

# Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



February, 2024

## To the Beloved HUUF Community **Reflections**

*“Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not;  
remember that what you now have was once among the things you  
only hoped for” — Epicurus*

A few Sundays ago, our beloved and (dare we say) virtuosic pianist got up to tell us about a recent virtual encounter she had. She’d sent out an email to some on her contact list (many who belong to this Fellowship) to let them know about a concert she’ll be part of in the coming month. It’s a benefit for Hospice, and showcases other wonderful community musicians as well. She expected a few replies, maybe asking for clarifying details or a link to buy tickets, maybe even words of encouragement and joy. What she did not expect were the replies like: “Why don’t we have a Minister?!” “When is the Fellowship going to address this issue?” Barely constrained sentiments that essentially boiled down to “Why can’t we have what we had before?”

It’s interesting how the machinations of late-stage capitalism shape our brains. In an era when we’ve effectively used up most of our cheap energy reserves, where the most privileged 10% of our world population are doing everything they can to continue to funnel resources to the top by extracting more from those at the bottom, where we look out upon the environmental and political landscape with a sense of foreboding and find ourselves contemplating a future for our children that looks harder and bleaker than the years we’ve known, it can be easy to lapse into a false sentimentality. We long to return to an earlier time when, inside our collective imagination, times were better and we had resources aplenty at our fingertips. Indeed, this messaging is so powerful, we’ve seen effective political campaigns mounted on this rallying cry alone: something about returning us to our former “greatness.”

The consumer culture works by keeping us in a state of perpetual scarcity, both real and imagined. And that is how it severs

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## **Take a dance with the Nominating Committee**

“Let It Be A Dance” is one of my favorite UU songs. When we sang it at the Ingathering service a few weeks ago I recalled that Ric Masten, the songwriter, used to lead popular sing-alongs at

my  
Eugene,  
Oregon  
UU. That  
was more  
than 40  
years ago  
and the  
song still  
grabs my  
heart, as  
that  
service  
did.



The  
truth is

that HUUF depends on all of us joining the dance. Part of our Fellowship’s aspiration *to help one another in fellowship* means to become a partner in the community as we garden, wash dishes, plan Sunday services, march in the Pride Parade, raise money for the building or social service, chair

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## Reflection, from page one

us from our power. We give undue attention to all that is beyond our reach, or all that we no longer have access to from a mythic, glorious past. It keeps us pining for what was, or projecting ourselves into a fabled future, while neglecting the very real opportunities that greet us in the here and now. It tells us we can only flourish if we can procure items A, B, or C, averting our gaze from the stealthy magnificence of X, Y, or Z.

For the time being, yes, it's true. We don't have a Minister: a single, professional, charismatic person whom we can trust to guide us into all we're called to become. But by the combined grace, ingenuity, and courageous efforts of this Congregation, let's pause to consider all we *do* possess:

- \* A team of deeply devoted women who bring years of experience, institutional knowledge, skill and heart to this work of stewarding and championing the beloved community in this tiny corner of our world;
- \* A Board composed of strong, insightful, heart-centered and dedicated leaders who are committed to guiding us in the year to come;
- \* New members who already are boldly stepping in to bring us their gifts of service, musicianship, creativity, nourishment, organizing, handyman skills and more;
- \* Beloved elders who continue to lovingly and skillfully chair our committees: managing our finances, tending our grounds, doing the work of hospitality, fundraising and more, who are ready to mentor the next generation of leaders as they appear;
- \* New opportunities for music-making and Earth-based celebrations growing in our midst;
- \* A beautiful (mortgage-free!) building in which we can regularly gather and worship, and welcome others to as well.

There will always be deficits. At any given time, there will be spots on our tapestry that look a bit threadbare, that could use mending or upkeep. There will be dreams not immediately within our reach. But as any scrappy revolutionary can tell you, we build the world we want not by waiting around until all the perfect pieces show up and fall into place. We shape the culture by showing up, leaning in, offering whatever we have in hand upon the altar of Love and Justice. We bring what meager morsels we possess to the collective feast, and watch, amazed as we gaze upon the table where a thousand tiny gifts are laid. Suddenly, there is plenty. Together, we have everything we need.

Yours in grace and gratitude, your Shared Ministry Team,  
*Amy Day and Bridgette Garuti*

## Dance, from page one

committees and serve on the Board of Trustees.

I ask you to consider a dance with the Nominating Committee to look at joining HUUF's 2024-25 Board of Trustees. We are recruiting Board members who will begin serving this July. HUUF's Bylaws require that we present candidates at the March congregational meeting. We invite you to honor us, the Nominating Committee, by asking us about the fun and confidence building experience of serving on HUUF's Board.

*Sylvia Shaw, Chair, (707)599-1563*

*Berti Welty, Tom Lewis, Laura Phelan-Shahin, and Laurel Busse*

*2024 Board Nominating Committee*



*The January 14 Ingathering Service welcomed 11 new members to the Fellowship. Pictured from left are David Sinn, Holli Sinn, Corazon Amada, Josh Charles, Douglas Carrol, Michelle Baggett, Rebekah Paez (officiating), April Klingonsmith, Jasson Klingonsmith, Colleen Betts, Dennis McGetrick. New members not in this picture are: Peggy Ho, Yemaya Kimmel, Wally Lee, Paula Levine, and Alexandra Wineland.*

## **A wonderful Ingathering Service, and Membership 101 comes up February 11**

What a joy we shared on January 14 when we held our first Ingathering service since HUUF resumed in-person services. We welcomed 13 new members who signed our Membership Book since 2023. We reflected on what the word “covenant” means in our living-tradition faith, and on our shared rituals. We got to share a potluck lunch together and get to know each other better. New members were gifted chalices decorated by Fellowship children. The experience was meaningful for all and reminded us of our covenant to membership, stewardship, and relationship.

Coming up, you’re invited, as a visitor, friend, or member of the Fellowship, to join the Membership Committee on **Sunday, February 11 after service** for “Membership 101.” We will share stories, expectations, ideas, and hopes. This is for those considering membership, or who simply want to learn more about HUUF. It’s also an opportunity for members to engage in “remembership,” a renewal of covenant. Please join us with a sack lunch and be ready for deep listening and sharing in a small group. Childcare will be provided.

*Rebekah Paez*

## **Seasons of love: a way to support the Fellowship**

How do you measure a year? In moments of connection? The moments of gratitude, generosity, or love? With the Equal Exchange products stocked in the lobby, the Fellowship provides opportunities to share love and generosity with those around you. Consider shopping from our coffee and chocolate cabinet on Sunday mornings. Lots of goodies to choose from for your sweetheart, friend, local bus driver, teacher, mentor, stranger ...and the list goes on. Not only will your gift warm the heart of the recipient, you’ll support the Fellowship and the workers and contributors participating in the sustainable and equitable business practices of Equal Exchange. Prices range from \$5 to \$20, and we have books for only \$1. Thank you for your support and love. See you by the cabinet!

*Rebekah Paez*



*At right, Montana and Jack Caouette and the Yaede family work on tidying up downed leaves from the maple tree between HUUF's buildings.*



### HUUF Poetry Corner

#### **Afterwards**

*by Jean Munsee*

And now  
Just as in the old movie  
When a wind swooshes through the dimly lighted  
room  
And the candle goes out  
Signifying a death  
A breeze blows through my house  
And the air goes flat  
No more tap tapping of little feet on the vinyl floor  
No more banging and clanging of pots and pans  
Or clicking and clacking of dozens of knives and  
forks  
No more raised voices of strong opinions  
Or shouts of amusement or joy  
No more reminiscence  
Or spoken and unspoken shared grief and loss  
No more clutter of car keys, wallets, phones , and  
more  
Covering the counters and tables  
No more lights left on in empty rooms  
And doors left ajar  
No more scorching salsas, pots of beans, and  
Persian food  
No more scones and special waffles  
Or cups of tea and favorite coffees  
No more abundant vases of flowers  
No more vibrance of life and love  
The candle's out  
The kids have gone.

### Notes from the Garden

#### **Winter still needs cleaning up, but Spring's on the way**

Our December Grounds Work Party was a lively affair, with four energetic children who were eager to help. They corralled the maple leaves blanketing everywhere between our buildings, and Jack Caouette even took some home for a soft landing to some joyful jumping. The other kids were Johnny, Lexi ,and Charlie, the children of Jack and Montana's friends Crystal and John Yaede, who generously lent us a helping hand. They worked diligently with Pat Carr and Montana to rake leaves, dig up a mountain of dandelions and track down a pesky leak around our heat pump. Margy Emerson and Katherine Almy weeded our patio bed, and Kate McClain tidied up the sand bed and environs. Montana brought muffins and I brought homemade brownies to keep spirits high. Sadly, our ambitious January plans for a joint work party and potluck with the Council of Chairs were rained out; we'll try for the potluck again in May.

Meanwhile, please join our next Grounds Work Party on **Saturday, February 10, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** We'll work together while taking in those first heartening signs of Spring.

*Valerie Gizinski*



## Sunday Services

**Sunday, February 4 – 11:00 a.m.**

### **The Service Service – Laura Phelan-Shahin and Margy Emerson**

Join Laura and Margy as they explore service as a spiritual practice. Then form small groups and use deep listening skills to learn about one another's experiences with service and volunteerism.

Questions offered as starting points for conversation are: What has been your relationship to volunteerism and how has it evolved over the course of your life? When you hesitate to do service, what is getting in the way? What type of service does your heart lead you toward, including in your spiritual community?

Stay for cookies and coffee afterward to continue the discussion.

**Sunday, February 11 – 11:00 a.m.**

### **The Work of Legacy**

They say the best way to predict the future is to create it. On this day, we take time to honor the labor of those who have helped shape and guide the culture of our Fellowship – offering us their wisdom, creativity, ingenuity, and heart. We will take time to hear their stories and honor their legacies, as well as hold space for the dreams we collectively hold for our community's future and all we are creating in the here and now.

**Sunday, February 18 – 11:00 a.m.**

### **The Many Sources of Unitarian Universalism – Berti Welty**

Unitarian Universalism is a non-creedal religion. Instead of sharing a common set of beliefs, we share a core set of values. A common saying in UU circles is "We don't have to believe alike in order to love alike." This service will celebrate the diversity of the sources of UU inspiration. Members of the congregation with differing beliefs will share how their search for truth and inspiration has led them to be involved in the UU community.

**Sunday, February 25 – 11:00 a.m.**

### **Stone Soup Sunday**

Maybe you are familiar with this story: A traveler comes to town and reminds the villagers – who feel themselves hard-pressed and guarded against the trying times they're living in – that each of us, however humble or tired, has a valuable gift to impart. And when we bring what we have to the collective feast, we create a world of nourishment and abundance for all. Join us as we use the gifts of ritual, story, song, work, and feasting to bring this story once more to life.

### **Children and Families Religious Education (RE)**

Sundays at 11:00 a.m.: Our wonderful RE staff 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 to serve as our Teen and Tween Coordinator. Join our offerings for the teen and tween set on the first and third Sundays of the month.

*See "Religious Education," next page*

## January 12 Board meeting notes

Pat McCutcheon, Margy Emerson, Montana Caouette, Jason Teraoka, and Amy Day attended the January 12 meeting of the HUUF Board. Bek Paez and Sylvia Shaw attended during the HUUF member public comment period.

During the comment period, Sylvia Shaw spoke for the Nominating Committee. The Board discussed their term commitments with Sylvia, who mentioned that the Service on “Service” will be presented on February 4 and will be led by Margy Emerson and Laura Phelan-Shahin. A “Cookies and Discussion” session will follow the service. Sylvia continues to recruit prospective board members.



Bek Paez spoke during the comment period representing the Membership Committee. That committee proposes that the HUUF restrooms become all-gender restrooms. The issue will be taken up during the next Congregational Meeting.

The Board acknowledged several successes, including completing the parking lot project; purchasing the new microphone (funded by donations from Berti Welty, Jenny Hansen and Steve Sottong); and HUUF’s first Coffeehouse event.

The Board voted to hire Hamanaka Painting Company to complete the HUUF exterior painting project. Painting will begin around March.

The board discussed the pledge drive. The pledge party will be multi-generational and is scheduled for May 18.

The all-day Board Retreat will be scheduled in August and will be held at the Morris Graves Museum.

Lastly, the Board discussed topics for the next Congregational Meeting (scheduled for March 24) and a Special Congregational Meeting (scheduled for September 15 at 11:00 a.m.).

Our next Board get together is scheduled as an in person meeting in the Sanctuary on February 13 at 7:00 p.m.. A reminder that the first 30 minutes of every meeting is reserved for HUUF members wishing to address the Board and Shared Ministry Team.

*Respectfully submitted by Jason Teraoka, Board Trustee*

## Religious Education, from page 5

This month, RE will explore the topic of “Justice and Equity” as part of our ongoing learning through the Soul Matters curriculum.

Please note: the fourth Sunday of each month is our “Stone Soup” service where we are invited to worship, serve, and feast together in a multi-generational context. Child “helpers” will be on hand, but expect to enjoy the service in the company of beloveds both large and small.

Hope to see you soon!

*Amy Day*

## Climate Action Campaign

### **Lots to get involved in to save our climate**

In late January, CAC co-sponsored a webinar, the first in 350 Humboldt's 2024 Speaker Series, on the potential climate benefits of marine protected areas (MPA). The talk was presented by Jaime Blatter who is a 350 Humboldt member, a climate specialist, and the tribal liaison with the MPA Collaborative Network.

It's a little ahead of time, but you won't want to miss HUUF's **March 3 Sunday Service** featuring Dr. Wendy Ring talking about the health and climate effects of biomass energy production by the Humboldt Sawmill Company. This local biomass plant has been operating for two years without a permit as required by the Clean Air Act. That, plus the numerous air quality infractions committed by this plant, are endangering the health of Rio Dell residents. What can we as UUs do? How do our UU principles call us to action here? More information will be available in the March newsletter.

All are welcome to visit our CAC climate action table every third Sunday of the month after the service. One of our areas of focus is to obtain legislative support for SB 252, the California Fossil Fuel Divestment Act, which would prohibit CalPERS and CalSTRS, the state's two major public employee pension funds, from investing in fossil fuels by 2030. CAC members are seeking to meet with Assemblyman Jim Wood to seek his support for SB 252.

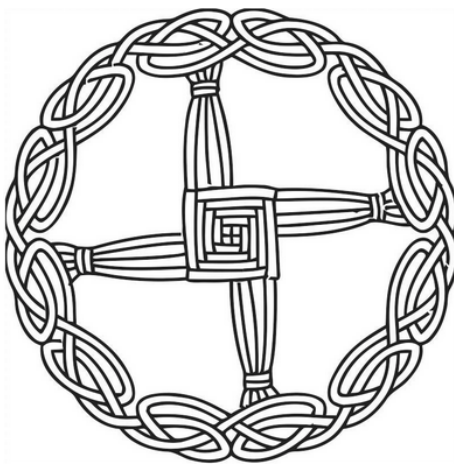
Another area of focus is the urgent need for the County to adopt a qualified climate action plan (CAP) by March 1, 2024 so that the County can qualify for a CAP implementation grant from the Inflation Reduction Act.

CAC members are also seeking to meet with our State Senator Mike McGuire. From his position as Senate Majority Leader and President of the State Senate, we are looking to seek guidance from him on how to get stronger climate legislation passed, such as a carbon dividend bill.

We have the solutions to make a just transition out of the climate crisis, but our administrations lack the political will to make that a reality. One way we can put our UU faith into action is to join the CAC where one focus (among others) is on climate legislation. Monthly Zoom meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at 1:00 p.m. You can find the link for our meetings at [huuf.org](https://huuf.org) and in the Friday Weekly.

In closing, I have served on CAC since its formation in 2018, and I wish to convey my gratitude, admiration, and respect for how CAC members and friends draw guidance from and support one another so we can keep going to protect the health of our planet and all life.

*Sue Lee Mossman, CAC Co-chair*



### **Redwood Coast CUUPS presents Imbolc at HUUF, February 2**

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

Many blessings! Hope to see you soon.

*Yemaya*





## Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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**Secretary:** Chris Chapin

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## Coffee House/Open Mic Night, February 23

Our first Coffee House event was a rocking success! A special thanks to HUUF member Dennis McGetrick for spearheading the idea, to all who showcased their talents, volunteered at the event, or heroically braved the stormy weather to attend. The Sanctuary space was transformed into a stage for poetry, comedy, science, magic, and song. The eclectic music performances ranged from original folk to familiar standards, from showtunes to world music, plus amazing original hip hop performances by Ra Imhotep and student Rocco!

Our next Coffee House event will be held on **Friday, February 23, 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.** Show us what yoUU've got! Look for the sign up in the foyer and in the *Weekly*.

### Editor's Note

## How does the HUUF Newsletter serve you?

Editing the *HUUF Newsletter* I sometimes wonder how the newsletter works for readers, and what changes would make it more valuable to Fellowship members and friends. If you have thoughts on these questions let me know at [newsletter@huuf.org](mailto:newsletter@huuf.org).

I've also thought about the gap between most adults attending HUUF services and kids in the CARE building attending RE classes. What can we do to bring six year olds and folks a few decades older together in a caring, inspiring, and supportive way? And more specifically, can the *Newsletter* help? While RE kids may not want to write articles, art is a medium most kids enjoy. If you have a child in RE, and you and they are interested, maybe there's a piece of art they've made in RE that would work for a future *Newsletter*? The RE staff are on board with this idea, and it's always great to have art to spice up the words that cover these pages.

Finally, I want to thank Steve Sottong for pitching in last month when I was ill and unable to edit the *Newsletter*.  
*Pat Carr*