

# Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



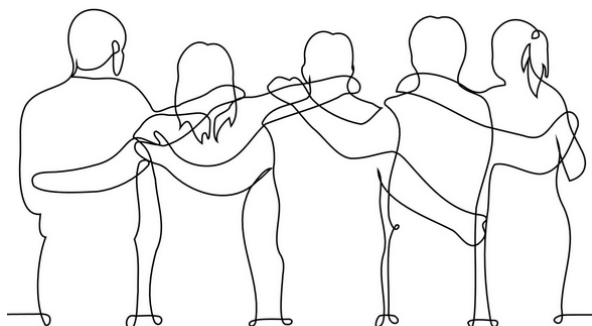
*To the Beloved HUUF Community*

*September 2025*

## Bringing belonging into our lives

I sat down to pen a note to you all about creating a culture of belonging. And as life would have it, the dog then needed walking. And the teenager needed a ride. These adored and sentient beings, to whom I've committed to making a home and a life with, have needs that don't always align with my own. And so, into the waking world we went. And on our walk, we encountered a stooped over man with a cane who looked up, wanting to draw us into conversation. "This is a nice spot," he opined, and inquired about the age of my dog and told me a little more about his own. I made the universal nod of polite dismissal with my head

and gently averted my eyes, intent to keep moving ahead on the path. After all, I had thoughts on belonging to return to, and a deadline not to be missed.



Then we encountered a woman, who turned to us with the full force of her quiet smile and told me, "You look just like my cousin." And we marveled at how lively her pooches became in the presence of my own. And again, I tugged at the leash of my furry friend, and we deftly made our way. As we paused a little further down the road, I could hear another man engaging her in conversation, could hear her say that they'd just moved to California and were looking to make this their new home. And I heard him welcome her and invite her into a space of gracious companionship I'd denied her only moments ago. Clearing a space at the proverbial table through the gift of his few moments of time and attention.

I made my way back to this keyboard, intent on saying something meaningful and potent about Belonging, only to realize I'd been handed a perfect opportunity to not just opine

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## Board report

### Your Board of Trustees has been very busy

During the summer the board had two regular meetings, plus a working retreat. Your Board co-presidents are Greg Blomstrom and Berti Welty. Dan Shahin has accepted the role of vice-president, and Hart Mendenhall is our treasurer. Corazon Amada will be our secretary, taking notes using AI-enhanced note-taker. Your remaining Board trustees are Colleen Broderick, Joanna Welch, and Jason Teraoka. Each staff member submits a written report to the Board each month. Our lay minister, Amy Day, attends Board meetings.

The Board meets in the HUUF library at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. In order to get through our agenda, we limit congregants' non-agendized input to the first 30 minutes. Please email Greg in advance if you wish to put an item on the agenda.

At our July 8 Board meeting we brought new Board members up to speed. It was explained that since we have not paid into unemployment (as a religious organization we are not required), we are paying Bridgette Garuti's unemployment while she receives benefits. The tensions with Temple Beth El over our support of Palestinians was discussed. The remaining time was spent setting the date and exploring options for our Board retreat.

At our August 12 meeting we again discussed our relationship with Temple Beth El. After being told there was no urgency we deferred the matter to our retreat. We had an update on unemployment expenses, discussed

*See "Board report," page six*

***HUUF Sunday Services go back to the 11 a.m. start time — see page three***

## To Know the Dark: A community grief ritual

Join us on Saturday, September 13, 1:00-4:00 p.m. at HUUF for an open, accessible, and donation-based Community Grief Ritual, a sacred space to come together to honor, express, and transform the grief we carry — both personally and collectively. Inspired by the work of Francis Weller and his *Five Gates of Grief*, this gathering offers a place for our hearts to be held and witnessed in community.

Through land-based altars, we will root ourselves in the beauty and presence of the Earth, offering our tears, prayers, songs, and gratitude back to the land. A song circle opening led by Maggie McKnight will invite us to voice our sorrow and longing, metabolizing grief through sound and harmony. Gentle movement and guided meditation with Hanna Nielsen and Amy Day will help us enter the body's wisdom, accessing the layers of grief that words cannot reach. Finally, we will work with the land and the senses with a ritual of composting our grief and resting upon the Earth, led by Alissa Pattison.

This work is nourished by the tender truth that *"grief is love that has nowhere to go."* Together, we will give that love somewhere to go—into the hands, hearts, and presence of our community—where it can be honored, held, and transformed.

All are welcome. Whether you come with a specific loss, a quiet ache, or simply a wish to tend the sorrows of the world, you will find a place here. No prior experience is needed—only your open heart. \$10-\$40 suggested donation. None will be turned away for lack of funds. For more information, and to read about the schedule, workshop descriptions, and facilitator bios, check: [huuf.org](https://huuf.org)

Amy Day



## Belonging, from page one

about the subject, but to *live* it. To drop, temporarily, my timeline and agenda and step into the rich, messy landscape of felt experience. To not simply craft language in the comfy recesses of my own head, but rather craft a lived encounter with another human being.

This month, as we come back together after our summer sojourns, we are asked to sit with the question of "How We Create a Culture of Belonging." What does this ask of us? What do we need to give up in order to welcome another fully into our midst? Whether it's taking the added time to drop into conversation with a new face in the foyer after service, or offering someone a tour of the building or a ride to Sunday service. Or shifting our service time to accommodate those who struggle to get to us at an earlier hour. Or offering injured, disabled, or older bodies a more comfortable and accessible place to sit. Or simply taking the time to inquire of those gathered with us: *"What would help you feel more at ease inside this space? What do you need to feel safe and seen?"*

What was it that first made you feel a sense of belonging here, my friend? Who was it that reached out their hand, extended their gaze, their energy, their time, their warm, unhurried gaze? What was the moment you went from visitor to friend? From a friend to a full-fledged, beloved part of the larger whole? I'd love to invite you to take a minute to reflect upon this and share. (You can do so at [minister@huuf.org](mailto:minister@huuf.org)).

In the meantime, may my missed opportunity serve as an invitation to you: Our words matter less than our actions. The embodied practice outweighs any lofty principle we can name, any day of the week. Or we can carry with us these words of Maya Angelou: *"People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel."*

May you feel the call this month, dear one, to keep haltingly, imperfectly, haphazardly, and beautifully creating the world of which we are dreaming. May you feel the moments that are calling you to embody your values inside the waking world. And may you carry the felt remembrance of belonging deep inside you, and offer it freely, wherever you go.

Yours in grace and gratitude,  
Amy Day, Lay Minister

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## Sunday Services

***Note that all services start at 11:00 a.m.***

**Sunday, September 7, 11:00 a.m.**

***Gathering of the Waters***

**Holli Sinn and Amy Day**

The Water Communion is an end-of-summer tradition at HUUF and in many other Unitarian Universalist congregations as we begin the new Fellowship year. The water element is deeply associated with our emotions and our blood, the fluid that powers our very lives. Join us for this celebratory and reflective time together. You may bring a small vessel of water to add to our collective font, that it may tell a brief story of where your life has taken you over the summer, and your hopes for our future together.

Potluck to follow. Please bring a simple side dish to share.

**Sunday, September 14, 11:00 a.m.**

***The Blessing of the Animals***

**Amy Day and Beverly Morgan Lewis**

Services that celebrate our animal companions are increasingly popular in UU circles. From the Catholic tradition, we schedule this sweet, fur-loving service at a time of year that honors the life and legacy of St. Francis of Assisi, whose message centered around peace, love, and care for all creation. Today we honor the furry creatures that keep our hearts open, our nervous systems regulated, get us into nature for daily walks, and attune us to a more tender way of being in this world. Weather permitting, we'll gather outside for this fun and festive gathering. Bring your well-behaved (and leashed, please) animals to be blessed and affirmed for all they bring to our sphere.

**Sunday, September 21, 11:00 a.m.**

***Fall Equinox Celebration***

**Kathryn Henderson and the Redwood Coast Covenant of UU Pagans**

Fall Equinox is a time of balance between the light and the dark of the seasons—the second of the three Harvest Celebrations. In this year's celebration we join to balance and empower the Earth and ourselves through song, meditational dance, and divination from Wiccan and Buddhist traditions.

Kathryn Henderson is an ordained priestess of the Reformed Congregation of the Goddess, a student teacher in the Tibetan Buddhist Tara Dance tradition, and Professor Emerita in Sociology.

**Sunday, September 28, 11:00 a.m.**

***Stone Soup Sunday Returns***

**Maggie McKnight and Amy Day**

As the song and story bid us, "You gotta bring what you got and put it in the pot!" Today we gather once more in a spirit of service and sacred action to let our prayers for a better, more just and heart-led world be embodied through simple, yet collective action. Together we will gather in song, set our intentions for our time together, then spend time in social action, concluding with a celebratory meal. Bring your open heart, your willing hands, and a simple potluck dish to share as we return to this joyous communal practice.

## **Here's a reminder—Sunday Services require a community commitment**

HUUF's Sunday services need your help.

There are many simple tasks that need to be done each week for our services. We ask each of you to sign-up for two or more of these tasks each month. The same old diehards have been doing these tasks, and they are tired. The tasks include: being a greeter, setting up chairs, making the coffee, bringing flowers, cleaning up after coffee hour, and on weeks when we do potlucks, both set-up and clean-up is needed.

Hopefully, starting on August 31 there will be a sign-up board. Sign your name and pick up the slip that says what the task includes. These are fun and simple ways to assist and get to know your fellow congregants.

*Berti Welty and Sylvia Shaw*

## **Darsty Nancy McAlinn: October 21, 1932—May 29, 2025**

Darsty McAlinn, a devoted educator, artist, and compassionate community member, died peacefully in Eureka. She was 92 years old.

Born on October 21, 1932, in East Grand Forks, Minnesota, Darsty—born Nancy Lee—was proud of her Norwegian heritage. One of her most cherished childhood memories was of waving her small Norwegian flag at a parade for the visiting Prince and Princess of Norway in 1940. Her love for her roots remained strong throughout her life, often expressed through traditional Norwegian culture.

Darsty married Chuck Christenson in 1952. They had two children, Loree and Jon. Though their marriage ended in divorce, Darsty and Chuck remained friends—a testament to the enduring respect and affection they had for each other.

Darsty moved to Fortuna in 1962. Two years later, when the devastating Eel River flood struck, Darsty stepped forward with characteristic empathy and generosity. She helped feed victims of the disaster, supported displaced families and even cleaned homes affected by the mud and flood waters. Her selfless actions during this time left a lasting impression on those around her.

It was after moving to Humboldt that Darsty met John McAlinn. The two shared a deep bond and were married on July 22, 1982. Their love for each other endured for more than forty years until her death, and he was with her in her final moments.

Professionally, Darsty worked for more than two decades as a special education teacher. A gifted artist herself, skilled in painting and sculpting, she brought creativity into the classroom, teaching art to students with special needs. Her passion for helping others extended beyond her retirement, as she continued to serve the community by teaching art to seniors.

Darsty's artistic spirit flourished throughout her life. Whether painting or sculpting, she found joy in creative expression and encouraged others to do the same. Her hobbies reflected not only her talent but also a desire to uplift those around her, especially seniors with whom she shared much of her time. In the 1970s, Darsty made a deeply personal decision to change her name from Nancy to Darsty, a tribute to her late brother who had been called that name by his band of fellow soldiers during World War II. Her brother had been awarded the Silver Star for his service, a legacy that clearly inspired Darsty's own strength and resilience.

A HUUF member for over four decades, Darsty rarely missed Sunday services, seated beside John. The couple could often be found seated in their usual front row spot during worship, openly sharing their “detailed joys and sorrows” during community reflections, a ritual that underscored their deep connection to both faith and fellowship.

Darsty is survived by her loving husband John McAlinn; daughter Loree McKague; son Jon Christenson; son-in-law Tim McKague; and grandson Timothy McKague.

Darsty's life was marked by compassion, creativity, and an unwavering commitment to others. She leaves behind a legacy of kindness that will continue to inspire all who knew her.

May her memory bring comfort and peace to those whose lives she touched. A memorial service will be held on Sunday, September 28, from 2:00—5:00 p.m. at the Fellowship.

*Tom Lewis*

## **Berti is grateful**

Berti Welty gives a big shout out to all who made her birthday party a lovely and memorable event. She says “It felt so good to have so many friends come together to welcome me into my 80s. You are what makes my life so special and rewarding.”

## **Sing-along with Maggie**

At the service auction Berti Welty won Maggie McKnight's offer to lead a sing-a-long, and all are invited to her home, 654 Ole Hansen Rd., in the Indianola area on Saturday, September 6 at 4:00 p.m. She says, “We will meet in the open lawn space past our shop. Bring chairs and perhaps a jacket. Please carpool as much as possible, and RSVP. The parking up by the shop will be for handicapped people only. The walk from the shop is about 40 feet on level grass.” Please RSVP at email: [bertijo@humboldt1.com](mailto:bertijo@humboldt1.com), or by phone: (707) 382-1472.





## Climate Action Campaign

### **CAC news—Come join us at the Arcata Plaza for Sun Day, September 20**

We're happy to report that the Rotary Club of Eureka approved the purchase of six sets of five environmental and climate-themed books for six Eureka elementary school libraries. The club approved an application submitted by CAC and 350 Humboldt's Outreach and Action Committee for \$642 to fund the books.

CAC and 350 had collaborated last spring to visit and offer the books to 26 schools in the county. Fifteen schools responded positively, and we will deliver the books to them in time for the beginning of the new school year.

Nancy Ihara from 350's Outreach Committee and Sue from CAC made a presentation to the Rotary Club of Eureka about the Book Project on August 25. Thanks to the generosity of HUUF members and friends, CAC raised \$394 in donations. 350 Humboldt generously covered the remainder of the cost (\$1,278), plus bookplates that acknowledge the donor groups.

#### **Electric home and vehicle fair**

Thank you to Pat Carr who represented CAC at this event on August 19 and volunteered to answer questions about heat pump hot water heaters. According to Pat, the fair, which was co-sponsored by CAC, "was wildly successful based on attendance. I barely stopped talking for three hours—many people interested in heat pumps, and maybe a few will actually replace their gas furnaces with them."

We also thank our HUUF members who attended and added to its attendance success.

Deepest appreciation to Chip Sharpe, Tom Lewis, and HUUF and CAC members who showed up every Saturday over the summer at the Courthouse in Eureka with the Black Lives Matter and Climate Action banners. You folks rock!

#### **Upcoming climate events**

On Saturday, September 20, everyone is invited to join CAC and HUUF families as we walk with 350 Humboldt in the North Country Fair's All Species Parade at 1:00 p.m. as part of the national Sun Day event organized by Bill McKibben, founder of [350.org](https://350.org). While Sun Day officially occurs the day before, join us for the fun, come in costume, wear a mask or sandwich board, and let's get the message out: solar and wind power are the cheapest energy sources on earth. See <https://tinyurl.com/mrx4srd>. As McKibben says, we want "to pressure local and state governments to loosen the strict regulations on the development of solar power."

We will stage at 12:30 in the parking lot behind the Campus Store. Tiffany Hess and Debbi Kalish, RE co-leaders, have fun ideas for how children can participate in the All Species Parade with climate-themed hats, streamers, shakers, and maybe seed balls to distribute to spectators.

Some CAC members will participate and sing climate-themed songs with the Raging Grannies who will lead our group in the parade wearing climate-themed sandwich boards.

For more about why Bill feels "a U.S. rooftop solar renaissance is possible in this political climate," you can go to this lightly edited interview and transcript at <https://tinyurl.com/2su4tt3b>.

An encouraging statistic from McKibben: "California is, almost every day, [producing a hundred percent of its electricity for long stretches from renewable sources](#)...the bottom line is, California, fourth largest economy on planet Earth, is this summer [using 40 percent less natural gas than it did two years ago](#) to generate electricity. If you wanna know why the fossil fuel industry is freaking out and sponsoring every bad politician on Earth, that's why."



*A room full of people learned about renewable energy options for their homes at Jefferson School on August 19.*

*See "Climate action," page seven*

## ***Board report, from page one***

disruptive behavior at HUUF and the need for training on how to respond, a policy, and a deescalation team. Training should include a 'what to do' card on the podium. The Board retreat was set for August 22-23, and a committee was formed to plan it.

October 19 was selected for the fall Congregational Meeting to be held following the service. Snacks will be served to stave off hunger. Each staff member submitted a report. Amy's report was detailed:

- Amy's priorities for August and the Fall are intergenerational relationship building with such activities as the retreat, the Fiber Arts Day Camp that Bellamy led, "cross-pollination" using Soul Matters themes with both youth and adults, and gearing up for a new year of Soul Matters groups and Chalice dinners.
- As an adjunct to Amy's two-year ministerial training, mostly online through Meadville Lombard (A UU theology university), she will travel to Texas in October. The Board agreed to request funds to cover her transportation.
- Amy, along with others, will offer a grief ritual on September 13.
- Amy has started to put her sermons online through Substack and will put them on the HUUF website.

Bek's administrator report included several items of which we all should be aware.

- We have a new contract for the young peoples' AA meeting which meets on our grounds.
- There is concern that a group of local young men are using our EV charger a lot and hanging out in groups that make her uncomfortable in the early morning hours. The building will remain locked until office hours begin at noon.
- A training for people doing dish clean-up is needed (dishes need to be washed before they go into the sterilizer). The roof needs to be de-mossed and volunteers are needed.
- Branches touching the roof need to be cut back and we need a volunteer with a chain saw.
- The Summer Market event raised a little money and attracted a lot of young people.

Tiffany's Fellowship engagement report was succinct:

- During the summer RE has been utilizing Summer Magic packets from Soul Matters.
- Jessa will be leaving soon.
- There will be a monthly Soulful Home night to bring families together.
- Tiffany is working to re-establish the RE committee.
- Tiffany continues to take online training through the UU/UUA covering multiple aspects of her job.

Our August retreat was held at Greg and Debbie's home (thank you so much). Friday evening the staff was included. After some personal sharing, we worked on staff-Board relationships, committee rejuvenation and Fellowship priorities. The most important committees were identified as Finance, Program and Worship, RE, Building and Grounds, Membership, Social Action, and Fundraising, plus the special Endowment and Ministerial Relations committees. We might organize a volunteer fair to raise awareness of committee opportunities.

On Saturday, Dan volunteered to be vice-president and Corazon volunteered to assume the secretary duties. The Board thanks them! They will need to be confirmed by the congregation at the October 19 Congregational Meeting.

Fundraising was discussed at length. Ideas include:

- More fully using our space to host events like craft and book fairs, swap meets at which we could rent booth space and serve/sell concessions.
- Online sales
- Penny event
- Ashland theatre trip
- UU bed and breakfast
- Service auction
- Bigfoot tour - Maybe through UU Whale Coast Alaska sponsorship. Several Board members agreed to host.

Committee rejuvenation/Fellowship organization: Colleen suggested we adopt a pod type of organization with Board members being assigned as liaisons to pods made up of related Fellowship committees/functions. Her suggestions were spiritual, community, organization, financial, plus building and grounds, to which we added RE. We agreed with this pod concept. Greg is putting together the various pods to which liaisons will be selected at our September meeting.

Unemployment insurance: While the Fellowship is not required to pay into the state unemployment system due to our religious status, we decided that we have responsibility as a conscientious institution to provide assistance. Dan

*See "More Board report," page seven*

## ***More Board report, from page six***

suggested that we budget and set aside money each month until we have an amount from which we could pay unemployment in the same manner as EDD, should the need arise. All agreed.

Security problem: Recently the building has been found unlocked on several occasions, sometimes with doors ajar. Bek will be asked to send a notice to all key holders, including renters, of the problem.

Discussion of the relationship with Temple Beth El: Dan pointed out that on topics like Gaza, over which we have little control, we will never all agree. Approaching that division head on will probably cause more harm than understanding and acceptance. He suggested we find a local problem such as hunger on which both HUUF and Beth El, working with other religious organizations, could have a positive impact. While working together, positive relationships could develop. We will need to form an ad hoc group to make it happen.

Financial: Our budget anticipates pledges of \$165,000. Our current pledges are at \$132,000. We cannot address budget concerns until we find out if there are additional pledges, or people who are still contributing but have not indicated a 2025-2026 pledge amount. Board members will contact everyone who has not yet pledged.

Dan suggested transferring some of our operational funds to a money market account on which we would earn substantial interest while having the ability to withdraw funds, including writing checks.

Gender neutral bathrooms: Berti suggests that the Board recommend the following on a trial basis. This will be discussed at the October Congregational Meeting.

- Between both bathrooms add a sign that reads: "Use whichever bathroom you feel comfortable. A single stall all gender bathroom 45 feet in next building" with an arrow.
- Leave the gendered men/women signs on the doors
- Add a gender neutral sign to each door.
- Add a urinal sign on the men's door.
- Add a baby changing station sign to the women's bathroom door.

Your Board co-presidents:

*Berti Welty and Greg Blomstrom*

## ***Climate action, from page six***

For the official Sun Day, CAC is co-sponsoring the Transition to Renewables Fair at Carson Park in Eureka on Sunday, September 21, from 1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m. This free event will feature music, speeches, children's activities, tours of fully electrified homes (thank you Joanna Welch and Deborah Dukes), information from solar contractors and personal experiences from owners of EVs, solar equipment, and induction stoves.

If you were unable to attend the electric fair, thanks to Wendy Ring you can access her posted summaries of the incentives for solar panels, batteries, heat pumps, hybrid vehicles, EVs, e-bikes, whole home electrification, and lowering electric bills at <https://tinyurl.com/GreenHumboldt>

We can do this—community by community, state by state, and as Amanda Gorman says:

".....For there is always light,  
if only we're brave enough to see it.  
If only we're brave enough to be it."

And let's add - If we're determined enough to use it.

For all climate matters, carry on and keep the cheer!

*Sue Lee Mossman, Co-chair*

## ***Goodbye, Jessa!***

After many years of heartfelt and joyous service, our beloved Religious Education Teacher, Jessalyn DeLucchi, will pull back from much of her Sunday duties. She's stepped into a full-time role at her weekday job with Fuente Nueva School and will need her weekends for some personal R&R. She's graciously agreed to stick around with us for one Sunday a month. Be sure to let her know how much she's meant to you and your kiddos during your time here. We will miss her jubilant spirit and playful yoga songs and stories, and wish her well on the next leg of her journey. Jessa, you've brought such joy to our midst...thank you for being such a wonderful part of our community!



## Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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### Classified Ad

We (the Sinn family) would like to borrow some garden tools for one day from someone who might have them available. A hedge trimmer, whippersnipper, and chainsaw. Please reach out to David at (530) 564-2033 if you might be able to help us out. Thanks!

### Dental consultation offered

Do you have questions or concerns about your proposed dental treatment? As part of my ministry as a dentist I am available to meet with any member or friend of HUUF, in confidence, to answer your questions and discuss your dental health. Please call, text, or email me at (530) 774-3550 or [tomaslewis70@gmail.com](mailto:tomaslewis70@gmail.com).

*Tom Lewis DDS, MDiv*

Saturday, September 20, 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

### Help clean HUUF, inside and out

Willing to lend a hand at the September 20 All-Fellowship cleanup? We'll be getting the grounds ready for fall, raking leaves, pulling weeds, sprucing up the building, and certainly taking a little time to enjoy each others' company. Perhaps you have time and energy on your hands and would like to tackle an individual project, as Jason Klingersmith did recently when he repaired a leaking irrigation line, single-handedly? Thank you, Jason, for your hard work!

Questions? Please contact Montana Caouette through the Fellowship office. Otherwise, plan to join us 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and enjoy one of summer's final days with your HUUF friends. We hope to see a tremendous turnout.

Remember, "service is our prayer."