



OUR COASTLINE

Official Newsletter of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship
Morehead City, NC

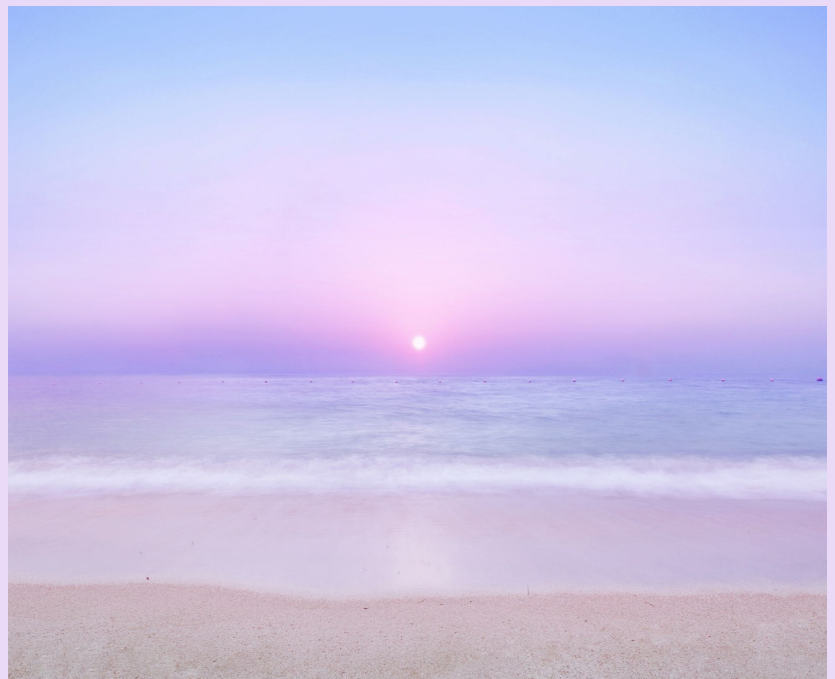
April, 2024

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 happy announcement has been made!
Hip hip hooray! A new minister is on her way!

This kind of announcement is accompanied by a myriad of feelings. Some people may be thinking, "Thank goodness! I can't wait for things to get back to normal!" Others, especially those who have only ever known me as the minister here, may be nervous: what will the new minister be like? Will I like them? Will we get along?

Your new minister is also nervous, I assure you. She is moving to a new place, with new people, to minister to a congregation that she has never even met in person. She has no idea what her day to day will look like, who she'll be working with, or even where she's going to buy her groceries.

This is what faith looks like! It takes faith to move halfway across the country for a contract ministry that may or may not turn into a call. It takes faith to hire a contract minister, sight unseen, with the hope that the contract will turn into a call. Faith in ourselves; faith in each other; faith in Unitarian Universalism.

And the "normal" associated with Rev. Sally B. White's time here has gone, never to return. With the new minister will come a new normal. She will have her own style, and it will be different from my style, which was different from Rev. Sally's style. And she will need *you* to teach her. You'll need to teach her the wifi password and how to lock and unlock the doors. You'll need to teach her what decisions are hers and which are the congregation's to make. You'll need to teach her how UCF lives into its vision and mission, and what role she has in that. And she will teach you, too: she'll teach you what support she needs in order to flourish and thrive; she'll teach you what spirituality means to her; she'll teach you how to love a new minister as much as you loved the old one; she'll teach you what a new normal looks like.

And as the years go by and the congregation grows and changes and evolves, it will seem as if things were never done any other way. And then, some day in the future, there will come another interim minister to shake things up and ask the congregation: who are you? What do you want? Where are you going?

And as for me, I will be in Search for another transitional ministry. By the end of April, I will have some sense of which congregations are searching; and by the end of May, I will have a new destination. Don't let me forget my walking stick!

~Blessings,
Rev. Micah C. Ma

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President's Column

Coastline Article April 2024, From the President

The Mission Statement is more than something that goes on the website and the Sunday morning program. It guides the work of the Board, the committees, the Leadership Council and the congregation. When new programs and actions are proposed, the question is asked, "Does this align with the mission of the congregation?" The proposed revised Mission Statement of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship is:

***Centered in love, the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship takes actions to:
Live compassionately,
Grow spiritually,
Advance justice.***

Thank you to all who contributed to the proposed revision. The Board met in a special meeting in January to propose a statement. The first draft was discussed in Coffees with the Board, resulting in consent that the above Mission Statement declares what UCF is and why it has to be here. We'll vote on this statement at the UCF annual meeting in June.

I like the action verbs in the proposed Mission statement. As I said on Sunday, it's in alignment with the proposed revision of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Article 2 of the Association Bylaws.. I reread the proposed Article 2 and found these action words and phrases: "work", "learn", "dismantle racism", "transform", "grow", "share", and "build and sustain." If you haven't already, please read the report of the Article 2 Commission at <https://www.uua.org/files/2023-02/article-II-study-report-2021-23.pdf>. Delegates will vote on the proposed Article 2 revision at the 2024 General Assembly. Let me know if you want to be a delegate to this virtual meeting of the UUA in June.

The next few months will be a transition period for our congregation. It's normal to have varied emotions and anxiety in such times. I'm excited that our dedicated, hard-working Search Team identified Minister Leslie Runnels to be our new contract minister beginning in August. Even though I know Rev. Micah Ma is an interim minister who came to UCF to facilitate the work UCF needed to do after Rev. Sally White's retirement and before hiring a new minister, I'm going to miss them. And it seems like we just moved into our new building, and are getting settled into a routine after meeting on Zoom because we had no building and Covid, and here we go again with big changes! But we are ready! As we say these words of Elizabeth Selle Jones together at the end of every service:

We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.

May it be so,
Susan Fetzer

Children & Family Ministries

Children & Family Ministries From Sarah Grenier

What a gift it has been to work with the children in this congregation so far! I've enjoyed getting to know everyone more and to meet some new friends too. We've had a lot of changes happening all at once, so I want to share what's been going on.

In the nursery, we've rearranged it to be a Montessori style class with a separate area for our littlest babies to play safely. I hope to rotate toys and activities to meet the ever-changing needs of our toddlers and babies.

In the RE classroom, we've been sharing joys and concerns, getting to know each other a little better. We've been reading a story depending on each week's theme (e.g. Black History Month, decolonization, Women's History Month). Then, we've had free time to do activities or play together. This is the format we will continue with until we fully implement Spirit Play!

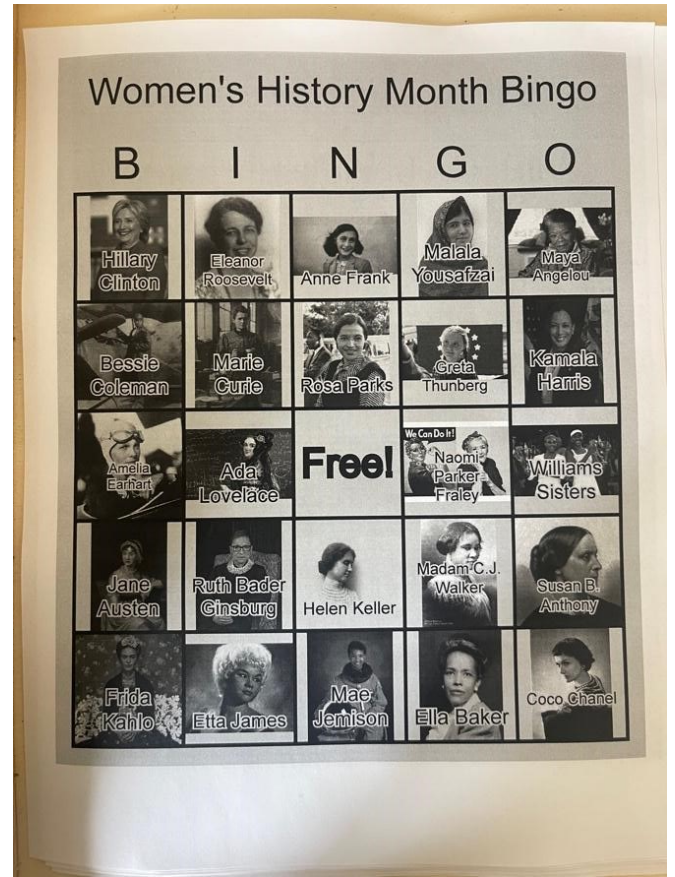
Also, we've decided to move Sunday Funday to coffee hour starting in April! The Children and Family Ministries committee hopes to have the nursery care starting prior to service sometime in this summer too, so be on the lookout for more information!

And now, for April events:

- **Sunday, April 7th, during coffee hour:** Come make seed bombs with us and have a yummy spring-inspired snack for kids during coffee hour! In Children's RE, we will discuss the Golden Rule and Chinese philosophy.
- **Friday, April 12th, 6:30PM:** Game Night! Bring your favorite board game or play one of ours. We will celebrate all April birthdays with a cake!
- **Sunday, April 14th, 10:30AM:** New member service to warmly welcome all our new friends to our congregation. This is a multigenerational service with **no nursery or children's RE.**
- **Sunday, April 21st, 10:30AM:** In Children's RE, we will be writing love letters to a person or thing that we love and want to protect to coincide with the Earth Day service.

Sunday, April 28th, 10:30AM: In RE, we will focus on using our senses to be in the present moment and practice meditation.

Children & Family Ministries



Upcoming Services

April 7: Confucius Says...

Many people are familiar with the jokes that begin "Confucius says..." But what did Confucius really say? And what does a Chinese philosopher who was alive in 500 BCE have to offer people of modern-day Earth?

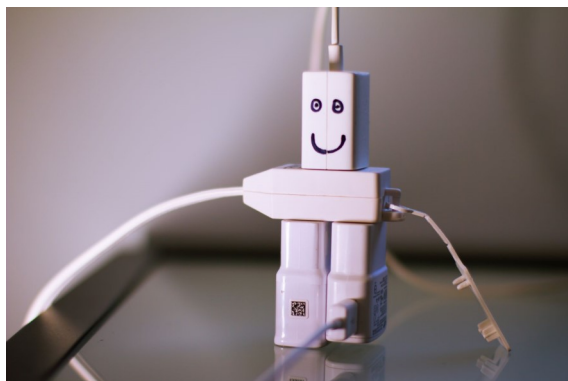


April 14: Come, Come, Whoever You Are

It's a new member ceremony! Those who have signed the membership book sometime in the past 12 months are celebrated in today's multigenerational ceremony as we widen the circle of Unitarian Universalism.

April 21: Earth Day – Protecting What We Love

This will be a special service co-led by Penny Hooper and Harriet Altman, sharing insights from the book *Braiding Sweetgrass*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, and other musings honoring the Earth. This theme will be carried forth with a special story and activity for the younger folks by Sarah Grenier.



April 28: Church, Unplugged

Let's have a "throwback" service today, without all the bells and whistles. No slides, no accompanist, no amplified sound. (Yes, we will still have Zoom, but it may look and sound different.) Come prepared to circle up and experience a worship service that may more closely resemble something from the 1st century rather than the 21st century.

Search Committee Update

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

INTRODUCING OUR NEW MINISTER, LESLIE RUNNELS



We have known from the beginning of Rev. Ma's time with us that they are our interim minister and that their time with UCF ends this July. In June 2023, you approved a Search Committee to find our new, fulltime contract minister. Since this time, the Search Committee, along with the Contract Negotiations team, has worked diligently to locate, interview, research and negotiate a contract and we are **THRILLED** to introduce you to our new minister.

Minister Leslie will begin in August and until she meets us in person, she sends the following hello and an overview of her ministerial record. (There are also hard copies of these on the bulletin board in the Social Hall.)



Hello from Minister Leslie Runnels

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IWNG1yPOvCZWzlt7i0Z6pyBMiaYSobcY/edit>

Ministerial Record Overview for Leslie Runnels

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_DejgEk_InLviWxH_Ze-m13II3UHJF1/edit

Search Committee members, Tom Cullison, Miriam Green, Sarah Grenier, Penny Hooper, and Amy Jones, extend their sincere gratitude for your trust, feedback, and suggestions that you provided to guide this search. By completing the ministerial search survey, participating in the cottage meetings and coffees with the Search Committee, and reaching out to us with questions and suggestions, you directed the Search Committee's work through every step of this process.

Thank you and welcome to Minister Leslie Runnels!!!

Social Justice News



FREE
EVENT

Part of the 2023-2024 Social Justice Film Series
Presented by Unitarian Coastal Fellowship

FILM SCREENING & CONVERSATION

A century after her grandfather claimed his freedom from slavery and the family land, Elsie Herring and her North Carolina community fight the world's largest pork corporation for their freedom to enjoy fresh air, clean water, and a life without the stench of manure. *Watch the trailer: smellofmoneydoc.com*

Thursday
April 11
6:30pm



2900 Bridges St.
Morehead City, NC
28557

Don't forget to share the social media posts with friends and local groups. Let's spread the word!

Agenda Call

Please submit any agenda items for the June 2024 Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship to the Board of Trustees before the Board's April Meeting, on Thursday, April 18, at 5 pm.

Share The Plate

February's Share the Plate was for Family Promise of Carteret County, a program for homeless families in our area. The families are given a place to stay, food, and counseling to help them get back on their feet and find a home. We collected \$517 during that month which will help us to make our quarterly support payment of \$300 with some extra to meet other needs of the program.

April's Share the Plate will be for the Queen Street Heritage Foundation/African American Culture Center. The mission is to support and uplift the heritage of this Beaufort community and surrounding area by preserving history, providing educational resources, and offering social activities for the enrichment of the wider community.

Rev. William Ellison, Sr., Executive Director, will share more information on Sunday, April 7.

Our Little Pantry

People are visiting our outdoor pantry just about every day. That is good news as it says we are meeting a need in our local community by helping people in need to get food when other larger indoor pantries are closed. At this time we are **very short** on the very things people seem to need. So if you can pick up a few extra things when shopping, bring them to church and put your donation in the large wicker basket in the social hall. Here are the items in short supply:

- Any type of ready to eat meals like Hormel Compleates, Canned chili or stew, canned Chef Boyardee pastas etc.
- Cereal
- Boxed milk (available at Dollar General)
- Tuna fish
- Vienna Sausages

News from the Welcoming Congregation Team

The Welcoming Congregation Team is thrilled that we were recently notified by UUA that UCF successfully completed the Five Practices of Welcome Renewal for 2023.

Below is an excerpt of the letter from Rev. Michael J. Crumpler, UUA LGBTQ and Multicultural Director Programs Director.

"Congratulations! You have successfully completed the Five Practices of Welcome Renewal for 2023. Sincere congratulations on your ongoing commitment to LGBTQ+ welcome and inclusion in and beyond Morehead City, NC. It was a pleasure to read about all you have accomplished and the powerful work you have done to ensure that Unitarian Coastal Fellowship is meeting the needs of queer and trans congregants and the wider community.

For more information on all our LGBTQ programs and activities, please visit: www.uua.org/lgbtq to subscribe to the quarterly UPLIFT newsletter, and read the UPLIFT blog. Thanks again for your congregation's life-giving, essential work!"



UCF Members Attend "Love One Another" Symposium at ECU



On Saturday, March 16th, several members of UCF traveled to Greenville to attend the "Love One Another" Symposium, subtitled "Share the Light – A Regional Faith Symposium on LGBTQ Inclusivity". Rev. Micah Ma was one of the Keynote Speakers and they and member Jason Pesch also were leaders of two of the workshops. The Symposium was organized by Mark Rasdorf, Director of the Dr. Jesse R. Peel LGBTQ

Center at ECU. The symposium was excellent with great speakers and workshops, great food and lots of opportunities to network.

Upcoming Events

Red Cross Blood Drive – May 14, 2024

Our next Red Cross Blood Drive at UCF will be held on Tuesday, May 14th from 10 AM to 3 PM in our Social Hall. If you regularly give blood or would like to donate for the first time, please mark your calendar for this event. You can go ahead and schedule your appointment [HERE](#).

We would love to get 30 pints of blood, which would give us \$300 to spend on something for our church! Giving blood is easy and will allow you to possibly save a life! There is always a great need for blood donations in our area.



Upcoming Events

Growing our Fellowship with New Members! Mark April 14 on your Calendar.

The Spring UU 101 Classes were offered March 3, 10, and 17, following the Sunday services. Many thanks to Rev. Ma for leading the first and third classes and to Maratha Kenworthy for facilitating the second class. The Membership Committee was very happy to have between 10 and 15 people attending each class to learn more about our Unitarian Universalist Faith and the way our UCF Committees work to do our part in the shared ministry of our congregation. Following the third class, we were pleased to welcome into membership the following friends: Sandy Parker, Devin and Nicole Merkley (infant son, Payson), Christopher Yost, and Heather Woodward. If you are interested in changing your status from Friend to Member, please see Rev Ma, Martha Kenworthy, or Penny Hooper and we will make sure you can "sign the book"!

At our service on **Sunday, April 14**, we will have a special ceremony to present to the Congregation all the new Members from the UU 101 classes last October, plus this classes in March, and any others who have decided to join. You will also be seeing their Photos and Bios in future Coastlines and on the new Member Photo Board above the drinking fountain in the Sanctuary Vestibule. Please try to make these new Members and all new Visitors and Friends feel very welcome!

In a clockwise direction, beginning with Rev. Micah Ma, Heather Woodward, Christopher Yost, Nicole and Devin Merkley with Payson, Melvin Cooper, Holly Rogers, Sandy Parker, and Mark Hooper. Photo taken by Penny Hooper.



Upcoming Events

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

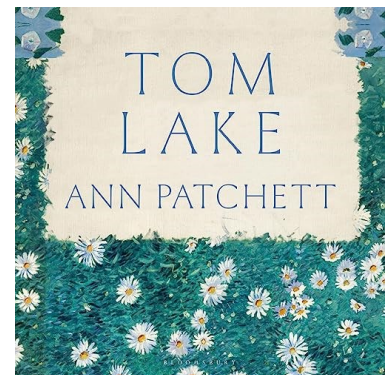
The Mental Health Family Support Group is an opportunity to share experiences and challenges of having family members or friends who live with mental illness. The Mental Health Family Support Group will be meeting on Fridays on Zoom from 1:45 to 3:15. If you would like to join these meetings or would like more information, please email: landfall2@mindspring.com



UCF Book Club April 15 at 4pm. SBW

Please join us at the UCF Book Club in April to discuss the book "Tom Lake" by Ann Patchett. We meet on the 3rd Monday every month in the Sally B White Center.

"Tom Lake" is not a love story in the conventional sense, but it is a love story between a woman and her daughters, her life, her husband and her past. For info: ldybg223@aol.com. All welcome.



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. Email landfall2@mindspring.com to be sent the Zoom link to join us!

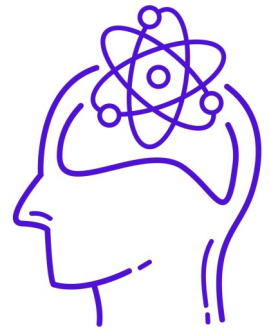


Upcoming Events Cont.

Philosophy in the Afternoon

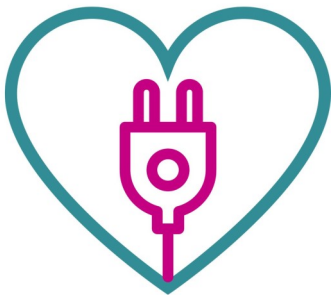
Philosophy in the Afternoon is still waiting for your input and ideas on topics that affect us as individuals as well as a society...join us for discussing the ultimately unknowable. We'll be in the Social Hall at 4:30 pm on Wednesday, April 3; please come and join us!

Questions of not a philosophical nature? Contact Holly: hollyer54@yahoo.com



VESPERS....Just What Is It? April 3 & April 17

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!

Mental Health Wellness Support Group (NEW)

This support group will begin on April 16 (3rd Tuesday of the month) - a monthly meeting at 7:00pm in the Sally B. White Building. This mental health wellness support group is for people with significant mental health challenges and/or struggles with substance abuse, to facilitate self-empowerment and recovery.

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. This will make it easier to "rally the troops" when someone's in need!

April Events

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

The UCF Team

Board of Trustees

President: Susan Fetzer sgfetzer@gmail.com

Vice President: Mark Hooper mhooper9@ec.rr.com

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

Children & Family Ministries Committee

Sarah Grenier sgrenier@ucfnc.org and

Laura Prestwich laura.prestwich@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 joelsx@yahoo.com

Membership Penny Hooper pjhooper@ec.rr.com and

Martha Kenworthy martha.kenworthy@gmail.com

Social Justice Harriet Altman harrietaltman@icloud.com and

Barb Thomas bsthomas2@gmail.com

Green Sanctuary Penny Hooper pjhooper@ec.rr.com

Harriet Altman (harrietaltman@icloud.com)

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

Adult Spiritual Enrichment Holly Rogers hollyer54@yahoo.com



Contact Us!

252.240.2283

UNITARIAN COASTAL FELLOWSHIP P. O. Box 425 Morehead City, NC 28557