

Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



To the Beloved HUUF Community

Putting love into our Darkness

In 1993, Unitarian Minister Lynn Ungar put one of Rumi's mythic poems to music, soon to become one of our most enduring and beloved UU hymns. As you read the words, you may even find yourself humming along to this familiar tune:

*Come, come, whoever you are,
wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving.*

*Ours is no caravan of despair.
Come, yet again come.*

However, as I've gotten older, and as the circumstances of collapse continue to proliferate inside our lives and the larger world, there's another version I've come to prefer. A kirtan artist who goes by the moniker Sudhananda penned a version in the minor key, which I feel more completely captures the essence of these words. For all of Ungar's magnificent qualities, there is something that misses an important mark, a lessening of the deep, salvific quality of these words when she positioned them inside a perky, major key.

"It doesn't matter if you've broken your vows a thousand times before": In the version in our hymnals, these words appear almost as an afterthought, slid beneath the upbeat melody in the form of a barely audible drone, which you rarely hear. And yet, to my mind, this is the most important message in the poem.

If you have never known the pain of leaving, if you've never wandered in the desert, if you've never felt buried inside the tomb of your despairing mind or the brokenness of this world; if you've never forgotten, even just for a moment, that you are a child of the Divine—Stardust in drag—then you don't know the exquisite pleasure of coming back to the truth of these words. If you've never known the darkness of the tomb, then the invitation to the light of resurrection becomes trite, meaningless, inert.

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Saturday, April 25, 5:30 p.m.

Keep HUUF humming at our Pledge Party

We all seek a place where we can breathe deeply and be in a safe haven, a place we create with others to soften our challenges. For many of us that place is HUUF. Keeping our congregation healthy requires funds to keep our buildings maintained, grounds kept up, staff paid, the heat and lights on.

Our pledge goal of \$175,000 will meet these goals. Both your family and HUUF feel the financial pressures of these times. We are especially thankful and appreciate deeply your generous offering of money and time to make this community work. We promise to make your contribution count.

Last year we did not have a pledge party. This year we think a great big party is overdue. We're planning some rollicking and giggles for our HUUF Fellowship. The big bash is set for April 25, 5:30 p.m.

Our theme is keeping the HUUF beehive humming. We all love bees. We admire how they work together as one big colony, each tending their duties and buzzing away to find flower nectar. They are keenly aware that they must make honey to survive. While that is not easy, it is necessary.

Our party starts with hors d'oeuvres and drinks in the lobby. In the Sanctuary each table will have a host. The children will have a pizza party in RE with clowns and balloons and bee projects. Wearing Bee costumes and telling Bee stories would be especially grand.

For the adult bees this is a potluck, so bring your favorite dish. We are asking each guest to make reservations online. Use the Sign up Genius app that you will find

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HUUF Board commends staff

We, the Board of Trustees, want to commend our staff, including our Minister, Amy Day, our Congregational Administrator, Rebekah Paez, and our Fellowship Engagement Coordinator, Tiffany Hess, for the extraordinary and heartfelt effort they put into communicating the very difficult circumstances surrounding the death of our longtime member Margy Emerson. Their combined effort produced a tender yet informative email notice as to the circumstances surrounding Margy's death that was distributed far beyond the HUUF community. That outpouring of grief was then tempered by a meaningful vigil only a few days later that helped bring relief and closure to the many who gathered to hear from Amy and others. It all happened on your days off, as so often death does, and so we are even more grateful to have such wonderful and committed staff. Thank you all for your efforts.

Greg Blomstrom, Co-President

Dan Shahin, Vice President

Corazon Amada, Secretary

Colleen Broderick, Trustee

Berti Welty, Co-President

Hart Mendenhall, Treasurer

Joanna Welch, Trustee

Jason Teraoka, Trustee

Planning for a HUUF/Rogue Valley UU Fundraiser next year

For this fundraiser to work in 2027, we need HUUF host families to commit soon to hosting Unitarian adventurers over Memorial Day weekend 2027. As a host family you would house perhaps 2-3 people, usually a couple, sometimes with a child for 2-4 nights in your home. Breakfast is usually provided, but guests are on their own for lunch and dinner (unless you agree otherwise) and guests provide their own transportation. At the end of their stay, you've made new friends and the Fellowship has received a substantial donation.

This effort is patterned after Whalecoast Alaska, a Unitarian Universalist eco-cultural and spiritual program for people who are looking for a more authentic local experience. In this endeavor, HUUF and Rogue Valley UU would solicit their members to host Unitarian Universalist adventurers from out of the area to come partake in each community's sights and activities. For us this would include the Memorial Day weekend Kinetic Sculpture Race, the Arcata Community Forest, hiking in Redwood National and State Parks, local beaches, and such. In Rogue Valley/Ashland, adventurers would visit the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, perhaps go rafting on local rivers, and go to Crater Lake National Park.

The two congregations benefit because instead of paying for a hotel room, guests make a donation roughly equal to the cost of a hotel. With the donation covering both lodging and breakfast, it could total between \$150 and \$200 per night. If ten couples sign up that might be as much as \$2,000 per night for a four-night stay, totaling up to eight thousand dollars to each congregation.

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As someone who has grappled with depression, I am always beautifully and powerfully amazed at what it feels like to be returned to the proverbial land of the living. The moment things palpably shift and one is allowed to wake up and finally, mercifully, have energy and enthusiasm and joy, to meet the demands of the day once more. Because I know what it's like to wander in the dark, the promise of the light holds all the more power. It is only through its absence that its presence has come to hold deep meaning in my life.

Beloved, let us learn to love our darkneses. Let us remember, as we wander in the desert, that this is part of the holy path we are meant to walk, not a detour, not a mistake. Let us remember that a song sung in a minor key that carries us unto our depths is the very thing that makes the return, the repairing of our sacred vows to life, all the sweeter.

As Spring returns us once more to the Light, and to our innate capacity to bloom, regenerate and flourish, let us not forsake the lessons of the Dark. Let us not be so enamored of the happy ending that we miss the magic embedded in the call to lament, to cry out. The table is waiting. The altar is set. And these prophetic words remind us, no matter where we find ourselves in the continuum of delight and despair: "*Come, yet again, come.*"

Yours in grace and gratitude,

Amy Day, Lay Minister

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on the website. The last day for reservations is April 12. Then the fun begins for adult bees: clowns Sean and Jen; music by Elizabeth and Doug; jugglers and jokesters: Sean, Montana, Dan; and finally the Game Show. Don't miss the fun.

Let's keep HUUF humming.

Colleen Brokerick

Sunday Services

Sunday, April 5, 11:00 a.m.

Easter Sunday—Practices of Resurrection, with Amy Day

The American observance of Easter invites us to celebrate a one-time and highly contested event. Words like “risen,” “king,” or “triumph” celebrate the narrative of a transcendent God, one who triumphs over Death itself and ascends into the celestial realm. Conversely, voices like the agrarian poet Wendell Berry invite us to turn our attention to humble, earthy, and accessible ways that we can become practitioners of regeneration and rebirth. Join us for a mytho-poetic discussion on what it means to embody this way of being—to live a resurrected life in times of great upheaval—and orient ourselves to the salvific call of this life.

Sunday, April 12, 11:00 a.m.

A Hospice Chaplain’s View of Life and Death, with Liesbet Bickett and special guest Sr. Chaplain Chris Breedlove, Hospice of Humboldt

What might those nearing death teach us about how to live?

In this special service, we welcome Sr. Chaplain Chris Breedlove of Hospice of Humboldt, who has spent many years accompanying people and families at the threshold between life and death. From the quiet space of hospital rooms and hospice bedsides, he has witnessed moments of grief, tenderness, courage, reconciliation, and unexpected beauty.

Through stories and reflections from his work, Chris will invite us to consider the sacredness of life’s final chapter—and the wisdom that often emerges from it. Together we will explore how presence, compassion, and community can transform how we face mortality, reminding us that the way we live and the way we care for one another matter deeply, all the way to the end.

Join us for a thoughtful and heartfelt service reflecting on life, death, and the love that holds us through both.

Sunday, April 19, 11:00 a.m.

Sermon on the Amount, with Amy Day

In the original biblical sermon (from which we get this pithy title), we are called to become “salt of the world,” to utilize our gifts, time and talents to nourish and sustain. Our wounds become our blessings. Our so-called burdens become invitations to action. As we gather to consider the health of our Fellowship and the ways we can nurture it, may we be re-acquainted with the ways of plentitude, Earth-rooted abundance, and sufficiency. This will be a time to explore our innate gifts and offer them forth.

Sunday, April 26, 11:00 a.m.

Earth Day at the Arcata Marsh

Worship Leader Ann Kilby, and presented by HUUF’s Climate Action Campaign

Elliott Dabill, President of Friends of the Arcata Marsh, will speak about the Arcata Marsh as a longterm and complex community project, as a community asset and longterm project, as an ecologically innovative park, wildlife refuge, public health asset, and as a source of insights to inform future development.

For our beloved Margy Emerson

Lately the days have been stunning in their brightness and expansiveness. Regularly, I find myself journeying to the beach, watching the brilliant light as it plays upon the water, encountering mamas and babies clad in nothing but their swimsuits, ready to greet this early and prolific spring. My car idles at stop signs, and my eye wanders to the fresh shoot of daffodils, newly sprung from the earth. And I find myself thinking, “*Oh... wouldn't Margy just love this,*” followed by another thought: “*I hope wherever she is, she's getting to experience something of this beauty right now.*”

When someone makes the decision to leave this world on a timeline of their own choosing, it's so easy for those of us left behind to question their conclusion. *But what about...and what about... and what about...?* There are so many things they will miss now that they are on the other side. Plants bursting through the soil, a hundred glorious sunsets, the embrace of a beloved, a delicious meal, a favorite song or line of poetry read aloud. At a closer glance, we are reminded: There is so much to love inside this broken and exquisite world.

I believe Margy knew that. I believe she did what the prophetic Mary Oliver bade us do in her *Instructions for a Meaningful Life*: “*Pay attention. Be astonished.*” Margy was a woman who lived her life with a profound degree of intention and care. She crafted a way of being in this world that was humble, yet beautiful, bespoke, deeply aligned with her values and that which she found meaningful and worthy in this life. And so, in some ways it seems fitting that she would bring that same intention and clarity to her death. How she entered it clear-eyed and with forethought and care. As Bonnie MacGregor so beautifully named when we gathered to pay tribute to her and mourn her passing at our community vigil, “*She gave to us what medicine she had to give.*”

As we greet this season of light and once again tend to our garden beds, wonderfully re-acquainted with the waking world, I know I will carry Margy with me. I will honor her memory and bow to her legacy as I marvel at the magic of a heron taking flight, the feel of my bare feet upon freshly warmed sand. I will carry her medicine and her gifts with me, and I will remember some other holy words from the aforementioned poet, that I'm almost certain Margy knew as well:

*“To live in this world
you must be able
to do three things:
to love what is mortal;
to hold it
against your bones knowing
your own life depends on it;
and, when the time comes to
let it go,
to let it go.”*

Thank you, Margy, for your powerful presence in this world, and in our midst. You belong now to all that is. Thank you for showing us a piece of what it means to live—wholly, holy and well—inside this world. Fly on, dear one. We carry you inside our bones, our hearts. The gifts you gave us are ours to keep, carry forward. Of those we will never let go.

Lay Minister Amy Day

Sunday, April 19, after service

Help plan our All Fellowship Retreat

The All Fellowship Retreat is coming up Friday July 31-Sunday August 2 at the Mattole Camp near Honeydew. Our first planning meeting is scheduled for Sunday, April 19 in the Multi-Purpose Room following the service. We hope you'll join us and bring your ideas and enthusiasm.

HUUF Poetry Corner

Play

(for Margy Emerson)

I heard she left her body in her yard and her letter on a table in the kitchen but what consumes my thinking, what I most remember of her now, is that evening with friends when we played a silly game of make believe of improvising sentences and stories together a child's sort of game nonsensical and fun and I see her so clearly in memory as she jumped into the play with both feet even standing at times and looking as delighted as any kid laughing playing and pretending as we all engaged in our childlike performance on that early evening and of us all she played so easily so readily so visibly with delight that this will remain my remembrance of her regardless of how she is gone.

Diane Dickson

A memory of Margy Emerson

It was Fall Equinox, 2018. Outside, in the dark, a priestess regally clad in deep blue, with a magical twinkle in her eyes, gracefully escorted us through Autumn's gate. It seemed like Margy Emerson had been a HUUF staple for at least as long as I'd been here, but that night she made an impact.

Margy's Earth rituals felt like a homecoming, a return to the spiritual path I was meant to be on. After the establishment of Redwood Coast CUUPS, I found myself unexpectedly leading our Beltane ritual for the first time. Margy was right there to help, volunteering to call in West/Water. Although I was nervous, her supportive presence gave me courage that day. In fact, I would not be leading rituals today if it wasn't for Margy.

Margy did not identify as pagan, and she would have never called herself a priestess. She had her own group she called The Village People, but was always happy to take on a role in the CUUPS rituals. Even when she retired from leading rituals, she still attended every single one. She always had such kind things to say afterward, and I always reminded her that we learned from the best.

Although I mainly knew Margy in the realm of Earth rituals, you may have known her from the Climate Action Campaign, the Program and Worship Committee, or as Co-President on the HUUF Board of Trustees. She also worked with building maintenance, and was instrumental in getting HUUF's air filtration system installed. In her life she was a potter, author, and Tai Chi Chuan instructor.

On my front porch, I have a yin-yang plate of Margy's, displayed alongside a Blessed Be sign that once belonged to Suzanne Moore, who also led Earth-based rituals at HUUF. Whenever I walk past this space, I smile, imagining these wise women guiding our work from the realm of the ancestors. Margy was well-loved and is deeply missed, but she has gifted us with a legacy that will continue to inspire and nourish all those who knew her.

Yemaya Kimmel

Climate Action Campaign

Margy's many contributions; meanwhile, our work continues

This month we wish to remember and honor Margy Emerson. We cherish having known Margy and are deeply grateful for her many contributions to the HUUF community and beyond. But we especially honor her work for our Climate Action Campaign. With her earth-based spirituality and her belief in the UU principle of the interconnected web of life, Margy was extremely concerned about the effects of climate change on the living organism that is Gaia, Mother Earth. Margy worked with CAC with remarkable intention and focus. At CAC's launch in 2018, Margy helped design our logo and the climate banner that Fellowship members have stood with on Saturday mornings alongside the Black Lives Matter banner. We deeply appreciate Margy's help with CAC's "Drive 55, Keep Earth Alive" message. For this campaign, Margy organized the production of several hundred bumper stickers.

For more than a year, Margy and fellow CAC member Cena Marino posted a monthly climate action in the newsletter for members to put our UU faith into practice to reduce our carbon footprint. For every monthly action she proposed, Margy put in many hours of research. For example, to cut down on single-use plastic containers and bags, Margy met with local grocery managers to discuss ways to accomplish this. A few years ago Margy served as liaison between HUUF's Board and CAC on the project to install additional solar panels, and kept in touch with the solar installer during the installation of the panels. Margy also kept communication going between Scott Allen, then chair of the building committee, CAC, and the Board on the project of replacing a gas furnace with a heat pump. When Covid struck, she was instrumental in getting an air filtration system in place, balancing cost, energy efficiency, and effectiveness.

As HUUF members, we're very grateful for Margy's focused and intentional work on the Worship Committee to organize and offer rich and thoughtful, Sunday services. In connection with climate change, she arranged to have Andrea Tuttle speak one Sunday about her attendance at the COP conference in 2019.

These are only some of Margy's contributions to CAC's work. We honor her light and legacy as we carry on the work to protect Earth's climate and life systems.

At February's CAC action morning, members and friends wrote 20 postcards and letters to the EPA to express opposition to the repeal of the Greenhouse Gas Endangerment Finding, the legal cornerstone of all U.S. climate policies since 2009. These will be part of the evidence that attorneys will need in their lawsuit to have the Endangerment Finding reinstated.

In addition, we collected \$73 in donations toward this year's Books to Local Elementary Schools Project. Thus far, ten more elementary schools have requested the set of books which are provided free of charge to the schools.

CAC has joined EPIC and other climate action groups to ask that the California Energy Commission condition Proposition 4 funding grants for offshore wind ports on port electrification and the use of zero-emission equipment.

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Broderick

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Both the Humboldt Bay Harbor District and the Port of Long Beach have indicated that their offshore wind ports will be "green" but what that entails is still uncertain. Having the CEC premise the use of Prop 4 money (specifically money located in the "Clean Air" section of Proposition 4) on port electrification will ensure that these investments do not unnecessarily burden neighboring communities with air pollution, reduce the cost of operations over time, and ensure that the ports are built from the start with California's zero emission goals in mind.

In spiritual community and in solidarity for the future health of Gaia and our collective children,
Sue Lee Mossman, Co-chair

Two Classified Ads

1) Kind, responsible couple seeking rental

Quiet, respectful couple looking to rent a one-bedroom or mother-in-law unit. We are used to living simply and in smaller, efficient spaces. Longtime locals of the area, have great references. My husband is a self-employed carpenter/handyman. No pets. We keep a clean house, enjoy nature, and have green thumbs. References available.

Thanks, Laura. Contact me at lagduo@gmail.com.

2) Skilled gardener and HUUF volunteer seeking rental

Skilled gardener and garden designer seeks small house or apartment to rent, up to \$1,200/month. I am a senior woman, neat, quiet, and highly responsible, with one pet bird. I created and designed some of HUUF's garden beds for the Grounds Committee. References available. Call or leave a message for Lynne at (707) 268-5539 or email lynneabels@gmail.com.