

Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



Being our true selves in different ways in difficult times

April 2020

In the coming days of challenge, chaos and changing times, let us remember who we really are. Some of you may recall that I have reminded us that we do not have a Soul but that we are a Soul. It is times like this that the presence and the wisdom of our Souls are called forth. When the Soul is recognized you will stop working so hard to get from point A to point B. You will instead spend more time experiencing yourself in the whole, and your place in it. Instead of venturing out we shall venture in. Our ancestors knew this and so do we. We may have forgotten but our DNA has not. Your grandmother's mother knew this wisdom, and this feminine principle is now coming forth as masculine energy is taking a back seat. Let me be clear that I am not referring to male or to female energy but to feminine and masculine energy, the Yin and the Yang, the soft and the hard, the hot and the cold and whatever energy creates those distinctions. This is the energy present in each of us and in all things. We know and affirm this. We recognize that this is an energy that connects us all and, therefore, as we say, connects us all in an interdependent web.

Simply put, this is a time to love my neighbor as I love myself. An opportunity for you to see me in you. An opportunity for me to really see you. Or, understood as the South Africans may say, Ubuntu; "I am because you are." To know that when I help you, I am helping myself. I do not know why difficult times such as these give us the opportunity to allow this part of ourselves to show up. I'm just glad it does. I'm not fond of the circumstances or the consequences and yet, I love the emerging caring. We need each other!

With the advent of COVID-19 we have all had to reevaluate our customs and behaviors, habits and procedures as we redefine our daily practices to adapt to the new and somewhat surreal reality of this pandemic. There is nothing to fear.

As Winston Churchill reminds us, "Fear is a reaction. Courage is a decision."

What will you choose?

Worship: Our in-person worship services have been cancelled until further notice. Our doors may be closed but our hearts remain open.

HUUF staff and our Board leaders are committed to your safety. We remain diligent to protect those in our community who are most vulnerable, to make sure that we do our part in containing this virus.

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Communication: We have initiated a Caring Circle Call Tree to connect us in-person and in service to one another. We will be providing worship services online as soon as we can. Please check the website daily. We are investigating different platforms to provide online worship services and a way for some regularly scheduled meetings to happen virtually. Stay tuned for more details as this develops.

Hold fast to the truth that difficult times always have a way of bringing people together.

Pastoral Care: During this crisis, Rev. Anthony will of course be available for spiritual and emotional support. If you become sick, need pastoral care, are quarantined and need food, or any assistance please reach out to Rev. Anthony (minister@huuf.org) or direct on his mobile phone 805-722-0305, or the HUUF office (office@huuf.org).

Giving: This is a difficult time to have a pandemic for many reasons, and one of them is that it is in the middle of our Pledge Drive. We sincerely hope you will respond quickly and with your giving heart when asked. We invite you all to continue your regular giving, either online (via our website) or by mail. Your continued donations are greatly appreciated.

Let us reach out with our hearts, where our hands and our arms normally extend.

In this community let us hold hope close. Hope is the place where that energy I spoke of earlier resides. Call on that energy, call it up and invite your ancestors in. As our Yang based culture and traditions are decaying all across our beloved planet, look up and in. Allow the Yin in. Breathe....A sweet breeze is stirring,

the tide is coming in again,
as it has done for the last billion years.
Blessed Be. Amen. Ashe'.

Rev. Anthony Johnson



PANDEMIC

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the sabbath—
the most sacred of times?
cease from travel.
cease from buying and selling.
give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.
sing. pray. touch only those
to whom you commit your life.
center down.
and when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.
know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(you could hardly deny it now.)
know that our lives
are in one another's hands.
(surely, that has come clear.)
do not reach out your hands.
reach out your heart.
reach out your words.
reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.
promise this world your love—
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.

LYNN UNGAR 3-11-2020

Lynn Ungar

The Rev. Dr. Lynn Ungar is minister for lifespan learning and editor of Quest for the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Larger Fellowship, an online congregation for isolated religious liberals. Her book, Bread and Other Miracles, is available at lynnungar.com.

Religious Education

In this moment, may I invite you to pause and take, collective breath and call upon some of the rituals embedded in our Sunday worship to ground and steady us. Light the candle (and the kettle). Tend the hearth flame. Gather with those you hold dear. Remember once again what a miraculous and privileged thing it is to be born into this human form. Here we are gathered in this liminal space to remind one another that the Fellowship continues to exist, beyond the bounds of the physical space we have, for now, ceased to inhabit.

Let love be the spirit of this Fellowship. . . .

Service be its' Prayer. . .

How are you doing, beloveds?

For so long now, we have talked and learned and read about the many ways in which our current way of operating would, inevitably, come to an end. From our current economic system to the far-ranging effects of climate change, we have known for some time, that change was on the horizon. And yet. . . such a sudden shift can feel so terrifying. Surreal. A total sea change of all the systems, rhythms and reliable markers of daily life all of a sudden come to a halt. This kind of seismic change can be stultifying.

And so, we invite you to anchor into the tenets of our faith and into some of the collective tools and wisdom that are emerging during this challenging time.

Some gems that have been floating around on the interwebs of late. . .

From my good friend and social worker, Lynette Diaz:

“And so, Mother Nature gives us what the world has desperately needed. The chance to slow down, stop, rest, and reevaluate what it is we are actually doing to ourselves and our planet. No more escaping into sports games, no more running around to make every appointment, no more stress to plan big events and trips. Just time to actually focus and restore our mental health and relationships, instead of using only 20% of our brain capacity to make sure today's ‘To Do’ list gets done. Let's take her lead, and listen to what she is trying to tell us.”

Or, from a local Ayurvedic Teacher and Practitioner, Traci Webb:

“Corona Virus - People keep asking me what I recommend from an ayurveda perspective. I tell them we must become mindful of what we allow to touch our minds as much as our faces. We must cultivate invincible immunity of our beliefs as much as our immunoglobulins. That we need to think about what we watch, listen to, and read before we allow it to enter into our minds. We must begin defending against the powers of undue influence, which, like a virus, are floating around unseen in our environment, entering our system without our noticing. That we begin to understand how powerful our brain is and the power of our beliefs are. In this age of information, it's perhaps more important than ever, that we begin to educate ourselves, our children, and our communities, about the power of group psychology, of group conformity, and the power of “phobia indoctrination”. I suggest we approach things scientifically. I suggest we don't rely on others for our information, but rather take a few moments to do the research on the statistics and numbers ourselves. I suggest that when our emotions get the best of us, that we tap into our rational minds and take rational actions to discover if our fears are based in reality or on the fears of others. In no way am I attempting to belittle the seriousness of any flu or virus. Yet, since there's enough information out there on natural flu prevention, and immune tonification, I'm simply attempting to redirect our focus to what I believe is the root of the problem - that is the heart of ayurvedic healing - getting to the root. If we can clear the shelves of Costco in a week, imagine what our collective forces of good could achieve.”

And yet another perspective from Andrew Timothy Gray:

Prayer for a Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced
Remember those whose lives are at stake.
May we who have no risk factors
Remember those most vulnerable.



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May we who have the luxury of working from home
Remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.
May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close
Remember those who have no options.
May we who have to cancel our trips
Remember those that have no place to go.
May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market
Remember those who have no margin at all.
May we who settle in for a quarantine at home
Remember those who have no home.
During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,
Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors.
Amen.

As a people of faith (no matter how diverse that “faith”), we are called to root into our truth, our Knowing, and the web of support we co-create for one another. We are called to look beyond our own fear and inconvenience and ask how we may play a part in the larger healing needed now. We are called to be solace to each other. We are called to see beyond the latest headline and seek the bigger meaning beyond.

During this time, as we are separated in body, I want to continue to be able to connect and support our families (and all ages, as best I can) from afar. Toward that end, I will be hosting twice weekly Virtual Community Care Calls via Zoom (an online platform you can download directly to your phone or computer, simply by going to their website. Each Monday and Friday at 10 a.m., I will light the chalice, ring the bell and have a reading or meditation prepared to share, then open up the circle for those who wish to participate in sacred community (or who just need support). The link to join is: <https://zoom.us/j/423703576>. Alternately, feel free to email me at re@huuf.org for more info.

Thank you for all the ways in which you are helping to show support and keep calm and compassion alive and stay well during this challenging time. Thank you for the ways in which you extend the Beloved Community far beyond the confines of a building, or a geographic locale. And thank you for continuing to do the work that is needed - in your homes, in your families, and in the larger world. What a beautiful thing to be connected to you all.

Yours, In grace, service and gratitude,

Amy Day, Assistant to the DRE

“And people stayed at home. And they read books, and they listened, and they rested, and they exercised, and they made art, and they played games. And they learned new ways of being, and being quiet. And they listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some found their shadows. And people started to think differently. And they started to heal. And in the absence of people living in ignorance, danger, selfishness and unconsciousness, the Earth began to heal. And when the danger passed, and the people came together again, they cried their dead and made new choices, and dreamed new dreams and created new ways of living and completely healing the Earth, just as they had been healed”.

- Kitty O 'Meara



LOCKDOWN

Yes there is fear.
Yes there is isolation.
Yes there is panic buying.
Yes there is sickness.
Yes there is even death.
But,
They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise
You can hear the birds again.
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet
The sky is no longer thick with fumes
But blue and grey and clear.
They say that in the streets of Assisi
People are singing to each other
across the empty squares,
keeping their windows open
so that those who are alone
may hear the sounds of family around them.
They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland
Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.
Today a young woman I know
is busy spreading fliers with her number
through the neighbourhood
So that the elders may have someone to call on.
Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples
are preparing to welcome
and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary
All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting
All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a new way
All over the world people are waking up to a new reality
To how big we really are.
To how little control we really have.
To what really matters.
To Love.
So we pray and we remember that
Yes there is fear.
But there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation.
But there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying.
But there does not have to be meanness.

Yes there is sickness.
But there does not have to be disease of the soul
Yes there is even death.
But there can always be a rebirth of love.
Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.
Today, breathe.
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic
The birds are singing again
The sky is clearing,
Spring is coming,
And we are always encompassed by Love.
Open the windows of your soul
And though you may not be able
to touch across the empty square,
Sing.

Fr. Richard Hendricks, OFM



Your pledge and Sunday collections

As you can imagine, our Sunday collections have stopped but even more important is that a lot of us make our monthly pledge by dropping a check in the collection basket. Please, if you normally make your pledge contribution via the Sunday collection basket, either drop your check by or put it in the mail. Also, for those so inclined we would love for your non-pledge Sunday contribution to come through the mail or, as above, drop it by HUUF (you can shove it through the front door).



Greg Blomstrom, co-president

Pledge Drive update

Given the extraordinary conditions we're experiencing as a result of the coronavirus, and in spite of not being able to have Sunday services, we hope that you know HUUF is still here for you, both as an organization and as a community of caring people looking out for the health and well-being of each of us. To that end, I was struck by the following quote from this month's *UUWorld* which, excerpted, tells us, "...the evidence of our faith as UUs is in the depth and quality of our relationships, ...how we love each other and how we affirm and support each other's humanity." Part of that evidence is seen in how our Board and volunteers are just now finding meaningful ways to provide spiritual and community support to each and every one of us. That said, as you can imagine, HUUF is struggling with the complete loss of Sunday collections while at the same time we go into our pledge drive for the upcoming year. Until a few weeks ago this year's pledge drive was looking similar to previous efforts. That's no longer true.

The pledge drive committee of David Marshak, Rebekah Paez and myself (with help from Colleen Broderick) has decided to at least initiate the pledge drive in mid April, with mailed packets to everyone but with no event or sermon to lean on. Those two items may come later, or not. In addition we will be asking each of you to phone one member and ask a set of questions about how they are doing, what they expect/want from HUUF etc.

So please, in these extraordinary times we hope that you will carefully look at the pledge packet when it comes and commit to helping HUUF and your community of faith.

Greg Blomstrom, co-president

Wiyot Honor Tax

Your Social Action Committee will dedicate the April 19 offering as payment of the Wiyot Honor Tax. We are accustomed to hearing at many of our gatherings a recitation that we exist on Wiyot ancestral lands, stolen and now used to our benefit. Our friend, Chris Peters of Seventh Generation Fund, conceived the Honor Tax a few years ago as a tangible way to recognize and pay back some of this debt and to recognize and support Wiyot tribal sovereignty. <http://www.honortax.org/resolution.html>

Chris is quoted in a North Coast Journal article: "Historically, for thousands of years, this was Wiyot territory and there is a presence on this land that folks need to be conscious of. But that relationship with the land and spirit is broken now, and a step toward that reconnection — of all peoples — is first to acknowledge it's broken. And we find that the best acknowledgment in American society is to reach in your pocket for a little bit of dollars. It may seem an easy way out, but at least it's a conscious effort to say, 'I understand now.'"

Since it is very uncertain whether we'll be able to gather for services on April 19, please send checks to the Fellowship office, payable to HUUF, with a notation Wiyot Honor Tax.

The dedicated offering for March 15 was to be for Food for People. Services were not held that day, so we asked you all to send checks payable to HUUF, with a Food for People notation. As of 3/20/20, \$1,100 has been sent in from just a few donors. If you are not among those few, please add your contribution to Food For People to help them recover from the warehouse sewage backup that caused thousands of pounds of food to be contaminated and thrown away, and driving their operations out of the West 14th Street warehouse. <https://www.foodforpeople.org>

Richard Kossow

Climate Action Campaign News

Thank you to the Rev. Anthony Mtuaswa Johnson and the Rev. Jamal Hasting Tharp who have joined clergy and other faith leaders around the country by signing the Interfaith Power & Light's petition to the CEOs of General Motors, Toyota, and Fiat Chrysler, and asking them to publicly support the current Clean Cars Standards. These automakers sided with the Trump administration to roll back the standards.

CAC has launched Drive 55. Let's drive 55, use less gas, and reduce GHG emissions. Pick up your bumper sticker – Drive 55- Keep Earth Alive - from the CAC letter-writing table on the fourth Sunday of each month.

When HUUF resumes Sunday services, events, and activities, CAC encourages everyone to carry our own hand towels for drying our hands after washing them in the restrooms.

Let's keep on raising our climate-related consciousness. When we all consciously use less gas, when we all consciously turn off the lights, and use less water, these become societal norms. That's when our policymakers listen. Let's turn off the faucets while we take 20 seconds for hand washing.

CAC cancellations due to Covid-19:

The UU - UNO Seminar on Climate Justice from April 16-18 in New York has been cancelled. HUUF teens, Sydney Tarlton and Sydney Bronkall, and their sponsor, Allison Bronkall were prepared to attend with financial aid from the CAC, RE, the Endowment Fund, and the Moore Estate. Instead, they will be attending the sessions remotely. We look forward to hearing about the information they obtain from the seminar at a future Sunday service.

A workshop for socially responsible investing for individuals, scheduled for Saturday, April 18, is now postponed, and will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

A look ahead:

Keep Saturday, May 23, open on your calendars for a workshop to be presented by John Schaefer on Low Cost Battery Power for Blackouts.

Sue Lee Mossman

{Ed. note: Again: drivers can be ticketed for impeding the flow of traffic by driving significantly below the speed limit.}

Art

Eve Anderson is the artist currently showing in the Fellowship Gallery. Eve creates interesting photo collages that explore ideas and emotions. As a group they can be like Taro or Angel Cards leading one to contemplate them for more complex meanings. This a fun show and it will remain up until we can view it.

Cheryl Rau



Interfaith Families Service Rescheduled

Due to rescheduling, the Interfaith Families Celebration Service has been pushed back to Sunday May 17. I invite members to share their experiences of being in relationship with, growing up with, or raising a loved one who follows a different religion or non-religion than oneself. The 9 a.m. service traditionally allows for more sharing between congregants; whereas, the 11 a.m. service will also feature the Interfaith Gospel Choir and hopefully be followed by the Social Action brunch. If you feel moved to share a brief 3-5 minute experience, please contact me at caouette.michael@gmail.com. And mark your calendars for a joyful celebration.

Montana Caouette



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Congregational meeting change

With apologies to Bev Allen, our board of trustees had originally scheduled our annual Congregational meeting for March 29 this year, which did not explicitly meet our bylaw requirement to meet between March 1 and March 15 of each year. Now that we cannot meet at all, we will attempt to conduct only the election part of the proposed agenda via email and Survey Monkey and postpone the other portions of the agenda until we can meet in person, whenever that is. So please watch for an email linking to a Survey Monkey poll asking members to “vote” for the nominating committee recommendations for Board of Trustees, Endowment Committee members and officers. A separate article in this newsletter describes the “slate” of candidates.

Greg Blomstrom, co-president

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 info

Deadline for the **May** issue of the newsletter is Monday, **April 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/HUUFnews>

Stephen Sottong, editor