

Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



Reflection:

January 2024

To the Beloved HUUF Community~

*“You can't lead the people if you don't love the people.
You can't save the people if you don't serve the people.” - Cornel West*

Ahh, the Gregorian New Year – time to re-up those gym memberships, eschew all manner of salt, sugar, flavor or fat, and adhere to some stringent guidelines as we once again endeavor to become a mythic version of ourselves in the year to come. Time for some culturally sanctioned “tough love” to whip us into shape. Even though history has shown us, these types of stalwart measures rarely see us into the long-term transformation we aspire to, we turn to them, time and again, convinced that this year will be the one for heroic measures to prevail.

The unconscious messaging we absorb living in a culture deeply devoted to dominance, hierarchy, power, and war. “Battle speak” unwittingly peppers our speech, inserts itself in our day-to-day thoughts and language. “Bite the bullet”, “push through the pain”, “toughen up”, even seemingly banal words such as “deadline” all come to our modern-day lexicon by way of military parlance. In a country where half of our federal discretionary spending goes to our armed forces, it stands to reason our collective thinking might be disproportionately given over to the discourse of warfare.

Even our most righteous causes come under this sway: how we must “fight climate change” or “beat back the far right” or “combat racism”, all contain the seeds of othering so common in the spaces we are attempting to make change. Indeed, even the inimitable Arundhati Roy talks about “laying siege” to empire. But it’s worth noting the tools she recommends bear little resemblance to the instruments of war. In fact, she advises arming ourselves with music, the making of art, the telling of stories, the cultivation of joy: the implements of loving, human relationship, tools of connection and care.

As we look to another year ahead, and contemplate what change might mean for us, our communities, and this one wild life we share, may we be mindful of the tools and ideas we wield. Rather than narrowing our focus upon what to eradicate, may we be called to devote ourselves to all we wish to see grow. Rather than being magnetically drawn to the siren song of what is going astonishingly wrong in this

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Children and Families (RE):

Sundays at 11 am - Our wonderful RE staff continues to provide meaningful engagement in the form of games, crafts, songs, sharing time, stories and outdoor play to our youth, grades Pre-K-5, during Sunday services. Nursery Care is also available for our babies and toddlers. Please, see this month's service descriptions for more details.



Bellamy Devine continues on as our Teen and Tween Coordinator. Join us for offerings for the teen and tween set the first and third Sundays of the month.

This month, we'll be exploring the topic of "Liberating Love" as part of our ongoing learning through the Soul Matters curriculum.

Board Report

Our meeting on December 12 began with an update by Rev. Tom Lewis on his involvement with the California Care Force. Tom is still hoping to get at least 20-30 volunteers from HUUF to join him for a two-day event next July 2024 providing free dentistry and eye care. Volunteers would be needed to help unload and help set up equipment, prepare and serve food to the other volunteers and medical staff, sign in people and escort them to the various locations for health providers, and to help to break down and reload equipment after the event has ended. Tom was pleased with a meeting with local dentists, who were very supportive. He is presently trying to secure a venue location; the Adorni Center looks promising. Bridgette Garuti is working to set up a GoFundMe account with the Faithy APP through the UUA to help get monetary donations, and Pat McCutcheon is helping Tom write an article for The World publication, which will explain and generate interest in this event. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

The Board will host a half-day retreat in January with the Leadership team, the Ministerial Relations Committee, and others to take stock of where HUUF is and to set goals for this coming year. Members are encouraged to get in touch with the Board with any ideas or concerns that they would like for us to address. In March we will have our annual congregational meeting to elect new Board members. Please let Sylvia Shaw know if you want to be considered for this opportunity. We are looking at having a Special Congregational Meeting next September to solicit member feedback on whether we should continue with the current ministry team model. This Fellowship has to be a reflection of all of our voices, not just the decisions made by those on the Board.

Our next Board meeting is scheduled as an in-person meeting in the sanctuary on **January 16**, at 7 p.m. This will be a week later in the month than is usual, due to the holidays. A reminder that the first 30 minutes of every meeting are reserved for HUUF members wishing to address the Board and the Leadership Team.

Respectfully submitted by Chris Chapin, Board Secretary

Council of Chairs

Hope you love the rain as much as I do. We skipped this month's Council of Chairs meeting in preparation for the New Year. I'm inviting all Chairs to participate in the **January 13** grounds work party followed by a potluck at 1 p.m. This will give us all an opportunity to get together in person again in fellowship and encourage others to get involved as well.

I'm still planning on the zoom meeting Tuesday night **January 23** and will send a reminder and link closer to the date.

Have a blessed Holiday season, Happy Chalica!

Montana

Reflection (cont.)

world, may we be called to the small, shining beacons where things are being slowly made right. May we actively seek out the tiny pockets of brilliance and beauty in those that frustrate and confound us. May we be more eager to lift up than to tear down.

May we gradually rewire our thinking, re-pattern our language as we walk the path of transformation together: from the lingo of combat to the fierce vernacular of deep compassion and liberating love.

Yours in grace & gratitude,
Your Shared Ministry Team,

Amy Day & Bridgette Garuti

Ingathering Service and Potluck

On **January 14** we celebrate members who joined us in 2023. There are several folks who joined our community last year, and we are lucky to see our Fellowship grow. Some have been in Humboldt for years and some only months. Join us to find out more about them and a reminder of what our covenant and membership is all about. Bring your favorite dish, one that makes you smile, and stay after for a potluck with our beloved community.

Membership Committee - Rebekah Paez

Coffee House - A Talent Showcase

Calling all performers! One of our newest members, Dennis McGetrick, has brought his gift of Coffee House to us. This talent showcase will be a great opportunity to see one another shine, and also raise money for the Fellowship. Please visit our website to sign up for a slot in the performance line and/or to donate baked goods or salty treats for our concessions. We will be selling these treats and drinks for fundraising. Invite your friends to this fun and easy-going time together.

Rebekah Paez



Happy New Year Fellow Members

I'm sure some of you have noticed the hallway bulletin boards looking different. I wanted to bring more attention to our HUUF community. Now you can find more information about who we are and how we do things. We still have our UU in the News and a place to put events and resources from the wider community. I hope that you will look at what's coming up and sign up to be involved in the many offerings and opportunities HUUF provides. Leave thank-yous to people you see committing random acts of kindness, or when you notice one another doing the work it takes to have a beloved community. Sign up to help wash dishes after Sunday service, bring flowers, set up chairs. These little things make a big difference. Thank you for engaging with this space, giving your time and attention.

Rebekah Paez



Sunday Services

Sunday, January 7 – 11 a.m.

Liberating Love – Josh Charles and Margy Emerson

“Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic.” – Martin Luther King Jr.

In small groups, using our deep listening guidelines, we will discuss liberating love. The following questions are offered as possible springboards for conversation: Do you have a practice that cultivates love toward yourself and others? How can love generate anger, and how can anger be used in the service of love? Have you ever been transformed by someone’s unconditional love for you, and has your love transformed someone?

As always with small groups, the underlying topic is deep listening, one of the truest forms of love.

Sunday, January 14 – 11 a.m.

Ingathering and Potluck

Our Fellowship has grown! Let’s take time to celebrate the new faces we have been seeing and friends we have been making. Led by the Membership Committee, our time together will center on our most recent members by welcoming them into the congregation and remembering our covenant. Please bring a favorite dish to share for potluck afterward.

Sunday, January 21 – 11 a.m.

Transforming through Sacred Medicine – Marissa Celeste, Danielle Daniel

Better access to sacred plant medicines is giving us new tools to navigate our increasingly complex modern world. Guest speaker Marissa Celeste will discuss how she is engaging with ancient traditions and how passing this gateway can affect our lives in the best way. Guest speaker Danielle Daniel will share about her work locally to decriminalize these medicines leading to safer access to them for everyone.

January 28 – 11 a.m.

Stone Soup Sunday – Amy Day

Join us for this multigenerational celebration of community and all the gifts we each bring to the collective. In partnership with Arcata House, we will use a portion of our time to prepare meals for those experiencing homelessness in our region. We will send them off with a burbling and delicious pot of “stone soup” made from the ingredients that we bring forth. Bring an offering of chopped vegetables – from your own garden, farm-share, or your neighborhood produce section – to contribute to this sacred and communal feast. We will share stories and songs and sit down to break bread together. Let service be our prayer.



Redwood Coast CUUPS presents Imbolc

Imbolc, also known as Candlemas and the Feast of Brigid, Friday, **February 2**, 6:00pm at HUUF. Ritual will be led by Solas Dorcha, Archdruid of the Druids of the Tuatha De' Danann. Join us for songs, crafts, and legends of Brigid as both Goddess and Saint. There will be stories from the Archdruid's visit to Ireland. Tonight we honor Brigid and invite her to join us as we tend her flame and welcome the coming Spring. A festive potluck will follow.

Sunday Sales

We continue our fundraising efforts every Sunday with Equal Exchange products and books for sale. Equal Exchange's mission is to build long-term trade partnerships that are economically just and environmentally sound, to foster mutually beneficial relationships between farmers and consumers and to demonstrate the contribution of worker co-operatives and Fair Trade to a more equitable, democratic and sustainable world. Their mission aligns with our values, so we encourage you to engage with this effort knowing that your dollars are well spent. These treats and books make great gifts and are perfect for the dark winter nights. In addition to chocolate bars, we have hot cocoa mix, both regular and maple flavor, various teas, ground coffee, dried mangos, pecans, and olive oil. Thank you in advance for supporting our community and the global community as well.

Membership Committee - Rebekah Paez - Membership Director

Holiday potlucks

Memories are made when we gather around the table!

A heartfelt thanks to Berti Welty for reviving the bygone but beloved Holiday Potluck Dinners.

Berti hosted Potlucks in both November and December that were well attended and wonderfully delicious. Sharing a meal, breaking bread together, is a profound and unifying experience that builds community.

Thank you Berti, and thanks to the many hands that helped with set up, clean up and all other contributions needed to bring back this beloved HUUF tradition.

Bridgette Garuti



Song Circles at the Fellowship

“Group singing is a powerful catalyst for social change and community building” ~ Maggie Mcknight

Community song circles welcome all voices, bringing together people who love to sing, regardless of experience. Song circles don't focus on performing for an audience; instead, Maggie teaches songs from a variety of traditions by call-and-response, and we sing for the joy of creating something beautiful together in the moment. Group singing is a powerful way of connecting with each other, and with something deep within ourselves, and the music we make as we support each other through song calls forth the singing voice that is every human's birthright.

As part of the Fellowship's new Music Ministry program, we'd like to encourage your participation in these monthly song circles led by Maggie Mcknight. Join one another at the Fellowship on the first and third Friday of each month from 4 - 5:30pm. This transformative experience is open to all. Join us in song for the launch of this new twice monthly offering on Friday, **January 5**, 4 - 5:30, in person at the Fellowship.

Bridgette Garuti

Garden Notes

Gardening often takes place at HUUF in between Grounds Work parties, when schedules don't match up with once-monthly Saturday events, or when there's a lengthy or urgent task to perform. Keeping plants watered can be a tough task during the summer drought period, and with so few volunteers available, automating our watering has been one such urgency. Berti and Jo installed an amazing system years ago when they planted the CARE garden we all enjoy. But we didn't have a watering line to the nursery bed. So on a weekday a few months back, Pat, my wonderful partner, dug a trench along the edge of the lawn between the two main buildings, plowing with great difficulty through lots of cobble. Then Berti, aided by her wonderful partner Jo, bored a mini tunnel under the walkway to the bed next to the nursery room in the main building. Now we have a way to keep our azalea, ginger and deer fern lush and happy through the summer. And just a few weeks ago, Lynne Ables, my gardening mentor, came on a weekday to trim back the lovely red monkeyflower in our sand bed that had gotten rangy and floppy. Voila! With some expert cuts, it was ready for shapely new growth. We have a lot of unsung heroes to thank for our beautiful, nurturing landscape.

Our next Grounds Work Party is scheduled for Saturday, **January 13**, from 10 am to 1 pm. Please join us and join our dedicated group of nature lovers and gardeners. We have fun along with beautifying our grounds.

Valerie Gizinski

FINDING ELIM

By Dave Nelson



I THINK WE'RE **ALL** HAPPY ABOUT THE RAIN, BUT DO THE FROGS HAVE TO BE SO VOCAL ABOUT IT?

Climate Action Campaign (CAC) News

In the recent months, there have been climate related developments that have been disappointing and others that have been encouraging. At the local level, the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) has yet to adopt a qualified climate action plan (CAP). CAC has been writing to the BOS and tabling on the urgent need to adopt one, and we will continue to do so because the County must adopt a qualified CAP by March 1, 2024 in order to qualify as an applicant for an implementation grant from the Inflation Reduction Act, and notice of intent to apply is due February 1, 2024.

We applaud the BOS for their letter of support for SB 252, the Fossil Fuel Divestment Act, to the California State Association of Counties and the Rural County Representatives of California. SB 252 would prohibit CalPERS and CalSTRS, the state's two major public employee pension funds from making new investments in fossil fuel exploration and expansion and liquidate all such investments by 2030.

At the state level, SB 252 failed to pass the legislature and has become a two-year bill. CAC has been and will continue contacting our state legislators to support this bill. CAC member, John Schaefer, has been contacting the offices of Senator Mike McGuire and Assemblyman Jim Wood for CAC to meet with either the legislators or their staff on strategies that would result in getting stronger and tougher climate legislation passed and signed by the governor.

On the plus side, Governor Newsom did sign SB 253 and SB 261 this year. Taken together, these bills will mandate that companies over \$1 billion and similarly sized financial institutions that do business in California disclose their carbon emissions (or those that they're investing in). These laws will mandate institutions to become accountable for their emissions and disclose their climate-related financial risks starting in 2026. In addition, the state has sued five major oil companies and the chief industry lobby group to hold them accountable for climate change. The lawsuit cites "decades of deception" by the oil companies about the causes of climate change and billions in damages to California communities.

And then on the international level, COP 28 has also resulted in major disappointments and some encouragement. While world leaders did not commit to a phase out of fossil fuels that are dangerously heating the planet, they did agree to ramp up renewable energy and transition away from fossil fuels. How quickly this happens will depend on investors, consumers, and national governments. As consumers, this means our work is cut out for us in the coming year.

For example, the COP 28 pact leaves room to use natural gas as part of the transition to clean energy. Climate scientists are warning us that the potential carbon emissions from major oil and gas expansion approved by the Biden administration are larger than the projected emissions reductions from the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, and that it will be necessary to halt these projects to keep temperatures from rising above the Paris Agreement's 1.5 degrees Celsius target.

Those of us with funds in financial institutions and pension funds need to keep contacting the CEOs to tell them that the fossil fuel divestment movement is gaining momentum with consistent reports of positive returns following fossil fuel divestment.

In addition to what's been mentioned, we have also been working on climate issues related to transportation, rooftop solar, methane emissions, carbon dividend, etc. There is much important climate work that needs to be done at the local, state, federal, and international levels, and we invite you to join us in our efforts.

With deepest gratitude to our current CAC members for all the ways your presence has supported and strengthened our shared ministry in our efforts for earth and her climate.

On behalf of CAC, our best wishes to all for a blessed new year with major fossil free developments.

Sue Lee Mossman, Co-chair



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Love Poem To My Hair

Wake in the morning sunshine
Unwind the braided river of my hair
Held high on my head like the cliff at Niagara
Nimbus of white surrounds the cascading waterfall
Brush stokes smoothing the water
River always flowing calm or tempestuous
Catching the rock of my left shoulder
Swirling around the rock of my right
Like a canoeist in rivers with rapids
I sometimes curse my way through
The eddies and tangles and currents
Yet always I choose it,
This sensuous long river of hair

Jenny Hanson 12/1/23

Classified Ads

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

Deadline Information

Deadline for the February newsletter issue is Saturday, **January 20** at 5 p.m. Send committee reports, announcements and articles related to HUUF (email only) to newsletter@huuf.org.

Many file formats are acceptable, but .doc, .docx, .rtf and text are preferred, and .pdf and .pages cannot be used. Late submissions are not accepted without prior approval. Full guidelines at: <https://tinyurl.com/HUUFNewsGuide>