago.

UNAIDS highlights the intersectionality of ending AIDS by protecting human rights for everyone. While the world has made significant progress towards the goal of ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030, UNAIDS notes the "recent, well-coordinated and well-funded global pushback against women's rights, against the human rights of LGBTQ people, against sexual and reproductive health and rights, against democracy and against civic space" as not only a threat to everyone's freedom but also a threat to everyone's health.

The United Nations commits their support to communities standing up for human rights across the world that they are "not only on their side but by their side."

Let us be proud of the work that we do personally and as a part of UCF to stand up for human rights and let us also reflect on ways that we can take further action.



INTERNATIONAL TRANSGENDER DAY OF VISIBILITY (TDOV)

March 31 is International Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV) and this is a day to recognize, revere and celebrate the resilience and accomplishments of the transgender and gender-expansive community.

In the 2023 White House Proclamation on Transgender Day of Visibility, President Biden celebrated the accomplishments and bravery of transgender people and he also highlighted the injustices, discrimination, bullying and harassment that transgender people continue to face.

An excerpt from the White House Proclamation on Transgender Day of Visibility is below and the entire Proclamation can be read at

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/03/30/a-proclamation-on-transgender-day-of-visibility/>

"Transgender Day of Visibility celebrates the joy, strength, and absolute courage of some of the bravest people I know---people who have too often had to put their jobs, relationships, and lives on the line just to be their true selves. Today, we show millions of transgender and nonbinary Americans that we see them, they belong, and they should be treated with dignity and respect. Their courage has given countless others strength, but no one should have to be brave just to be themselves. Every American deserves that freedom."

UUA has great resources to learn more about ways to be more welcoming and inclusive of transgender people and basic definitions about gender identity at <https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/identity/transgender>

The Human Rights Campaign is another site that has current information and resources. <https://www.hrc.org/resources/international-transgender-day-of-visibility>

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 March 18 at 4pm. SBW

Please join us on Monday March 18 at the Sally B White Center to discuss the book "The Year of the Witching" by Alexis Henderson.

This book tells the story of a young woman living in a rigid, puritanical society that discovers dark powers within herself in this feminist fantasy.

For info contact Joan Burton: 201-669-1529.



Weekly Meditation Mondays 5:30pm-6pm

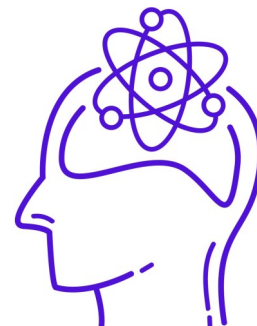
Come meditate with us on Zoom on Monday afternoons. You can sign on between 5:30 and 5:40 and meditation will be from 5:40 to 6:00. Coloring Meditation, Monday, March 4: Please plan to join us in the Social Hall at 5:30pm for meditation music, beautiful coloring books and more colored pencils than are 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.

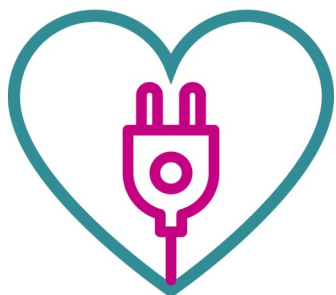
Philosophy in the Afternoon

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, March 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? March 6 & March 20

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



Vespers is a short, contemplative worship service for a mid-week spiritual refresher. 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!

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 [mma@ucfnc.org](mailto:mmma@ucfnc.org). This will make it easier to "rally the troops" when someone's in need!

March Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 1:45pm Mental Health Family Group (Zoom)	2
3 9:30am First Sunday Family Fun Day 10:30am Worship Service 11:45am UU101	4 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 5:30pm Meditation	5	6 4:30pm Philosophy In The Afternoon 6pm VESPERS	7 10am Leadership Council	8 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 1:45pm Mental Health Family Group (Zoom) 6pm Game Night	9
10 9am Choir Practice 10:30am Worship Service 11:45pm UU101	11 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 5:30pm Meditation	12	13 9am Rev Ma Office Hours 2pm Finance Committee 5:45pm Children & Family Ministries (Zoom)	14 6:30pm SJFS presents: "Following Their Lead"	15 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 1:45pm Mental Health Family Group (Zoom)	16
17 9am Choir Practice 10:30am Worship Service 11:45pm UU101	18 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 4pm Book Club 5:30pm Meditation	19 6pm NAACP Meeting	20 9am Rev Ma Office Hours 6pm VESPERS	21 2pm ASE Committee 5pm Board of Trustees 5pm Deadline April Coastline	22 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 1:45pm Mental Health Family Group (Zoom)	23
24 9am Choir Practice 10:30am Worship Service 11:45am Coffee with Search Committee & Board	25 12:30pm Rebecka Office Hours 5:30pm Meditation	26	27 9am Rev Ma Office Hours 10am Buildings & Grounds 3:30pm Worship Committee 5:30pm Potsticker Party	28	29	30 3pm Peer Wellness Support
31 9am Choir Practice 10:30am Worship Service						

The UCF Team

Board of Trustees

President: Susan Fetzer sgfetzer@gmail.com

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Treasurer: Joan Burton ucfwelcomenc@gmail.com

Leadership Trustee: Linda Rudd lerudd@ncsu.edu

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Children & Family Ministries Committee Sarah Grenier sarahjgrenier@gmail.com



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