

Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



To the Beloved HUUF Community

About Our Practice

A few short weeks ago, we gathered at HUUF to talk about Practice. And I referenced some simple things I've started doing in these middle years of my life to tend to my physical well being. How I'm teaching myself to gradually, steadily push beyond my current capacities. How I'm aiming for small changes over a long span of time. How I'm enlisting the help of others who know more than I do to help guide me in the places I feel inexperienced or fumbling. But, in truth, a personal physical practice can prove too facile to prove an adequate metaphor. The body can be downright mechanical in how it responds to certain stimuli and effort.

But what about the human heart? What about the psychological toll being felt all over this nation by immigrants and people of color under attack? What about those of us here, grappling with our own struggles, trying to take it all in, doing what we can to push back, and showing up for those in the impact zone, however best we can? What is the recipe for that sort of practice? How do we make space for it? How do we practice showing up in the face of horror and injustice, as it continues to rage on, seemingly without end? In our time together, we also looked at the work of Timothy Snyder, a Yale historian known for his work on Eastern Europe and the Holocaust. He wrote the 2017 book *On Tyranny—20 Lessons from the 20th Century* in which he outlines historically sound principles for pushing back against authoritarianism. He says: *"It's okay to take a little step, so long as...it's something you know something about, do with other people, do regularly, [and] it makes you a little bit uncomfortable. If it meets those criteria, then you're helping democracy."*

We know that whatever we practice grows stronger, whether we do it intentionally or not. Are we spending more time locked in outraged analysis and headline-scrolling disbelief than we are in actual, deliberate action? Are we repeating the phrase to ourselves about our own lack of agency, or are we extending our hands to move the levers of power near us? Are we making space for our grief and bewilderment? Are we making a habit of asking for help? Doing the difficult thing of vulnerably admitting to a trusted other, "I can't see my way through here. Will you walk beside me for a while?"

The era into which we are moving seems to ask of us to become multi-dimensional beings. We are called to tend to it *all*. Develop practices that sustain us physically, mentally, spiritually, politically, planetarily. No longer can we traffic in the antiquated language of *personal* New Year's resolutions. We are moving toward a set of intentions that will guide us to a New Earth, a new way of being here together. In the end, perhaps, the principles that guide our inner or outer praxis are not all that different. **We acknowledge the issue:** Identify a problem we want to address or

See "Practice," next page

Playscape work party on 2/21

Fellowship Religious Exploration

This month in Religious Exploration the children will dive into our theme of Embodying Resilience. Through conversation, crafts, activities and nuanced sub-categories we'll deepen our understanding of resilience each week to help us live our faith, such as:

2/1 Session One: Finding Resilience through Nature

2/8 Session Two: Finding Resilience through Grit

2/15 Session Three: Finding Resilience through Community

2/22 Session Four: Finding Resilience through Humor

We recently kicked off our monthly Playscape Work Party which will continue as an ongoing event on the third Saturday of each month, rain or shine, with the next scheduled for February 21. We have created a QR code, digital sign up and signage as our playscape is regularly enjoyed by not only our HUUF members and friends, but also folks out for a walk and enjoying our magical grounds. For information or to get involved, contact Tiffany at connect@huuf.org.

Tiffany Hess, Fellowship Engagement Coordinator

Friday, February 13

First Gate of Grief with Maggie McKnight and Amy Day

Join us at Francis Weller's "First Gate of Grief" where we will explore the tender truth that "*All we love we shall lose.*" Together, we'll be guided in song, silence, ritual and sharing to help process our losses, both the ones we carry alone and those facing the larger community as well. Donation-based. None turned away for lack of funds. Check the HUUF website soon for more information, or contact Amy at minister@huuf.org

Tuesday, February 24

Singing with the Living Earth

You are warmly invited to the first Earth Blessings Circle, led by Liesbet Bickett, Tuesday, February 24, 4:30–5:45 p.m.

This gathering is a gentle, communal ritual rooted primarily in sacred song, supported by meditation and simple ceremony. Together we will sing with the Earth, offering intentional vibration as a form of prayer, communication, and shared healing. Through voice and breath, we enter relationship with the land beneath our feet and the Earth within our bodies.

Everything in the natural world communicates through vibration, through wind, water, stone, root, and rhythm. In this circle, we remember the human voice as a living instrument and song as one of the oldest ways of listening and responding to the land. When we sing together with intention, our voices carry vibration into the soil, into our bones, and into the wider web of life. Human life and Earth life are inseparable. What we carry—grief, sorrow, and harm—has long been received and held by the Earth. In this gathering, we honor both our responsibility to tend what has been wounded and the Earth's extraordinary capacity to transform pain into nourishment, beauty, and life.

Weather permitting, the circle will be held outdoors on the HUUF grounds, so please dress warmly. If it is raining, we will move into the Sanctuary. This is the first of what is hoped to become a regular offering. All are welcome and no singing experience is needed. The gathering is free, with donations welcome to benefit the Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

Come as you are—your voice is enough.

Coming in March

Transpose: Community Singing for Queer/Trans/Nonbinary Folx

Join our beloved Community Song Leader, Maggie McKnight, for an LBTBQ+ centered offering. This will be a five-week, donation-based series starting in March. This workshop will be geared specifically toward queer, trans, and nonbinary people, with the goal of providing support to this historically marginalized community. Singing together opens us to our own and each other's humanity in a way that transcends words. And science is continuing to prove what we community singers know from experience: that singing together makes you feel better (among other things, by releasing endorphins, serotonin, dopamine, and oxytocin). Community singing provides a vital sense of belonging, wellbeing, and release, in a world that many of us find increasingly hard to face. Please help us spread the word and check back with the HUUF website soon for more information.

Congregational Meeting on March 29

Looking ahead, there will be a short Congregational Meeting on March 29 in order for the Congregation to approve nominees to the nominating committee. The meeting will take place immediately after the Sunday Service that day. Thank you in advance for attending.

Greg Blomstrom Co-President

Practice, from page one

resolve. **We take responsibility:** Recognize that we are part of this experience, even if we didn't create the external event. **We repeat the practice:** Whatever it may be. Showing up over and over, to do the dedicated, uncomfortable work of change. **And we repeat until we feel the energy shift** or a sense of peace, a sense that we have done some or all of what we came to do. And then we invite others to join us and do the same.

In grace and gratitude,
Amy Day, Lay Minister

Sunday Services

Sunday, February 1, 11:00 a.m.

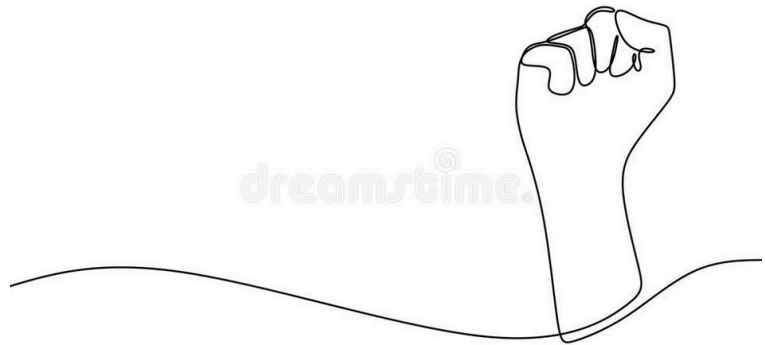
To be announced

Please visit the HUUF website for more information.

Sunday, February 8, 11:00 a.m.

Embodying Resistance—Amy Day

In a world that often feels heavy with loss, injustice, and uncertainty, we gather this Sunday to explore what it means to keep showing up with open hearts and steady spirits. Inspired by voices wrestling with how to parent, love, and remain hopeful in the face of persistent injustice, we'll reflect on resilience not as stoic endurance but as the courageous choice to remain present, even when the world feels overwhelming. Let us reaffirm our commitment to show up, with curiosity, courage, and love for one another and the life we share.



Sunday, February 15, 11:00 a.m.

Being Embodied— Amy Day and Christine Fiorentino

Join us for a talk and meditative exploration with guest speaker Christine Fiorentino, who brings 26 years of experience as a yoga teacher and a lifelong inquiry into what it means to embody spiritual wisdom in daily life and relationships. About six years into her teaching, Christine felt called toward a deeper understanding of lived, embodied practice. This led her to a Berkeley-based spiritual school devoted to expressing our deepest nature, where she has been a member for the past 20 years. Together we will explore what embodiment truly means—how to return to our bodies and hearts with stability and care amid reactivity, tension, and overwhelming emotions—through guided reflection, experiential practice, and compassionate insight.



Sunday, February 22, 11:00 a.m.

Love at the Center: A Stone Soup Experience—Amy Day

This Sunday, we will move beyond words and into practice as we live our Unitarian Universalist values through small, meaningful acts of service. Together we will pack lunches for our unhoused neighbors, write letters of care to children in Gaza, and engage in other tangible expressions of love that help seed the world we long to inhabit. In these simple yet substantive actions, we affirm that compassion is something we express, not just something we believe in. We will conclude our sacred time together with a community potluck. Please bring a simple dish to share as we continue building connection and care around the table.

Cheryl Lynn Peterson Rau: 1944-2026

The following is adapted from the eulogy presented by Bonnie MacGregor at Cheryl's Celebration of Life at HUUF on Sunday, January 18

Cheryl Lynn Peterson was born on June 10, 1944 in Santa Cruz, the first daughter of Allen and Shirley Peterson. Her parents, both children of farm families, met in high school and married soon after graduation. Those roots influenced how they raised their four children, instilling in them that any work was good when done with integrity; that the work itself is what is of value, and what you bring to the table is what matters—not how much money or prestige you have.

Cheryl's first challenge was to survive her birth. She was born prematurely and the doctors didn't expect her to survive; but her mother's sisters came to help, feeding Cheryl as they willed her to survive—and so she did. Cheryl found strength in circles of women in various settings over the course of her life and exemplified a willingness to take on hard things and persevere.

Cheryl's parents were an extraordinary team as they supported Allen's career at Stanford University where he became an electrical engineering professor, but they also created a vibrant and stable home, raising Cheryl, her sister Cyndi, and brothers Jon and Rob.

That modeling of partnership in marriage and work as well as juggling academic and career pursuits while raising children seems to have been ingrained in Cheryl as she established her own family.

Cheryl's second big challenge emerged as she began her childhood education and found it difficult to process language and reading due to dyslexia. There wasn't a lot known about this problem in the 1950's, and it was tough for her in a town of high academic achievers. During this time, Cheryl's mom sought out how best to help educate Cheryl—as well as her other children—and help them optimize their strengths and abilities. She encouraged her kids, giving them the sense that there wasn't anything they couldn't do, the girls as well as the boys. It made all the difference.

Cheryl persevered and graduated from Palo Alto High School in 1962, right into the cultural changes of the 1960's, many of which blossomed in the San Francisco Bay Area. It was a dynamic time and Cheryl took a somewhat circuitous route as she followed her family's deep valuing of a college education, choosing the practical path of Early Childhood Development, at the same time pursuing her love of art. She studied Early Childhood Development and taught in Head Start programs, before enrolling at Humboldt State University in Studio Arts.

While at HSU she met Martin Rau. They married soon after, moving onto his family's land in Loleta and founding a Christmas tree farm in 1971. Drawing on childhood experiences gardening with her grandfather, Cheryl helped develop it into a viable business. While the trees grew, Cheryl completed her Studio Art degree at HSU in 1974; and gave birth to Coren in 1976 and Carl in 1979. She ran a daycare program in their home while her children were young, then began a credential in Early Childhood Education at College of the Redwoods.

Then Cheryl met her next great challenge: while studying at CR she took a class in Children's Literature from a young English teacher named Pat McCutcheon. Her intrigue with Pat led her to take more of her classes and they formed a friendship that became more than either could have imagined, becoming a deep and life-changing relationship that lasted over 40 years.

As wonderful as their love story is, in the early 1980's their choice had huge repercussions and Cheryl—together now with Pat—had to discover how to follow her heart while keeping her integrity, making a living, and caring for her family both at home and in the Bay Area, all in an atmosphere of public scorn. It took all her strength to find her way.

See “Cheryl,” next page



Cheryl, from page 4

Cheryl ended her marriage with Martin in 1985, and with Coren and Carl she joined Pat and her young son Josh. Both Cheryl and Pat committed themselves to making sure the children stayed connected with their fathers.

In 1990 Cheryl and Pat bought a house on Buttermilk Lane in Arcata and settled into life as a loving blended family. Here Cheryl cultivated a picturesque garden in the yard and a house of vibrant colors that delighted all who entered.

Cheryl began work in Early Childhood Development in preschools, culminating in her role as Assistant Director of CR's Child Development Center for 13 years. During these years, and after retiring, Cheryl volunteered to teach and help guide HUUF's Religious Education program and co-led the congregation's process to become a Welcoming Congregation for LGBTQ people. She curated a rotating art show of members and friends on our Sanctuary's walls, bringing the spirit of life to all who entered. And she painted, participating in plein air outings, art shows, and workshop events, immersing herself in the environments she loved, and bringing her perspective and style to the canvas and into our lives. She and Pat brought a supportive circle of women around them—that is still going after more than 30 years; and hosted an annual New Year's Day gathering that brought their diverse connections together to foster lasting friendships.

Cheryl approached her final years as she had all her life, facing the challenges, enjoying the pleasures, cultivating beauty, and living fully until her body could no longer hold her spirit.

Cheryl is survived by her devoted wife of forty years, Pat McCutcheon, her sons Josh, Coren and Carl, grandson Dylan, brothers Jon and Robert, and sister Cyndie, as well as numerous extended family in the San Francisco Bay Area. She will be sorely missed by many more.

Farewell dear friend, it has been so good to know you.

Bonnie MacGregor

Meal Train for:
Meals and Home Visits for Pat
McCutcheon

Visit this link or use the QR
below

mealtrain.com/q20m89



“Around Humboldt Bay” Art Show Features Berti’s art

This month, HUUF member and current co-president Berti Welty will share some of her art work in an exhibit titled “Around Humboldt Bay” on display at the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center, 569 South G St., Arcata. The show is sponsored by Friends of the Arcata Marsh.

The Marsh Interpretive Center is open to the public Monday from 1:00–5:00 p.m. and Tuesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information, call (707) 826-2359. For more information about purchasing a print of Welty’s work, email her at bertijo@humboldt1.com.

Visit the HUUF Library

Our Fellowship Library is full of great winter reading—perfect for the long, dark days of the season. From spiritual reflection and justice-centered nonfiction to novels and poetry, there’s plenty to browse and borrow. We’re also excited to share a new addition: *Sign My Name to Freedom* by Betty Reid Soskin, a powerful memoir of activism, resilience, and living history. (An additional copy is available through the Eureka Public Library.)

Climate Action Campaign

Climate Change Theatre on the Radio

HUUF's Climate Action Campaign will continue to collaborate with 350 Humboldt's Outreach and Action Committee to donate books about the climate crisis to local elementary schools that weren't reached in 2025. We are cooperating to choose books and write grants to fund the purchase of books.

We invite everyone to join us at the Fellowship on the fourth Sunday of every month where we can roll up our sleeves and act on our UU values by contacting decision makers about climate related issues at the local, state, and federal levels.

Climate Change Theatre Action 2025 with CAC Readers Now Available for Listening

As I mentioned in last month's *HUUF Newsletter*, Climate Change Theatre Action (CCTA) is a worldwide festival of short readers theatre plays about the climate crisis and presented biennially to coincide with the United Nations meetings about the climate crisis. Fifty professional playwrights, representing all inhabited continents and several cultures and Indigenous nations, were commissioned to write five-minute plays about an aspect of the climate crisis. CCTA uses storytelling and live or recorded performances to foster dialogue about our global climate crisis, create an empowering vision of the future, and inspire people to act.

Credit goes to Wendy Ring, our "ringleader," who chose six plays and recorded CAC members Ann Kilby, Cena Marino, Laurel Busse, Sylvia Shaw, Sue Lee Mossman, as well as others who were available as readers. Wendy also edited and added sound effects and music. The recordings can be accessed at the links below and are now available to radio stations around the country. One radio station in New Mexico downloaded the plays the first week of January.

<https://exchange.prx.org/pieces/602028-climate-change-radio-theatre-2025-part-one>

Readers: Sylvia and Sue from CAC and other readers from the Environmental Protection and Information Center (EPIC).

<https://exchange.prx.org/pieces/602030-climate-change-radio-theatre-2025-part-two>

Readers: Ann, Laurel, and Cena from CAC and other readers from EPIC

The mp3 link that follows is a version of Part One that will be broadcast for the EcoNews Report and radio station KZZH with a local action item at the end. [CCTA ONE local.mp3](#)

Pledge a simple climate action to do for February, and be a Valentine for Earth and Climate. Happy Valentines to all!

Sue Lee Mossman, co-chair

April 10-12

Pacific Regional Assembly in Sacramento

The Pacific Western Regional Assembly will meet in Sacramento, April 10-12 at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento. In times like these, what does it mean to be a spiritually resilient Unitarian Universalist? Times of rising authoritarianism and dehumanization call us to lean into our UU values more than ever, not just to protect those targeted, but also to protect our ability to stay grounded, interconnected, and spiritually alive. Regional Assembly 2026 will feature speakers, workshops, music, worship, and interactive games to help us live into this moment with beauty and life-affirming power. HUUF is committed to helping members who wish to attend in person with travel and lodging stipends. For more information about how to attend, contact Regional Administrator Hara Madera at hmadera@uua.org.

Greg Blomstrom, HUUF Co-President

Lenten Bible Study Group Starts February 3

Bellamy Devine is facilitating a Bible study group starting February 3 and ending April 7 (encompassing the season of Lent). The group will meet every Tuesday evening at HUUF at 6:30 p.m. Vegan chili will be provided; donations are always welcome to help with the meal. This is an inclusive, interfaith study group that will focus on canonical, apocryphal, and gnostic texts during the ten weeks we'll be meeting. Feel free to come to every meeting or drop in as you like. The curriculum is below:

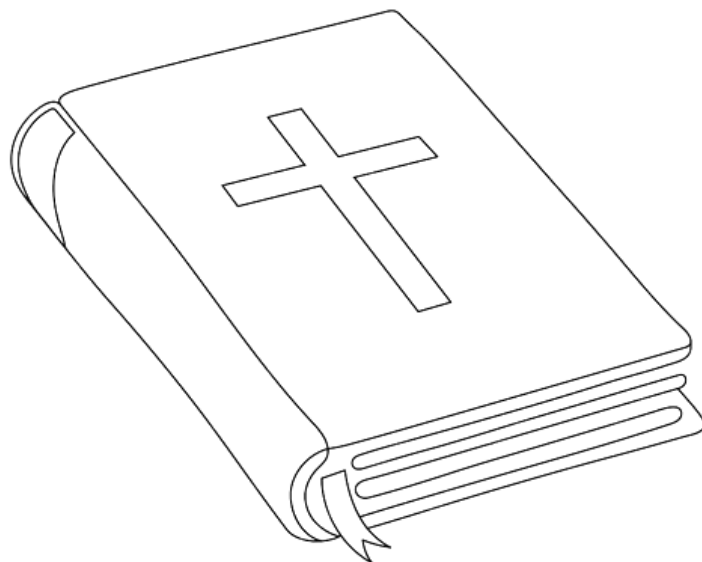
- Week 1 Feb 3: Jonah
- Week 2 Feb 10: Ecclesiastes 1-4
- Week 3 Feb 17: Lessons of Lent (A more casual meeting discussing the diversity of Lent practices)
- Week 4 Feb 24: Wisdom of Solomon 7-9
- Week 5 Mar 3: Sirach 15:11-20, 43:1-33
- Week 6 Mar 10: Gospel of Thomas 1-6, 20-22
- Week 7 Mar 17: Gospel of Mark 11-15
- Week 8 Mar 24: Gospel of Judas
- Week 9 Mar 31: Gospel of Mary
- Week 10 Apr 7: Lessons of Lent (A more casual meeting celebrating the time of study and reflecting on the season of lent)

The agenda of each meeting will follow this structure:

- Casual Dinner
- Chalice Lighting
- Joys and Sorrows
- Reading of the Text
- Contemplation
- Discussion

Cooking and clean-up will be needed. Please email bellamy@huuf.org if you would like to be added to the volunteer list or would appreciate weekly email reminders about the meeting. Thank you!

*Bellamy Divine,
Religious Exploration and
Community Outreach
Coordinator*



HUUF Poetry Corner

Deep Gratitude

Deep Gratitude
For everything that sings
For leaves rustling in the wind
And blossoms returning every spring

Deep Gratitude
For the four directions
For the brightly shining sun
And the moon's reflections

Deep Gratitude
For winter, summer, day and night
For the world going 'round
And wild birds in flight

Deep Gratitude
For joy unplanned
For kindness shown
And footprints in the sand

Deep Gratitude
Especially for water
The birthplace of life
And its sustainable power

Deep Gratitude
Even for the pain
At least it lets me know
That I'm alive again
Doug Carroll



Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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Greg Blomstrom, HUUF Co-President

Next HUUF Newsletter Deadline February 20

Deadline for the March issue of the HUUF Newsletter is Friday, February 20, at 5:00 p.m. Classified advertising is accepted at the bargain rate of one dime/word, and letters to the editor are welcome. Articles about HUUF people and activities are welcome, please take a look at the submission guidelines at <https://huuf.org/home-2/upcoming-events/newsletter-2/> and contact the editor if you have any questions..

HUUF Newsletter, February 2026