

# Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



March, 2024

To the beloved HUUF community

## Reflection

*Poetry puts starch in your backbone so you can stand, so you can compose your life.*

— Maya Angelou

Many of you will be familiar with the practice of Lectio Divina. From the Catholic tradition, it asks us to spend time meditating upon sacred words. For some of us, this will be a verse from a trusted religious source. For others, it may be calling to mind the contemplations of a beloved teacher, activist or prolific thinker. For many of us, who find medicine inside language, it may simply be the act of re-reading (or reciting from heart, as some of these words have become so essential to our journey, we've allowed them to take up permanent residence inside our consciousness) a favorite poem or recalling a cherished song.

In the Judeo-Christian texts, the Psalmist writes, "*I have hidden your word in my heart.*" For us Unitarian Universalists, those holy words may vary greatly. Our wise ones and prophets may not fit the traditional mold, but their words speak directly to our hearts. At times like these, when words are being weaponized across the political and ideological strata, it is important to remember that these same words can be used as a balm, a force for healing and reclamation, too.

As you journey through the month to come, beloveds, we invite you to surround yourself with wisdom. Seek out wise company, wise counsel, wise media, wise books and articles and entertainment. Wise memes and tweets and soundbites and conversation. Pay attention to how you feel when you encounter the words around you. Does it add to your sense of peace, agency, beauty, and holy empowerment in this world? Or does it feed into the parts of you that feel fearful, disenfranchised and at war?

See "Reflection," next page

## March 24 Congregational Meeting **HUUF Board Slate of Candidates**

The Nominating Committee presents the following candidates for election to the 2024-25 HUUF Board at the March 24 Congregational Meeting, which will immediately follow the Sunday Service that day.

**Pat McCutcheon**, Co-president, one year term

**Chris Chapin**, Trustee, two year term

**Josh Charles**, Trustee, two year term.

Continuing board members for the 2024-2025 Board:

**Margy Emerson**, Co-president, second year of two year term

**Montana Caouette**, Vice president, second year of two year term

**Jason Teraoka**, Trustee, second year of two year term.

The Nominating Committee continues to seek Board candidates, especially to fill the positions of secretary and treasurer. Please talk to us or current Board members, if you are at all inclined to serve on the Board.

Additional nominations will be taken from the floor at the Congregational Meeting.

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

## Update on our California Careforce Clinic

The Host Committee is meeting on a regular basis at HUUF, every other Monday at 2:00 p.m. The Adorni Center has been secured as the site for the clinic. At the present time the committee is focused on raising funds to operate the clinic, sometime in July. Grant writing, offering sponsorships to local businesses and using Faithify (a UUA crowdfunding platform) are the methods being used.

For more information or to make a donation, go to HUUF's website [www.huuf.org](http://www.huuf.org) or directly to our Faithify campaign at <https://www.faithify.org/campaign/312/care-force-free-dental-clinic>. Later this spring volunteer sign-ups will be available at: [californiacareforce.org](http://californiacareforce.org). Stay tuned for ways you can participate in this event.

Tom Lewis: (530) 774-3550 or [tomaslewis70@gmail.com](mailto:tomaslewis70@gmail.com)

## Reflection, from page one

Hiding words inside the heart, so that when we find ourselves in need, these healing salves will be at the ready. We will be able to claim their truth once more, and rest in their regenerative power. We'd love to hear what "holy words" you all are reaching out for these days.

Here are a few of ours:

"Sometimes we are blessed with being able to choose the time, and the arena, and the manner of our revolution, but more usually we must do battle where we are standing."

— **Audre Lorde, Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches**

"Any real change implies the breakup of the world as one has always known it, the loss of all that gave one an identity, the end of safety. And at such a moment, unable to see and not daring to imagine what the future will now bring forth, one clings to what one knew, or dreamed that one possessed. Yet, it is only when a man is able, without bitterness or self-pity, to surrender a dream he has long possessed that he is set free - he has set himself free - for higher dreams, for greater privileges."

— **James Baldwin, Nobody Knows My Name**

"You are a light. You are the light. Never let anyone—any person or any force—dampen, dim or diminish your light. Study the path of others to make your way easier and more abundant. Lean toward the whispers of your own heart, discover the universal truth, and follow its dictates...Release the need to hate, to harbor division, and the enticement of revenge. Release all bitterness. Hold only love, only peace in your heart, knowing that the battle of good to overcome evil is already won. Choose confrontation wisely, but when it is your time don't be afraid to stand up, speak up, and speak out against injustice. And if you follow your truth down the road to peace and the affirmation of love, if you shine like a beacon for all to see, then the poetry of all the great dreamers and philosophers is yours to manifest in a nation, a world community, and a Beloved Community that is finally at peace with itself."

— **John Lewis, Across That Bridge: A Vision for Change and the Future of America**

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



## **Sunday Services and Religious Education**

**Sunday, March 3 – 11:00 a.m.**

***Join in, Let's Get Clean Energy Clean* – Dr. Wendy Ring, Ann Kilby**

HUUF Climate Action Campaign members invite everyone to hear physician and climate activist Dr. Wendy Ring's presentation. She will share her passionate engagement and focus especially on the not-at-all-clean "clean energy" generated and marketed here in our county. She will explain the present window of opportunity and the larger context in which our action may have influence.

**Sunday, March 10 – 11:00 a.m.**

***How We Hold Each Other Close* – Karen Harris, Gage Bock, Amy Day**

Unitarian Universalists have long recognized that the facile offerings of "love and light" while people are suffering are not enough. We are a people deeply devoted to practicing and enacting our love. Join us as our former HUUF minister, a local professional holistic coach, and our Director of Spiritual Life gather around the question of how we care for one another during these times. What is our responsibility to one another as members of the beloved community, and how do we gain the skills needed to meet the moment we are in?

**Sunday, March 17 – 11:00 a.m.**

***Ostara (Spring Equinox) Ceremony* – Margy Emerson, Maggie McKnight**

Join the revelry as we celebrate Ostara and the height of spring – the moment of balance between night and day. We will cast the circle, call in the directions, plant the seeds of our intentions, and sing. Bring flowers, sacred items, and colored eggs for the altar. And for making joyful noise, bring drums, tambourines, and rattles.

**Sunday, March 24 – 11:00 a.m.**

***Spiritual Tools for Navigating Difficult Times* – Caroline Isaacs**

As a longtime psychotherapist, Caroline Isaacs offers Depth Psychology and Spiritual Direction. She practices Judaism with both a particularist and a universalist understanding. Caroline will offer tools for coping with both personal and sociopolitical turmoil.

**Sunday, March 31 – 11:00 a.m.**

***Gender, Rebirth, and the Holy Work of Change* – Amy Day**

Gabriel Garcia Marquez wrote: "Human beings are not born once and for all on the day their mothers give birth to them, but ... Life obliges them over and over again to give birth to themselves." On this day when we culturally gather around the powerful notion of resurrection, we examine the many ways in which we human beings are asked to continually make space to give birth to the new, both as individuals and toward the collective.

On this day of transgender visibility as well, we will celebrate and lift up how our beloved gender-expansive siblings have helped crack open old, limiting definitions of self and sexuality in order to articulate a more multifaceted and vibrant world for us all. Bring a simple dish to share for our potluck celebration.

## **Children and Families Religious Education**

**Sundays at 11:00 a.m.** - Our wonderful RE staff continue 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. See this month's service descriptions for more details. *See "RE," on page 4 for more*

## More RE, from page 3

Bellamy Devine serves as our Teen (and Tween) Coordinator. Join us for offerings for the teen and tween set on the second Sunday of the month.

This month we'll explore the topic of "Transformation" as part of our ongoing learning through the Soul Matters curriculum.

## March 15 coffeehouse

Join us for another gathering of creative folks! Bring your guitar, your dad jokes, your kazoo, your tap shoes, your poetry, your freestyle verse, your verve and your brilliance, to another all-ages evening Open Mic experience, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. More information and sign-ups can be found on the HUUF website.



## Song circle date change for March

For the month of March, we will be shifting our bi-monthly Community Song Circle meetup dates with Maggie McKnight. We will meet in the Sanctuary from 4:00-5:30 p.m. on March 1 and 22, gathering in a circle, learning harmonies and singing rounds, sipping tea, and basking in the warmth of this heart-lifting practice.

## Pancakes, anyone?

Once again, the great folks at Redwood Pride will host a delicious fundraiser in the form of "The Pancake Agenda" on Saturday, March 23, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Come have your fill of pancakes, sausages, eggs, juice and coffee while supporting the great work they do in our community. Gluten-free and vegan options are available. \$10 for adults. Kids under 6 eat free.

## Womens' and gender fluid folks' retreat coming up April 13

We are delighted that Laura Phelan-Shahin and her longtime cohort Bobbie Spurlock will offer a day-long retreat for women and gender-fluid folks at the Fellowship, Saturday, April 13. Participants can expect a day of ritual, deep dive discussions, expressive arts, snacks and fabulous company! Scholarships and childcare are available. Check the website soon for more details.

## Need a lift?

The Caring Circle is preparing a survey to gain understanding of current needs within our Fellowship. One of the things we strive for is to care for one another — sometimes in spirit, sometimes in the needs of the day-to-day. If you or someone you know could use a ride to Sunday Services, feel free to reach out in the meantime. Contact Amy at [comm@huuf.org](mailto:comm@huuf.org) We'd love to have you with us.

## Caring Committee coming back to life

HUUF's Caring Committee is being reactivated. Several caring HUUF members and new friends have met twice this month to organize and determine the committee priorities. Thank you Nancy Engel for keeping the "light on" for the Caring Committee at HUUF.

Soon, the Committee will survey the congregation to determine needs that are important to you, such as: meal preparation, transportation, check-in calls, visits, receiving supportive cards.

*Tom Lewis, Chair (530) 774-3550 [tomaslewis70@gmail.com](mailto:tomaslewis70@gmail.com)*



## Board Report

### **Birthday cake and hopes for peace**

Our meeting on Tuesday, February 13, was attended by all HUUF Board members and Director of Spiritual Life Amy Day. HUUF member Josh Charles also attended (despite this being his birthday) to see if the meeting was interesting enough to merit his joining the Board. We ate birthday cake and pie, and he was still present at the end of the meeting.

Laura Phelan-Shahin spoke to us on behalf of the Redwood Peace and Justice Coalition. They are seeking endorsements from spiritual groups in our local area for their resolution for a ceasefire in Palestine. They are asking the City of Arcata to adopt the resolution, already adopted by a score of major cities across the country. Palestinian families have been forced to move into a concentrated area of the Gaza Strip, deprived of water, food, adequate shelter and medications, and bombed by the American-supported Israeli military forces. After hearing her presentation, the Board endorsed the ceasefire resolution with consensus. Laura asks that we attend upcoming Arcata City Council meetings (first and third Wednesdays of the month at 6:00 p.m.) to speak in support of a ceasefire, and that we sign the resolution they are circulating.

The Board is preparing for the March 24 Congregational Meeting, to begin at 12:30 pm, at which we will discuss instituting all-gender restrooms and will elect the newest slate of Board members.

Our amazing Director of Congregational Operations, Bridgette Garuti, helped me compose a fund raising effort on the UUA platform *Faithify*, on which we hope to raise \$10,000 in support of Rev. Tom Lewis' California Careforce free vision and dental clinic. Please save time on July 12 or 13, between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., to help staff this humanitarian project, a great chance to put our UU principles into action.

The HUUF Pledge Drive is fast approaching. More on that next month.

Our next Board meeting will be on March 12, 7:00 p.m., in-person in the HUUF Sanctuary. The first 30 minutes are provided for members to share their ideas or concerns with the Board.

*Respectfully submitted by Chris Chapin, Board Secretary*

## HUUF Poetry Corner

### **Statement of Conscience**

*by Pat McCutcheon*

A war that inspires terrorists  
inspires a statement of conscience:  
    a conscience bruised,  
desecrated by lies  
whose half-lives last lifetimes.

A conscience that  
shudders at images  
of three year olds, bloodied,  
orphaned, starving,  
and nowhere to run.

A conscience outraged  
at amputations without  
anesthesia,  
parents searching for children  
dying beneath rubble.

Such a conscience can  
no longer turn away, no longer  
choke back what must be said:  
this immoral war  
must stop.



## Climate Action Campaign

### **Things we can do, from the legislature to our daily bread**

CAC members John Schaefer and Sue Lee Mossman recently met with staff of State Senator Mike McGuire's office to seek their advice on how to get effective climate bills introduced in the State Senate and ask the senator to introduce carbon pricing legislation. Our request was based on the En-Roads computer model that shows that a higher carbon price is THE critical strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions quickly enough to mitigate the climate crisis. We are in the process of completing a legislative proposal form to go to Sen. McGuire's Energy and Climate Related Policy team. They will determine if the requested legislation can be forwarded to the Senate Democratic Caucus, which decides legislative priorities.

We appreciate Pat Carr's efforts to arrange a meeting with Assemblyman Jim Wood for climate related matters, but he was unsuccessful due to lack of staffing at Assemblyman Wood's Eureka office.

Dr. Wendy Ring will speak on the campaign to shutter Humboldt's local biomass electricity plant at HUUF's March 3 service. The plant is a major power source for our Redwood Coast Energy Authority, which supplies electricity to most of us, and Arcata holds a board position. Dr. Ring has asked Arcata residents to contact city council members about this, and I thank CAC members who have done so.

A reminder to EV drivers that CAC member Cena Marino has installed a JuiceBox charger at her home in Eureka. Cena welcomes HUUF members and friends to charge their vehicles free of charge; please call first to arrange a time.

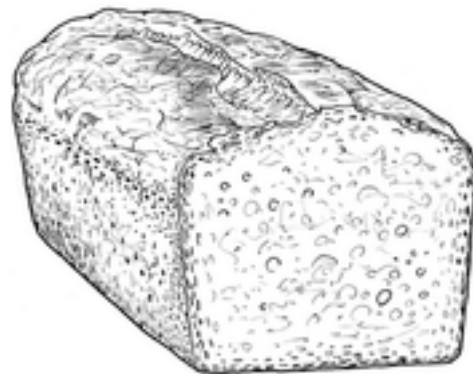
Given the critical situation with plastic pollution, you may be interested in ways we can each help mitigate this crisis. When ordering take-out in Arcata, I bring my own container, and I get 25 cents off. (When they put my take-out or beverage in their containers, I'm charged an extra 25 cents.) When I recently ordered take-out from Tomo's in Arcata, I went there and placed my order, left my containers and ran errands for 30 minutes. When I returned, my order was ready in my own containers. But Tomo's will only do this for orders placed in person. The same can be done with take out from food trucks. For a recent article about BYO containers, see <https://www.northcoastjournal.com/eat-drink/byo-takeout-container-27875660>

When I buy day-old bread at Ramones, I bring my own plastic bread bag and ask for the bread to be transferred from their plastic bag to mine. They don't charge me the quarter for the plastic bag. At Eureka Natural Foods (ENF) in McKinleyville, I bring an empty egg carton for bulk eggs. At both the Arcata Co-op and ENF, I use empty yogurt containers to hold items I order from meat and seafood counters and for some items in the produce and bulk departments. Workers at ENF have expressed appreciation that I do this, and I get a few cents off at the register for each bag or container that I reuse (although I have to remind most of the cashiers).

When I buy sushi at the Arcata Co-op, I order directly from the counter and hand them my own container. But if I've forgotten to bring a container, they will put my order into a cardboard carton from the deli section if I ask. These are small actions on my part, but they would have more impact if each of us did this. Along with shopping bags, I always carry yogurt containers and used plastic bags in my car.

Thanks to each of you for the everyday acts you also do to protect our climate and Earth's life support systems.

*Sue Lee Mossman*



## HUUF Annual Meeting, March 24

HUUF's Annual Meeting will take place on Sunday, March 24, following the service. This is when the congregation traditionally elects new members to the Board of Trustees. Please see Sylvia Shaw's article in this newsletter for information on the nominees.

Two other issues are on the agenda. First, we'll discuss converting the two restrooms in the main building to all-gender. This is the first time the possibility will have been raised with the congregation. No consensus will be sought on a decision. This is an opportunity to air the idea and to speak and listen to each other.

Second, at their February meeting, the Board of Trustees came to consensus and endorsed a petition authored by the Redwood Peace and Justice Center Coalition urging the City of Arcata to demand the U.S. Congress and President "take urgent action to enact an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip." (See the proposed resolution below.) The Board can only speak for itself; it cannot speak for the congregation. Following discussion, consensus will be sought from the congregation to endorse this petition. The Unitarian Universalist Association came out strongly for a ceasefire in October 2023: <https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/catastrophe-gaza-and-israel> .

Refreshments will be served after the service. The Annual Meeting will begin around 12:30 p.m. Looking forward to seeing you there!

*Margy Emerson, Co-President, HUUF Board of Trustees*

### **• Redwood Peace & Justice Center Coalition Proposed Resolution, City of Arcata, on a Ceasefire in Palestine**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Arcata has an important and longstanding history of supporting peace and diplomatic solutions to international conflicts, and

**WHEREAS**, Dr Martin Luther King Jr. said, "It is not possible to be in favor of justice for some people and not be in favor of justice for all people," and

**WHEREAS**, time is of the essence to halt an unmitigated humanitarian disaster in Palestine, as expressed by the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East when he said, "Gaza is running out of life," and

**WHEREAS**, Israel's blocking of food, water, medicine and fuel into the Gaza Strip is causing suffering, starvation and disease that is leading to more deaths, and

**WHEREAS**, Israel's continued indiscriminate bombing and shooting of innocent civilians along with the displacement and destruction of the Palestinian homes and critical infrastructure is making Gaza uninhabitable, and  
**WHEREAS**, this atrocity is causing an expansion and escalation of regional war and could ultimately lead to a world war.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** the City of Arcata formally demands Congress and the US President take urgent action to enact an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza strip.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Arcata calls for the unrestricted supply of food, water, fuel and medicine into the Gaza strip.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Arcata demands the US President to resume negotiations for the release of all hostages, both Israeli and Palestinian.



## Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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**Director of Spiritual Life:** Amy Day on campus Tuesday and Thursday, email: [comm@huuf.org](mailto:comm@huuf.org)

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### **Board of Trustees:**

**Co-Presidents:** Margy Emerson, Pat McCutcheon

**Vice-President:** Michael Caouette

**Treasurer:** Vacant, seeking volunteer

**Secretary:** Chris Chapin

**Trustees:** Jason Teraoka, Ann Kilby



## Help plan the June Women's Retreat

### **March 18 deadline for April *HUUF Newsletter* items**

Due to travel plans, the deadline for next month's newsletter is two days earlier than usual. Please plan ahead, and send your items to [newsletter@huuf.org](mailto:newsletter@huuf.org) by 5:00 p.m., Monday, March 18. Thanks!