

Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



Minister's corner

October 2021

As part of cultivating our budding relationship, last month I shared a bit about my professional and spiritual journeys, and how these met in UU ministry. (If you missed that, or my initial summer article, it's one good way to get to know me.) (ed. archived newsletters at <https://tinyurl.com/HUUFarchive>)

Continuing from there, once deciding on this path I attended the UU seminary in Chicago, Meadville Lombard Theological School. Their format of traveling there a few times a year to attend intensive courses, and doing other work online, fit my parenting life since I didn't need to move. During the last two years of the three-year program, I interned at Neighborhood UU Church in Pasadena, which had around 500 members.

Upon graduating in 2014, I was chosen as minister of the UUs of the Santa Clarita Valley (UUSCV) in northern LA County. With about 60 members they'd always had half-time ministers, which in my case eventually went to 3/4-time. I was (and am) grateful for this opportunity, and for all the terrific folks there. And serving congregations both large and small provided a wealth of different ministerial experiences.

We did some good work over the next five years. And with my mounting concerns about America's political condition as the 2020 election cycle ramped up, in June of 2019 I stepped away to focus full-time on several creative projects intended to further UU values by impacting those elections.

The pandemic caused these to take a more internal turn for now, chiefly meaning writing more than I'd planned. Yet in stepping away from UUSCV, I actually strove deeper into the creative center of my ministry. I continue to develop these projects as part of my personal vocational endeavors, which in time may connect to my HUUF work in some form(s). If so, you'll definitely hear about it!

That brings us to the end of my biographical summarizing, and to the present – including October's theme of "Cultivating Relationship." Like others presenting Sunday services this month, I'll address some spiritual aspects of this on October 10 and 31. Meanwhile I've greatly enjoyed starting to cultivate relationships with many of you, and look forward to expanding these and beginning others.

One way to do either is to stop by the Fellowship during my open/drop-in office hours, Tuesdays 11 a.m.-1p.m. or Thursdays 2-4 p.m. We'll stay masked and keep social distance, and, weather permitting, meet outside. Or



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Newsletter deadline



call the office (707-822-3793) or email me (minister@huuf.org) to set an in-person, Zoom, or phone conversation at other times.

Once again, I'm delighted to be with you.

Many Blessings,

Rev. Peter Farriday

People

We join with **Jessie Wheeler** in mourning the passing of her daughter Laura Anne Wheeler-Graben from COPD.

Dr. Alison O'Dowd (Environmental Science and Management) published a paper in *River Research & Applications* entitled "Toward natural approaches in restoration: Experiments of co-evolving physical and biological structures in a self-organizing step-pool channel." Thanks to SPF's generous financial support, the article is available via open access here.

Congratulations also to **Julie Neander** who is being honored as a Zero Hero by Zero Waste Humboldt (ZWH) for individual achievement and 30 years of leadership, mentoring, and modeling to reduce waste within the Arcata community at large and within the local government. According to ZWH, Julie's "dedication to zero waste is one of the reasons the city of Arcata has had a national reputation for adopting progressive ordinances, working with community groups and providing assistance and services that help to reduce waste." We commend Julie, and are grateful for her efforts to call to the attention of city staff, local government colleagues, and HSU interns the significant relationship between zero waste and climate change.



Soul Matters Circles have returned

These circles are a small group experience created for Unitarian Universalist congregations that includes spiritual exercises, inspirational readings and questions that encourage reflection on daily living that helps participants explore monthly themes in more depth.

We have several options available to participate:

- Visit our Open Circle every second Wednesday with Rev. Peter Farriday, 7-8:30 p.m. via Zoom (Next offering **October 13**)
- Or join our still-forming Committed Circle the first Thursday of the month, 7-8:30 p.m. with Danielle Stubblefield and Amy Day, also via Zoom (Next meeting **October 7**)
- If you feel safe gathering together, we invite you to our In-Person Circle on the second Saturdays of the month, 2-4 p.m. at HUUF, with Amy Day and Alison O'Dowd facilitating. Childcare will be available. Please email Amy at comm@huuf.org if you have questions or would like to join. This circle will start up on **October 9**.

Creativity Circle forming

Expressive Arts Therapy, as defined by *Psychology Today*, "combines psychology and the creative process to promote emotional growth and healing. . . . This multi-arts, or intermodal, approach to psychotherapy and counseling uses our inborn desire to create...as a therapeutic tool to help initiate change. It is used with ... individuals or in groups, to nurture deep personal growth and transformation."

In a more perfect world, we'd all have access to a space in which creative play and exploration can help us heal some of the traumas of this life, and reconnect us to our innate sense of possibility and joy. Lucky for us, in this world, we have a wonderful once monthly offering from Expressive Arts Therapist Laura Phelan-Shahin as part of our own Fellowship Engagement program. On the third Friday of each month, 7-8:30 p.m., via Zoom, Laura hosts an open circle which can include a guided meditation or somatic check-in. Through prompts, multiple mediums, and gentle guidance, participants are invited to explore process over product, and to use this playful and generative time as a way to access their own inner wisdom and guidance.

We invite adults and older-age children to come join us in this healing and connective space. Our next circle will be Friday, **October 15** at 7 p.m. Please check the HUUF Weekly or our website under "Fellowship Engagement" to access the link.

Amy Day

Religious Exploration

To our beloved families,

Last week, my family and I welcomed two adorable blondes and their tender-looking Papa into our yard for a re-union of sorts. Though we've been friends with the girls' dad for years, different towns, different schools, different ages, life, the pandemic, the passage of time... many things had conspired so that it had been a very long while indeed since we'd sat and shared space with them in any substantive way. A month ago, however, their Mama passed away. A friend, too, of this Beloved Community, and a powerful embodiment of a mother's heart and spirit, if ever there was one. And so we find ourselves once again reaching out with tentative hands, texts, phone calls: "I am here," they say. "This is hard and sad and nothing we can do inside this moment can heal the loss you have suffered. But I want to offer you what I can."

Several months ago, sitting on the sunny couch of a therapist's office, seeking wisdom to use within my own home and marriage, she told me, "The rupture is inevitable. Life is a constant cycle of rupture and repair. The work is not so much to avoid the rupture as to get better - and faster - at the repair."

My first instinct upon encountering our sweet, 5-year old friends in my yard, newly bereft of their precious Mama, was to gather them in my arms and to offer them every ounce of mother-love I myself possess. But I had not yet earned that privilege. Instead, I acknowledged in my own being that it would take time, consistency, and gentle presence in their worlds to earn that intimacy and trust. So, too, as we find our way back to one another, toward re-building and regenerating this sweet community, may we be willing to do what we can to overcome the rupture of the past two years. To take steps – steadily, tentatively, bravely – toward re-creating the type of spiritual home and interdependent web that will restore us to one another, and to our selves.

From Starhawk:

"We are all longing to go home to some place
we have never been – a place half-remembered and half-envisioned
we can only catch glimpses of from time to time.
Community.
Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion
without having the words catch in our throats.
Somewhere a circle of hands
will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter,
voices will celebrate with us whenever we come into our own power.
Community means strength
that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done.
Arms to hold us when we falter.
A circle of healing.
A circle of friends.
Someplace where we can be free."
Come, let us rebuild this place together.



Yours,
In grace and gratitude,

Amy Day (she/her) Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration

Sunday Services

Sunday, October 3 – 11 a.m. – Interpersonal Relationships within the Fellowship during Covid – Berti Welty

One of the major reasons people come to any religious group is to be a part of a vibrant community in which they can explore ideas and have companions on life's many journeys. Ordinarily, the Fellowship would be having potlucks, social hour after services, parties, dinners, fundraisers, concerts, retreats and a host of other events during which there would be lots of chances for interaction.

While many events have been curtailed for health reasons, there are lots of opportunities to connect deeply with others. Congregants will share some of the ways they have cultivated relationships with others in the congregation during the Covid era, and as we begin to emerge from our isolation.

Sunday, October 10 – 11 a.m. – Cultivating Soul Connections – Rev. Peter Farriday

Inner listening. Alert attention. Brave inquiry. Today's service explores and illustrates how such actions nurture a relationship with our soul and frees up the healing spiritual "medicine" it holds for ourselves and others.

Sunday, October 17 – 11 a.m. – Spirit of Life, Come to Me – Bonnie MacGregor and Laura Phelan-Shahin

Often in times of trouble we call out in hopes there is some "One" beyond us that might help. Then, crisis over, we go back to our everyday life never looking back. This pattern doesn't work well in these days of constant crisis. Is there any One to call out to? Inspired by the Soul Matters topic "Cultivating Relationship," Bonnie, Laura and other HUUF members will lead us up to the edge of that question: Is there a God/Ultimate Source/Higher Power? Can we cultivate a relationship with this Power/Spirit? What can this look like?

Laura Phelan-Shahin, the mother of two young children, is a marriage and family therapist for whom cultivating and healing relationships is her life work. Bonnie MacGregor is a lifelong spiritual explorer and practitioner close to the end of her life span. This exploration matters greatly to them both.

Sunday, October 24 – 11 a.m. – Be the Change – Amy Day

Welcome to our first official All Ages Sunday. In this dynamic, multi-dimensional and intergenerational space, we will look at how we, as families, householders and ordinary individuals, can conduit great changes in our world. Together, with guidance from the great folks at the North Coast Environmental Center, we will look at ways people of all sizes and from all walks of life can be a part of the healing of our planet and our culture in ways both ordinary and profound.

Sunday, October 31 – 11 a.m. – When the Veil is Thinnest – Rev. Peter Farriday

This autumnal Sunday focuses on several traditions that honor deceased ancestors and loved ones. These include the pagan holy day Samhain (SAH-win) aka All Hallows Eve or Halloween, and Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead from Mexico), as well as the Christian All Saints Day and All Souls Day.

What do these traditions, and other sources, have to say about the veil between life, death – and the hereafter? We'll also remember and honor/mourn/celebrate our own dear departed. So, whether attending in-person or online, you're invited to bring photos and/or mementos of late loved ones.



Fellowship engagement

“Cultivating Relationship” is the theme that the good folks at Soul Matters have given us to contemplate this October. Where do we feel the rupture? And where are we willing to work towards the repair? This month, as you continue to weigh the opportunities presented to you and your family in this restructuring time, I want to invite you to consider where there might be space for the practice, embodiment and delight of the spiritual community inside of it all.

Here are some things we have on offer:

Sundays in our R(eligious) E(xploration) Multi-Age Classroom:

For the time being, there is no 9 a.m. service.

October 3, at 11 a.m. – Yoga and Mindfulness teacher Jessa will be offering up songs, movement and mindfulness exercises on the relationship to self, others, and the Earth.

October 10 at 11 a.m. – Artist and teacher Debbi Kallish will be teaching paper-quilt making through craft, myth and stories.

October 17 at 11 a.m. – Teen Coordinator and community organizer Sabrina Miller will be leading us in a chance to practice our connectedness to one another and to the marginalized within our community by helping us put together care packages for the un-housed in our region.

October 24 at 11 a.m. – All Ages Sunday. No separate RE this day. We’ll gather together inside the body of our service to talk, play, imagine and explore ways that we – as families, individuals, and householders can create changes in relationship to our larger world. With help from our friends at the NEC.

October 31 at 11 a.m. – Creating an altar for all we’ve lost with DLRE, Amy Day. Children are encouraged to bring an item from home – a picture, toy, piece of fabric, knick-knack or jewelry – that tells a story about someone or something we’ve lost inside the last year. We’ll take time to honor these stories and light our candle to grieve what is passed.

Other Ways to Get Involved:

RE Committee: First Sunday of the month via Zoom – **October 3**, 12:45-2:15p.m.

Playscape Committee: Planning Meeting, every third Wednesday of the month – **October 20** at 6 p.m. via Zoom.

In-Person Soul Matters at HUUF – second Saturday of the month, **October 9**, 2-4 p.m., childcare provided, RSVP to Amy commathuuf.org if you’d like to join us.

Playscape Work Parties: Kids will have an activity and separate space set up for themselves to craft, create and play together, plus help as needed/appropriate with the ongoing efforts of this community project. Upcoming dates: Saturday, **October 2**, 11-3 p.m. Saturday, **October 23**, 1-4 p.m.

HUUF Families Halloween Festival – More info to come, but we have decided to do a small-scale, invite-only festival this year. To take place the night before Halloween – **Saturday, October 30**. If you’d like to help, or RSVP, please let Amy know. We’ll have an online sign-up sheet set up shortly for you to reserve your spot.

Fall day of mindfulness: Living this precious life

All are welcome to join the Ancient Forest Sangha for a nourishing day of mindful meditation practices, sitting, walking, eating, deep relaxation, and times of silence and sharing led by Dharma Teacher Alexa Singer-Telles on **October 16** from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. You are invited to bring a picture or symbol to place on an altar to our ancestors as we contemplate the Five Remembrances. These wisely remind us of the theme of this day’s practice: the preciousness of life, and how looking at death teaches us to live life more fully. Bring a vegetarian lunch, water, a blanket or yoga mat for total relaxation and a cushion if you prefer to use one. Since part of the day will be held indoors, we will observe the following Covid precautions: all attending must be fully vaccinated and masked, all windows will be open (so it may be cool), and people will be spaced appropriately. The suggested donation for the day is \$30, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds; offerings of ‘dana’ (generosity) will be invited. Please contact me for more information or to register: polkaqueen@gmail.com.

Valerie Rose

Climate Action Campaign news

For this upcoming Fellowship year, CAC is inviting our HUUF community to participate each month in a “Climate Action of the Month” (CAM) that will help mitigate the consequences of climate change.

Building on September’s Soul Matters topic and Ann Kilby’s recent Sunday thoughts on “possibilities within limits,” let’s embrace the possibility that our shared individual sparks of acting together in community can light the way for further climate actions in ourselves and others in the greater local area.

Thanks to Cena Marino and Margy Emerson who have volunteered to suggest a new CAM for each month of the coming Fellowship year. Look for a new CAM each month in the newsletter.

The recent IPCC climate assessment is warning that as global temperatures rise, we will have longer and hotter heat waves, more intense droughts, and more intense wildfires. Given the extent and severity of drought and recent wildfires in California, CAC proposes for the month of October that we kick off our new HUUF year by joining together to conserve water. The CAM article has suggestions.

Thanks to everyone who either attended the September Arcata City Council meeting or emailed individual letters to the Mayor and City Council Members of Arcata to request that \$1.65 million out of the \$4.4 million federal pandemic relief funds be spent for decarbonization efforts within the city. Because of actions by various local climate action groups, city officials were alerted to the urgent need for mitigating the effects of climate change, and approved a sum \$500,000.

Thanks to John Schaefer for his letter in the Times-Standard and in the Mad River Union informing readers of MIT’s En-Roads model which predicts the highest leverage actions that can reduce global warming. Furthermore, out of those actions, the En-Roads model shows a high price on carbon dioxide pollution to be the most effective at reducing temperature rise most quickly. Given IPCC’s recent grim climate assessment, the CAC urges everyone to ask state and federal legislators for support of legislation that would place a high tax on carbon emissions.

On behalf of the CAC, letters were emailed to Assembly Member Mike Wood, Senator Mike McGuire, Rep. Jared Huffman, and Senators Dianne Feinstein and Alex Padilla individually to urge them to support legislation on carbon pricing.

Sue Lee Mossman



Cleaning the solar array

Playscape progress

As anyone who comes to the Fellowship can see, there is a large berm of soil in front of the CARE building. This berm will eventually have a climbing wall, slide, and a rolling slope, in addition to the tunnel that is already in place. Several families from the Religious Exploration program have been hard at work, along with some older volunteers. Many hands make quick work.

Due to the rainstorm, the berm was covered with burlap and rice straw to protect it from erosion. Eventually the top, ends and rolling slope will be covered in sod. The steeper slopes will have beautiful native plants for all to enjoy.

The already completed patio off the east wall of the main building was the first of several components to our playscape. Also planned is a willow tunnel, a dry creek play area, and outdoor musical instruments. Other climbing and balancing objects will double as seating around a gathering area complete with a hidden fire pit. The handicap-accessible walkway from the CARE building to the main patio is awaiting the contractor's schedule.

If you'd like to see a model of the proposed area, walk by the Care building and look in the window.

All interested are invited to help the project along. Our next planned work party is Saturday, **October 2**, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. We also hope to have another work party on Saturday, **October 23** from 1 to 4 p.m. In addition, if you have time and energy, we can have small one or two person work hours during the week. Contact project manager, Berti Welty, if you'd like more information at 707-476-0654 or bertijo@humboldt1.com.



Montana Caouette covering playscape berm



Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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Proofreader needed

Bert Taylor has, for many years, been the proofreader for articles submitted to the newsletter, and her work is greatly appreciated. She has asked to be relieved of this job. I'm requesting a volunteer. The task requires checking each article for spelling and grammar and compliance with the guidelines. Articles are sent to the proofreader on the 20th or 21st of the month and require a fairly fast turnaround. A copy of the final newsletter after layout is also sent for proofing. The service is necessary to keep the newsletter readable and informative. If interested, please contact me at newsletter@huuf.org.



Stephen Sottong

Deadline information

Deadline for the **November** issue of the newsletter is Wednesday, **October 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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