

Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



September 2021

Minister's corner

Hello again! The July/August newsletter contained some brief personal history. This month I'll touch on my professional and spiritual journeys. Because of limited space this is highly condensed, but I'll share more as I begin to offer services.

I mentioned last time that my younger brother Tim has Down syndrome. My late father had many fine qualities and a good heart, but at this stage of his life he just didn't want to deal with Tim's inherent challenges. He decreed Tim would become a ward of the state (and thus not live at home), which caused a rift and ongoing tension between my parents. (FYI Tim has lived happily for decades in a caring group home, and long ago reconnected to his nuclear and extended family.)

The difficult and then-unnamed feelings of loss, resentment, and misplaced responsibility in my two-year-old being led me to later withdraw from my family. At puberty, I also got really angry – and suffice to say, if you or any loved ones are struggling with substance abuse, I might well be a resource.

When my ten-year roller coaster ride ended, I finished college, majoring in Political Science with an eye toward public interest law. But while wondering why I couldn't get excited about applying to law schools, a sudden series of spiritual synchronicities took me to an M.A. program in Culture and Creation Spirituality at Holy Names College in Oakland, CA.

Led by progressive theologian Matthew Fox (Original Blessing, et al.), the focus on an earth-honoring spirituality emphasizing compassion, creativity, and inclusive justice (including for earth's non-human inhabitants) was revelatory. It also revealed why I'd hesitated about law school. Because only in encountering this program's diverse spiritual teachers (including pagan/goddess spirituality leader Starhawk) and (very UU-like) perspectives were the questions of my searching soul finally articulated.

My desire to share what I'd learned via mass media eventually brought me to Los Angeles in 1996. A lovely woman named Ann and I married in 1999 when my TV writing career was blossoming, and by 2003 we had two children. But our marriage didn't fully work, and we divorced amicably in 2011.

Though respectful, this was painful. It was also becoming painfully clear to me that the form in which I'd been working wasn't the best vehicle for the viewpoints I wanted to share. I explored new options (teaching, social work, counseling), but like law school none felt quite right. So, in the fall of 2009,

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People

Congratulations to Maya Kaup who is the lead author on her recent publication entitled, "On the Move: Sloths and their Epibionts as Model Mobile Ecosystems" in Biological Reviews from the Cambridge Philosophical Society. See her publication at <https://tinyurl.com/32awhyxv>. Maya was a member in the children's RE about 18 years ago.

Sue Y Lee

Minister's corner (cont.)

newly separated and without work, I visited the UU Fellowship in Thousand Oaks, mainly to explore it as a possible spiritual community for my kids.

Or so I thought. Because sitting in the sanctuary before my first service, feeling more than a bit lost and like I had failed on several counts, I flipped through *Singing the Living Tradition*. I had only been to maybe a dozen UU services, and was now astonished to find numerous poems and readings I'd encountered elsewhere that had sustained and inspired me. I began to weep. For the pain and losses; and also because for the first time in what seemed like forever, I felt like I was home.

This led to conversations with the interim minister, who after hearing my background and aspirations encouraged me to pursue UU ministry. I later had a profound mystical experience that affirmed my call. (I'll share that story in a sermon sometime.) So my tears that Sunday heralded a multi-layered homecoming, as they also called me to my true vocational dwelling.

I am deeply grateful that this call has now brought me to your spiritual home – and delighted to begin sharing it with you.

Many Blessings,

Rev. Peter Farriday

Women's Retreat

Since the spring retreat went well, we will do it again, but for a shorter time. The Women & Religion VIRTUAL Retreat will take place Saturday, September 25, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Zoom. The theme is *New Beginnings*. In addition to learning sessions and affinity circles, Paula Cole Jones will be our keynote speaker on the proposed 8th UU Principle, which articulates a commitment to dismantling white supremacy. (See www.8thprincipleuu.org)

Regular registration is \$25; for women 18-35 and first timers: \$10. Scholarships are available. Register before the September 20 deadline at <https://www.pcduuwr.org/>.

Marnie Singer



Lifespan Religious Exploration

To the Beloved Community,

Recently I happened upon these words by writer and spiritual teacher Marianne Williamson, that seemed apropos for our ongoing conversations here:

There is a point in everyone's spiritual journey where, if you are not careful, the search for self-awareness can turn into self-preoccupation. There is a fine line, at times, between self-exploration and narcissism. One way to see how we're doing is to measure the fun factor: spiritual growth that's too much fun all the time usually isn't growth at all. Anything that has become too comfortable cannot ultimately be comforting. The universe is invested in our healing, and healing is a fierce, transformative fire. It is the product of human willingness to change, and change is often hard.

For years, I thought I only had to heal myself, and the world would take care of itself. Clearly, we must work on healing our own neuroses in order to become effective healers (and I would add leaders, caretakers, parents, partners and world-changers). But then, having worked on our own issues a while, another question vets for an answer: How healed can we ultimately become while the social systems in which we live and move, and have our earthly being, remain sick?

World conditions challenge us to look beyond the status quo for responses to the pain of our times. We look to powers within as well as to powers without. A new, spiritually based social activism is beginning to assert itself. It stems not from hating what is wrong and trying to fight it, but from loving what could be and making the commitment to bring it forth. A non-violent political dynamic is once again emerging, and it is a beacon of light at the dawn of the twenty-first century. The goal, as in the words of Martin Luther King Jr., is 'the establishment of the beloved community.' Nothing less will heal our hearts and nothing less will heal the world.

It is the task of our generation to recreate the American polity, to awaken from our culture of distraction and re-engage the process of democracy with soulfulness and hope. Yes, we see there are problems in the world. But we believe in a universal force that, when activated by the human heart, has the power to make all things right. **Such is the divine authority of love;** to renew the heart, renew the nations, and ultimately, renew the world.

Such is the vision I continue to hold in my heart for this community. A place where we can gather and be held and healed from our collective and individual traumas. Where we can be witnessed and uplifted, supported in our unfolding. And like the poet Kahlil Gibran said, to let this form of love, "be a moving sea between the shores of (our) souls..." A love that actively spreads beyond the tiny boundaries of our congregation and joyfully pours itself into the continual healing and unfolding of the larger world.

As we gather again, I am delighted to announce:

We have brought on three terrific RE teachers for our Religious Exploration program this year. **Jessalyn Ducchi**, a local children's yoga and mindfulness teacher, has signed on as our **Childcare Coordinator**, and will be active in the RE classroom (and maybe joining us for some kinesthetic worship experiences during Sunday services, as well). **Sabrina Miller**, a member of the core team at Cooperation Humboldt, community organizer and youth advocate, will be joining us as the **Teen Coordinator**, as well as lending her unique energy and sparkle to our multi-age classroom this fall. And **Debbie Kallish**, former preschool teacher, artist and creativity teacher, will be with us, as well, on our teaching team. Together we'll be welcoming the multiple ages of youth that join us in-person (Goddess and CDC-willing) on **Sundays at 11 am**.

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Sunday Services

Sunday, Sept 5 – 11 a.m.

Labor Day: A Bygone Day of Rest – Amy Day, Scarlett Trippsmith, Bonnie MacGregor

During this past year and half of uncertainty, we have seen many alarming inequities and dichotomies within our culture concerning work and the workplace. There is an expectation – even a requirement – to be constantly producing even though or because we are in the middle of a Global pandemic. Do we ever just stop to truly rest? Are we really living if work is the means and the end?

We will hear three perspectives from Scarlett Trippsmith, Amy Day, and Bonnie MacGregor of how work has changed in their lifetimes and how we, as a culture, might benefit from a change in perspective on rest.

Sunday, Sept. 12 – 11 a.m.

Choose to Bless the World – Rev. Peter Farriday

Many of you already know that September's Soul Matters topic is "Embracing Possibility." I can't imagine a more fitting theme as we begin our shared ministry. On our first Sunday together, Rev. Farriday will reflect on aspects of this, including how we might embrace UU minister Rebecca Parker's invitation to "Choose to Bless the World" in the most powerful ways possible.

This Ingathering Sunday customarily includes a "Gathering of the Waters" ritual. Because the pandemic is still with us, in lieu of individual water-sharing, the service leaders will instead blend local waters on everyone's behalf – waters that flow together to nourish our lives and our Fellowship.

Sunday, Sept. 19 – 11 a.m.

Possibilities Within Limits – Amy Day, Scarlett Trippsmith, Ann Kilby

During these times of constant transition, sometimes the path ahead seems obscure. What possibilities might we find ahead? What obstacles might we encounter? We come to contemplate these questions again and again throughout our lifetimes, arriving at different answers each time. This interactive service will offer us an encounter with the question: What are the possibilities within limits in your life currently?

Sunday, Sept. 26 – 11 a.m.

The Door is Round and Open – Rev. Peter Farriday

No one speaks to "Embracing Possibility" quite like the great Sufi mystical poet, Rumi. Four days short of the 814th anniversary of his birth (commonly thought to be Sept. 30, 1207) Rev. Farriday will explore Rumi's wisdom and his lyrical yet profound calls to realize and express our spiritual essence.

Lifespan Religious Exploration (cont.)

Our **OWL program** is rebooting once more, with our team of deeply dedicated facilitators ready to teach a full cohort of 4-6 grade students in late September. Our **Playscape Team** continues to make progress toward realising our vision of a nature-based playspace and outdoor classroom space. And our community-care ministry of small groups program, **Soul Matters**, is starting up once more.

All that is to say, I hope you will find a space in which to join us. A space to be renewed and inspired, and support you in your own ongoing efforts of to play your part in the “*renewing of the world.*”

Amy Day, Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration

En-Roads can help prioritize climate policy

It’s apparent to even the least aware that the climate crisis is here. But so far lawmakers appear oblivious to real solutions. We’ve delayed so long now that solutions must reduce carbon dioxide emissions radically. Merely setting goals isn’t enough anymore; immediate, concrete legislation is essential. Individual actions haven’t saved us; only government action can.

We used to believe that 1.5 degrees Celsius rise was a safe limit, but we’re at 1.2 degrees now and damages are already too high. Moreover, it’ll be very hard to hold temperature rise to 2.0 degrees.

MIT scientists offer an easy-to-use way for each of us to prioritize the options. The En-Roads model (en-roads.climateinteractive.org), from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, combines technical and economic modeling to forecast temperature rise with any mix of policies the user chooses.

One policy is essential to keep us below 2.0 degrees: without a high price on carbon dioxide pollution, other necessary policies can’t work soon enough. The good news is that, where pollution prices are high enough, mostly in Europe, they have reduced carbon dioxide emissions.

California claims to be at the forefront of climate protection. But heretofore lawmakers have taken only meager steps to put a price on carbon. California’s cap and trade program, designed twice by fossil fuel lobbyists, sets the carbon price (\$17 per ton) at less than a tenth what En-Roads shows (\$247) is needed.

Beyond arresting the climate crisis, another issue ignored in Sacramento is how California will pay for damages (fires, floods, and sea level) the crisis has inflicted. Those damage costs should be paid by fossil fuel burners who cause them, by requiring cap and trade fees to cover those state expenditures. Fossil fuel lobbyists won’t like that either.

Given the urgency, letters to Assembly Member Wood and Senator McGuire should request a prompt and drastic revision of cap and trade.

Contact info for McGuire and Wood will be posted on the HUUF website at huuf.org within the link for the Climate Action Campaign.

To help policy evaluation, there will be a Sunday service (time to be determined) at which attendees can make up their own policy mix with En-Roads, and see the effect of the policy mix on temperature rise.

John Schaefer

Art

It is with sadness the Art & Aesthetics Committee is postponing the All Fellowship Show. We love to see the work that HUUFers produce, but it doesn’t seem that we can put up a show until it is safe to meet inside. We hope that you will be able to appreciate that you made art and will stay tuned in for another chance to present it. Thank You, Artists.

Cheryl Rau

Climate Action Campaign News

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) just released its alarming climate change report. The Earth is now almost certain to warm 1.5 degrees Celsius within the next two decades – triggering even harsher extreme weather events: heat waves, droughts, wildfires, and storms. Human activity, through burning fossil fuels is the major cause of the rapid climate change and the crisis that we are in right now. To limit the rise of global temperature, and mitigate the effects of rapidly changing climate, carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses (GHG) emissions generated from transportation, power plants, and industrial processes must be drastically reduced and carbon neutrality reached by mid-century or sooner. This can only be done effectively if we have strong and aggressive government-led climate policies such as sufficient financial incentives to remove fossil fuels from the global economy.

With this grim report from the IPCC, I couldn't help but feel despair. But climate scientist and writer, Dr. Katharine Hayhoe tells us, "We must act so that we can feel hopeful, not the other way around."

So, what action can we as a spiritual community take now?

According to the En-Roads model from MIT (see related article), the primary action to limit global temperatures to 1.5 degrees Celsius is to establish carbon pricing. Our state and federal governments can do this via an effective carbon tax and through effective cap and trade programs. Without a high price on GHG pollution, other necessary policies can't hold off the climate crisis soon enough. In Europe, high carbon pricing reduced carbon dioxide emissions.

California has made some very slow and puny attempts at pricing carbon. One of the goals of the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act (SB 32) is to reduce GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. This act also created a multi-year Cap-and-Trade Program in 2013 to reduce GHG emissions over a span of 20 years. Influenced by fossil fuel lobbyists, it set the carbon price at \$17 per ton which is nowhere near the price that the En-Roads model shows is needed (\$247 per ton) to get polluters to reduce GHG emissions sufficiently to halt the rise of global temperature. For more information on the state's cap-and-trade program, see <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/cap-and-trade-program>.

As members of this spiritual community for whom climate action is a moral imperative, CAC urges you to contact our state legislators to support higher and more realistic carbon pricing.

Contact info for our legislators will be on the CAC link within the HUUF website.

Climate actions on other fronts:

Thanks to some CAC members, who joined with 350 Humboldt recently to demonstrate at Chase Bank in Eureka to call out on their claims of green credentials while still financing loans for oil pipelines such as Line 3.

As the County's regional Climate Action Plan (CAP) is about to be released, there will be a request for public input. Given the IPCC's alarming climate assessment, we need to contact our city council members to support a qualified CAP. A qualified CAP would require following SB 32's target goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. Not all of our local elected officials are on board for the qualified CAP.

Plans are still pending to join Dr. Wendy Ring and others for a group review/discussion of the CAP on zoom when it is released. As soon as there is a firm date set, it will be announced in the HUUF Weekly.

Speaking of a discussion of the County's CAP, local climate activist, Dr. Wendy Ring,

is inviting everyone to participate in a climate action board game as a fun way to talk with friends about the County's CAP and what we can do locally to slow climate change. The game, co-designed by Dr. Ring et al, is called EverGreen: the Humboldt Climate Game. It is specific to our county and is based on models and decision tools developed by state agencies, academic institutions, and reputable NGOs. Dr. Ring is organizing outdoor games right now with four people around a picnic table which allows for social distancing. Please email me at syll1@humboldt.edu if interested.

Heads up for an announcement in the October newsletter for an intergenerational all congregational climate action of the month challenge.

For more information about the CAC, check our link at huuf.org

Thanks everyone for all your good energy on behalf of Mother Earth.

Sue Y. Lee

FINDING ELIM

By Dave Nelson



NOW THAT **IS** SCARY!



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Another slim month

The newsletter relies on the members and friends for its content. This month, only eight articles were submitted. If you want to preserve this avenue of communication, submit articles. The deadline information is published on the back page of each issue with a link to the guidelines.

Stephen Sottong

Deadline information

Deadline for the **October** issue of the newsletter is Monday, **September 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/HUUFNewsGuide>

Stephen Sottong, editor



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