

Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



December 2017

A note from the minister

One of our five-year goals as a congregation is to strengthen our bonds of fellowship. In a world where our lives are busy and our congregation is also busy, it is easy to get overwhelmed and lost. Often when we get overwhelmed we withdraw from the things we need the most. Often, the needs of a congregation seem so demanding that members stay away when they can't "pitch in" the way they would like to. They feel guilty about just coming to services and, for a while, just feeding their spirits. They drift away.

Of course, your Fellowship needs your energy and support. At the same time, your Fellowship is here to give you energy and support when you need it. This balance between giving and receiving is something we all wrestle with. And it's something we all need to learn to talk about.

One way we can do that is by intentionally keeping in contact and asking one another how we're doing. At the Ministerial Relations Committee, the Caring Circle, the Membership Committee and the Board, I have floated the idea of working with you folks to create a program we might call "Contact Ministry." The purpose of that program would be for us to train those of us who are willing to be Contact Ministers. Contact Ministers would intentionally keep in touch with a small number of individuals in the congregation and intentionally have conversations with them about how they are doing, how they are taking care of themselves, how the Fellowship is feeding their spirits and how they might like to give back as they are able.

For a Contact Ministry program to be effective, we will have to create it together. On Monday, December 11, at 7 p.m., we will have an initial planning meeting to talk about what a Contact Ministry program might look like for us. I hope many of you will want to join this conversation. I think it might be a great way for us to pursue our goal of "strengthening our bond of fellowship."

Yours in the journey,

Rev. Bryan Jessup



Hanukkah Concert

A concert of "Songs the Immigrants Brought Us" will take place on Saturday, December 16, at 7 p.m. at the Fellowship. Rabbi Les Scharnberg will present a program of songs from immigrants that speak of their immigrant experience and the justice they have searched for in this country. A \$10 donation is requested but no one will be turned away.

Inside

Page 2: People

Art & Aesthetics

Council of Committees

Page 3: RE

Page 4: RE cont.

Teacher opening

Non-monetary donations

Page 5: Work Party

Work Party addendum

Page 6: Preparing for college

Mah Jongg anyone

Transportation talk

Page 7: Regional Assembly

Race - Power of Illusion

Page 8: Classified

Christmas dinner

Assistant Editor

The newsletter is a key communications channel for the Fellowship. I've been the editor for a couple of years now and there have been times when my schedule and the newsletter schedule have not meshed. It would be very useful to have someone who could back up the editor in those cases when I'm not really available to do it. I will provide the software we use (sorry, PC only) and show you how to use it and the procedures for laying out the newsletter.

Stephen Sottong

People

Congratulations to **Jackie Wales**, who walked away with another prize in the recent Fortuna Camera Club competition, for her photo entitled “Bald Hills Road.”

Good strong, positive healing energy to **Bonnie Mesinger**, who recently had a second hip replacement.

Debi Cooper wrote: wanted to thank my beloved community for the warm welcome I received after being gone in SF for a few short months. I am enjoying my time in the city and yet I miss your smiling faces. The new storage shed looks great and I was thrilled to hear there was a work party of 40 people to make our sanctuary shine.

Congratulations to new member **Kathy Lerner** for returning to painting, after a move. Her art is showing this month at HUUF.

Welcome home from New York to **Sue Mossman**.

Congratulations to **Dave Troxel**, starting a new job at Arcata House.

Many happy returns to **Ursula Osborne** on her 90th birthday.

Bill Hansel has two more post-op visits to go at Stanford. His symptoms have not changed since the two surgeries. He is getting Home Health care for a few weeks. We hope the cervical collar will come off soon. It resembles a piece of medieval armor and is most uncomfortable.

Jean Munsee writes: Jack has been recently been hospitalized for pneumonia. He is under Hospice care now and has good days and bad. The bad days are those in which he simply sleeps for extended periods. In some ways, our lives are like a roller coaster ride right now, but we’re hanging on and hanging in. It’s heartening to hear that people are thinking of us.

Fred Mazie writes: I would like to thank **Jeanne Chapin** for going out of her way to drive me home every Sunday. I think she is a caring person who is willing to offer assistance wherever needed.

Sylvia Shaw

Art and Aesthetics

Art: The current art display is that of Kathy Mason Lerner. Kathy and her husband are new members at HUUF. Kathy has shown her work in galleries from Chicago and Florida to Burbank and St. Helena. We get to enjoy her paintings throughout the Holidays.

Aesthetics: In September representatives of various committees met to discuss use and arrangement of permanent and event equipment for regular days and for Sunday mornings. Represented were committee members of Aesthetics, Greeters, Coffee to drink and to buy, Membership, Social Action, Children’s Religious Education and The Clipboards. The groups have been experimenting with different ideas. If you have feedback, contact me at clrau@sbcglobal.net.

Cheryl Rau



Council of Committees gathering in January

There will be a Council of Committees gathering at a time and date in January yet to be determined. The topics for discussion will include improving communication between committees; developing leaders; contact ministry, and ways to improve our current governance structure. Exciting topics? You betcha. What could be a better evening than being surrounded by your loving Unitarian friends and discussing communications, leadership and governance. Seriously, we hope all committee members and any other members will help make this a productive gathering. We promise to keep it to two hours at the most.

Greg Blomstrom, Co-president.

Religious Education

Cultivating hope through religious education

“Hope” is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops - at all -

Emily Dickinson (UU poet)

As December begins, I invite you to reflect upon the ways in which you and your family gave thanks during the Harvest Season. Did the table card blessings allow you to be mindful about eating? Did you express your gratitude aloud? For those of you participating in a Soul Matters circle, how did the contemplation of abundance shift your internal experience?

This month we will explore what it means to be a people of hope. Nearly every winter holiday contains a seed of hope: the birth of a child, the return of the light, the miraculous rededication of one’s holy temple. These seeds live in stories. What story of hope allowed you to endure through a cold, scarce season of your life? I’d like to begin utilizing these monthly articles to offer a spiritual practice for your family to consider. I’d love to hear about your experience if you choose to experiment with any of these practices.

December practice ideas:

Mealtime ritual: Begin or continue a mealtime ritual of expressing gratitude. This can be as simple as holding hands and each person expressing one sentiment of gratitude, or try expressing one thing you appreciate about the person to your left. Read one of the blessings from our November handout on mealtime blessings. Sing the call and response song Bryan taught us.

We Give Thanks

by Wendy Luella Perkins

Oh, we give thanks for this precious day,
For all gathered here, and those far away;
For this time we share with love and care,
Oh, we give thanks for this precious day.
(www.youtube.com/watch?v=AzbqW8TNa5A)



Share stories of hope: Choose one night this month or one night each week to read or tell stories of hope. Share stories from your own experience or consider interviewing an extended family member or friend about a story of hope to bring back to a mealtime conversation.

Celebrate Chalica: Consider attending the first two Sundays of December to learn about the UU winter holiday, Chalica. Pick a week in December to light a candle every night (perhaps as part of your mealtime ritual), recite one principle for seven days and discuss one way you put that UU belief into action.

RE cont.

RE calendar

December 3: Exploration Sunday: Seeds of Hope

Explore our seven UU principles. Contemplate how each can be put into action in preparation for Chalica.

December 10: Intergenerational Chalica service: Light of Hope

All ages are invited to participate in the service. Childcare will be provided in the nursery.

December 17: Exploration Sunday: Birds of Hope

Pre - 2: We will read an inspiring story of hope then tell and illustrate our own stories of hope.

3-8: We will tell stories of hope, then have a Solstice burning ritual to contemplate what we'd like to release.

December 24: Intergenerational Christmas Eve Service

December 31: Friendship Sunday

Come play games with your Fellowship friends.

Teen Group: The Teens will work on their contribution to the December 10 Chalica service and continue their work on the Coming of Age program. Meeting times will be communicated via email. Feel free to contact Kit at kitestingsflying@gmail.com.

Teacher opening

One of our R.E. teachers, Lorraine, will be graduating in December and has accepted a job out of the area. We greatly appreciate her service and wish her well. This means we have an opening on our teaching team beginning in January. Responsibilities include teaching the first and third Sunday of the month, as well as attending a meeting at 9 a.m. on the first Sunday. Teachers receive a \$100 taxed stipend per month. The age level is flexible depending on the applicant's interest and strengths. If you'd like to apply for the position contact me at 498-3564 or t_keslin@hotmail.com. It's an opportunity to develop relationships with the families of our congregation and to deepen your own spiritual practice.

Therese FitzMaurice, ADRE

HUUF – Non-Monetary Donation Policy (proposed)

Policy established by HUUF Board on ____

It is the policy of HUUF that all donations of tangible property must be pre-approved.

The appropriate committee will decide whether to grant approval (not just a member of the committee), before the donation is accepted. When there is no appropriate committee, aesthetics and or the board will make the decision. Examples: A stack of plates needs approval of the Kitchen Committee. Plants or garden sculpture approval by Grounds. Craft items by Religious Exploration, etc.

Factors to be considered in approving the acceptance of donations:

Is the item needed or wanted?

What is the condition of the item? Will it need to be restored and at what cost?

Is it aesthetic.

Is there any on-going cost to having or maintaining the item?

Is the item intended to last "forever" and therefore is there an accompanying "endowment" to maintain the item.

All tangible items donated to the Fellowship can either be retained by the Fellowship or disposed of when the item(s) are no longer needed or wanted. Disposal could include sale, recycling, donation or trashing – or any other means of disposal that is deemed appropriate.

Greg Blomstrom

Work Party

The Building Maintenance Work Party on November 4 was fun and productive. I'd like to thank the following participants:

Susan Allen, Terry Uyeki, and Erica and Jacob Alston for window washing and light well cleaning.

Carl Thomas for sanding and repainting the wall in the Men's Room.

Chip Sharp and Tommy Fitzmaurice for converting more of our sanctuary lighting from fluorescent to LED.

Reverend Bryan Jessup for roving assistance, moral and spiritual support, and for staying late to clean the kitchen, vacuum and mop the sanctuary floor.

Nancy Cook, Jo Ann Huffman and Kelly Keen for the amazing snacks.

Sylvia Shaw, Ann King, Judy Rishel, Bob, Allison, Sydney and Darby Bronkall for cleaning and repairing all 90-plus sanctuary folding chairs.

John Schaefer and Greg Blomstrom for removing old bird nests and for scrubbing and taping over wall vents in preparation for pressure washing the buildings.

Therese, Thomas and Cadence Fitzmaurice, and Frances Woody for cleaning windows and mopping up water from the pressure washing in the CARE Building.

Jo Weisgerber, Stephen Underwood and Scott Allen for spraying high-pressure water all over everything. Some even got on the buildings.

Berti Welty for cleaning up the kitchen yard and general troubleshooting and assistance.

Dave Woody for helping with chairs and documenting the event with his camera.

Thea Gast, Terry Uyeki, Kelly Keen, Cathy Cook (a visiting friend of Sylvia and Kate) and Kate McClain for cleaning the offices.

And a special thanks to Kate McClain for publicizing the work party and contacting and encouraging participation. Her infectious enthusiasm guaranteed a great turnout.



Scott Allen

Work Party addendum

We accomplished a lot of outdoor work on November 4 to make our grounds more beautiful and welcoming. We were especially fortunate to have the help of six California Conservation Corps volunteers. Valerie Gizinski led the work and sends her thanks to the following folks:

Karen Underwood for helping with overall planning and logistics. She organized CCC volunteers and others to weed, add soil and cordon off a bare, weedy area of lawn at the east end the RE garden. Lastly, she and CCC helpers prepared several beds for winter by covering them with cardboard and lots of mulch.

Stephen Underwood for seeding and fertilizing the refurbished RE lawn area.

Carilyn Goldammer for demonstrating planting techniques and overseeing the planting by RE families of numerous native wildflowers into the meadow area. The wildflowers were planted by Michelle Hasting and her children Abby, Chris, and Alexander Hasting-Tharp; and Zoe Moor, Therese Keslin, Cadence FitzMaurice and Frances Woody.

Judy Rishel for raking up all the maple leaves on the lawn between our two buildings, and hauling them to the compost area.

Jo Weisgerber for loaning her and Berti's mower and trailer to CCC volunteers, and showing them how to run it; we transported a heckuva' lot of mulch that way. And for loaning their chipper, too, and chipping a lot of the slash at the northwest end of our property.

Mike Kimmel for organizing the CCC and others to move the little (but heavy) wooden home to a playful destination for families; it is nestled under the alders at the northwest end of our new sidewalk.

Hart Mendenhall for planting and trimming in the RE Garden.

Valerie Rose

Preparing for college

Dr. Corliss Bennett-McBride, director of HSU's Cultural Centers for Academic Excellence, will provide a two-hour motivational seminar for students, parents, teachers and allies to youth to help students prepare to attend college. The presentation is Monday evening, December 11, 6-8 p.m. at HUUF. Middle school and high school students are invited to attend.

Widely known, Dr. Bennett brings a wealth of professional and educational expertise in leading culturally oriented student services programs. She will address local students aspiring to attend college, bringing with her a lifelong commitment to supporting HSU students with networks blending cultural, community and academic engagement.

She has worked in educational institutions at numerous levels and in a variety of capacities, including recruitment, pre-college guidance counseling, teaching, and providing educational and motivational seminars to parents, students, and professional staff.

For the last 17 years, she has served as Director of the Center for Black Cultural and Student Affairs (CBCSA) at the University of Southern California (USC). In addition to working with several departments within student affairs, Dr. Bennett-McBride prides herself for collaborating closely with students, alumni, staff, and faculty and university departments across the campus community.

Before CBCSA, Dr. Bennett-McBride served seven years in undergraduate admissions and pre-college outreach programs at USC and Occidental College, as well as teaching English and Communications for the Upward Bound Program at Harvey Mudd College. She also spent four years as a middle school teacher in Los Angeles.

Salaam,

Rev. Jamila Tharp



Deadline info

Deadline for the **January 2018** issue of the newsletter is Wednesday, **December 20** at 5 p.m. Send committee reports and articles to newsletter@huuf.org (email only).

While many file formats are acceptable, .doc, .docx, .rtf and text are preferred, and .pdf and .pages cannot be used. Late submissions are not accepted without prior approval.

Stephen Sottong, editor

CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ads are 10¢ per word. Send your check to the HUUF office and the text of your ad to newsletter@huuf.org (email only).

Mah Jongg anyone?

We're looking to form a Mah Jongg class after the holidays. Two members have expressed interest, but we need at least five. The game takes some time and commitment to learn, but is not nearly as difficult as Bridge. Email Fry if you are interested, wlhndlr@gmail.com, and suggest time and day of the week that would work for you (not weekend). Great for the brain, great for laughs.

Marcia Wolhandler

Transportation talk

Football, the World Series, and midterm elections have saturated the news with statistics. Let's not focus on numbers of rides this month. Who needs to know? Let's talk about people. I had the pleasure of driving Linda, her daughter, and Zoe one day. My apologies to Zoe. I wrote that she was three. Zoe is FOUR. Children under the age of eight are required to ride in an easily installed car or booster seat. Two snaps and a buckle or two, and done. Way back in the day, we would just lay the baby on the front seat and put your arm over the baby when coming to a stop sign. To this day my right arm is on automatic reflex and extends across the front seat when a stop is coming up. Use child and adult restraints and drive safely. (I can't resist...87 rides this time and a big thank you to all the drivers.)

Nancy Cook

Regional Assembly

The Pacific Western Regional Unitarian Universalist Assembly takes place April 27-29, 2018, at the Doubletree Hotel in Portland, Oregon. The theme of the conference is “Stories of Hope, Courage, Resistance and Resilience.” This regional conference should be dynamite. Keynote speaker is Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, the first Indian-American woman to be elected to Congress. Prior to her election she was an immigration and labor activist in Seattle. The Sunday worship speaker is the Rev. Dr. William Barber, well known for starting the “Moral Mondays” protests. He’s a social justice work trainer of religious leaders from many denominations, an NAACP leader, and an author. In addition, The Rev. Susan Frederick Gray, newly elected president of the UUA, will share her vision of the future of the UUA. On Friday before the conference, a workshop for religious professionals on multi-generational, multi-cultural worship will be offered.

Conferences like this are open to all Unitarian Universalists. Imagine gathering with hundreds of UUs. It is powerful. Information about the conference can be found at the UUA Pacific Western Regional web site, www.uua.org/pacific-western. Further details and registration information will be available in December.

The 2018 national UUA General Assembly will be held in Kansas City, Missouri, June 20-24. Too far away? The 2019 UUA General Assembly will be in Spokane, Washington, June 19-23.

Berti Welty

Race - The Power of An Illusion

Please join us on January 22, 29 and February 5 from 6 - 8 p.m. at HUUF to watch the 3 part documentary, *Race - The Power of An Illusion*. Afterward, we will participate in small circle reflection and discussion. Our goal for showing this documentary is to counter racism and to build a more racially just and sustainable community. We welcome community members, HSU students, faculty and teachers to join us.

The division of the world’s peoples into distinct groups - “red,” “black,” “white” or “yellow” has become so deeply embedded in our psyches, so widely accepted, many would promptly dismiss as crazy any suggestion of its falsity. Yet, that’s exactly what this provocative, new three-hour series by California Newsreel claims. *Race - The Power of an Illusion* questions the very idea of race as innate biology, suggesting that a belief in inborn racial difference is no more sound than believing that the sun revolves around the earth.

Yet race still matters. Just because race doesn’t exist in biology doesn’t mean it isn’t very real, helping shape life chances and opportunities.

On January 22, Episode 1- “The Difference Between Us,” examines the contemporary science, including genetics, that challenges our common sense assumptions that human beings can be bundled into three or four fundamentally different groups according to their physical traits.

On January 29, Episode 2- “The Story We Tell,” uncovers the roots of the race concept in North America, the nineteenth century science that legitimated it, and how it came to be held so fiercely in the western imagination. The episode is an eye-opening tale of how race served to rationalize, even justify, American social inequalities as “natural.”

On February 5, Episode 3- “The House We Live In,” asks: If race is not biology, what is it? This episode uncovers how race resides not in nature but in politics, economics and culture. It reveals how our social institutions “make” race by disproportionately channeling resources, power, status and wealth to white people.

By asking what is this thing called ‘race,’ a question so basic it is rarely voiced, *Race - The Power of an Illusion* helps set the terms that any further discussion of race must first take into account. Ideal for human biology, anthropology, sociology, American history, American studies, and cultural studies.

For further information about the documentary, please view <http://newsreel.org/video/race-the-power-of-an-illusion>.

Please pass this invitation on to whoever you think might be interested in joining us, in encouraging educational learning and meaningful reflection on the topic of race.

Rev. Jamila Tharp



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CLASSIFIED ADS

UU Ex-PCVs: Let's get together and tell our Peace Corps stories. Contact John Schaefer at 825-9533.

Wanted: Someone to mow and weed-whip the property I manage with a lithium-powered mower and weed whip on a 1/4 acre property in Arcata. Please contact Joanna Welch at jfwelch22@gmail.com

Christmas Dinner at the Fellowship

Our festive Fellowship meal will take place on Monday, Christmas Day, December 25, at 2 p.m. Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells. Are you coming to dinner? No need to slave away all day, cooking. Just bring yourselves and a dish or two to share at our Holiday Feast. All are welcome at the table. The main omnivore course will be lamb. We'll need someone to bring a Vegan and/or Vegetarian main dish. If you know you are coming, please let me know what dish(es) you plan to bring and the number in your party. Hopefully we'll have someone come who can play the piano as we sing our favorite holiday songs. Assistance with decorations, set-up, and clean-up will be gratefully accepted. 476-0654 or bertijo@humboldt1.com

Berti Welty